

**CAPACITY BUILDING OF LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS WITH ORGANIZATIONAL KNOWLEDGE & CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

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“Individuals come and go but organizations preserve knowledge, behaviors, mental maps norms, and values over time” (Hedberg, 1981)

Abstract:

In order to improve library professionals' ability to solve problems in special attention should be paid to two main issues- to develop in professional's problem solving skills through education, and to look at the difficulties faced by professionals in this area and find ways to help them overcome these difficulties. Conflict gradually weaken or destroy your organization's energy and diminish standard of service - and no one is immune. Whether you are a team leader, a manager or a member of your organization's leadership team, the ability to handle difficult situations constructively is critical to organization's success. In this study Knowledge, Organizational Knowledge real causes of conflicts discussed and explained how library professionals have to build capacity by knowing more of organizational knowledge and skills required for conflict resolution.

Keywords: *Knowledge, Organizational Knowledge, Problem Solving, Conflicts and Conflict Management.*



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Introduction:

Libraries and Information centres have given many highly educated and vocationally qualified people to India. These Qualified people are making their mark, domestically and globally, in Engineering, Science, Information Technology and Research & Development. These qualified people share only a small fraction of the total population. There should be continued and



sustained cadre of knowledge workers. To create cadre of knowledge workers library and information centres should be more demand driven to meet the emerging needs of the economy. This means libraries and information centres has to raise the quality of their departments, for world class knowledge workers.

Knowledge-

Knowledge originates in individuals. Knowledge is embodied in teams, communities, culture and organizations. Knowledge is embedded in routines, norms and processes. Knowledge is represented in systems and Infrastructure.

Need for Knowledge Management-

- Changes in strategic direction may result in the loss of knowledge in a specific area.
- Competitive pressures reduce the size the work force that holds valuable business knowledge. The amount of time available to experience and acquire knowledge has diminished. Early retirements and increasing mobility of the work force lead to loss
- Market places are increasingly competitive and the rate of innovation is rising.
- Organizations compete on the basis of knowledge. Human resource has become more mobile; there is loyalty to profession and not to organizations.
- Products and services are increasingly complex, endowed with a significant information component.
- Reductions in staffing create a need to replace informal knowledge with formal methods.
- The need for life-long learning is an inescapable reality.

In brief, knowledge and information have become the medium in which business problems occur. As a result, managing knowledge represents the primary opportunity for achieving substantial of knowledge. There is a need to manage increasing complexity as small operating departments/units are trans-national sourcing operations savings, significant improvements in human performance, and competitive advantage.

Commandments of Knowledge Management-

- Knowledge Management is About People- It is directly linked to what people know, and how what they know can support business and organizational objectives. It draws on human competency, intuition, ideas, and motivations. It is not at technology-based concept. Although technology can support a KM effort, it shouldn't begin there.
- Knowledge Management is Orderly and Goal-Directed-It is inextricably tied to the



strategic objectives of the organization. It uses only the information that is the most meaningful, practical, and purposeful.

- Knowledge Management is Ever-Changing- There is no such thing as an immutable law in KM. Knowledge is constantly tested, updated, revised, and sometimes even “obsolete” when it is no longer practicable. It is a fluid, ongoing process.
- Knowledge Management is Value-Added-It draws upon pooled expertise, relationships, and alliances. Organizations can further the two-way exchange of ideas by bringing in experts from the field to advise or educate managers on recent trends and developments. Forums, councils, and boards can be instrumental in creating common ground and organizational cohesiveness.
- Knowledge Management is Visionary: This vision is expressed in strategic business terms rather than technical terms, and in a manner that generates enthusiasm, buy-in, and motivates managers to work together toward reaching common goals.
- Knowledge Management is Complementary: It can be integrated with other organizational learning initiatives such as Total Quality Management (TQM).It is important for knowledge managers to show interim successes along with progress made on more protracted efforts such as multiyear systems developments infrastructure, or enterprise architecture projects.

Challenges for knowledge sharing & Re-Use Know-how-

- An Emphasis on Formal Learning Efforts as a Mechanism for Knowledge Sharing
- Creation of Repositories without Addressing the Strategy to Manage Content
- Defining Knowledge for Different Audience
- Failure to Analyze and Map Knowledge Management System to User’s Needs
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- Failure to Avoid Re-Invention of the Wheel
- Information Sharing and Information Access
- Issues of Privacy of Personnel Knowledge
- Lack of Processes for Conversion of Tacit Knowledge to Explicit Knowledge
- Organization’s Inability to Motivate Employees by Addressing their Knowledge and Learning Needs
- Resistance to Share Information



- Retaining Employees and Retiring Work-Force
- Security
- Selection of Right Tools and Technologies
- The Problem of Capturing Data

Components of Knowledge Management Strategy-

- Communications and Collaboration
- Information Management
- Intellectual capital Management
- Leadership and Culture
- The Learning Organization-Formal learning & Informal Learning

Library Professionals & Knowledge-

Libraries & Information Centers have been involved with collecting, organizing & disseminating of Data, Information & Knowledge. Knowledge can be capture, disseminate, record, communicated and shared with the help of information Technology tools. Skills and expertise in short unrecorded knowledge in the form of tacit knowledge needs to create and share. Knowledge management is misinterpreted as content management or information management. Even among Library professionals understanding of knowledge management are varied. Most of us view knowledge management as the management of information resources, services and systems. Information acquisition, storage & retrieval, data mining, information use, training of users for effective use are the tools. There is overlap between concepts and tools involved in management of information and knowledge. But library professionals will agree that for knowledge management's application, is the best way to improve the functions and services of library and information centers.

Even though there is limited involvement in knowledge management practice, but now library professionals are developing interest towards knowledge management. Librarians should enter into knowledge management with application of their traditional skills. There is benefits like career development and enhancement of the position and status due to involvement in knowledge management. Final benefits is development of library and information centers. To reap potential benefits due to implementation of knowledge management , professionals need to understand knowledge management. Library professionals need to focus on the management of explicit and tacit knowledge. Focus of knowledge management focuses on



people expertise. Library professionals should acquire skills and competencies in the human resource management, project management, communications, mentoring, teamwork, leadership, presentation. These skills are essential for the reengineering of libraries to face the challenges of modern age. Parent organization's objectives and mission is supported, by unit, academic libraries and information centers.

Organizational knowledge-

Organizational knowledge exists and is distinct from knowledge of individuals and groups. Specifically, there is evidence of three distinct forms of organizational knowledge types each with an explicit and tacit dimension. These are systemic, socio-political and strategic knowledge. Explicit knowledge is readily available in codified or documented forms whereas tacit knowledge is highly dynamic and difficult to access or share. Tacit knowledge also has cognitive, technical and social dimensions that are similar to existing theoretical frameworks of individual tacit knowledge. Knowledge is created only by individuals. An organization cannot create knowledge without individuals. The organization supports creative individuals or provides contexts for them to create knowledge. Organizational knowledge creation, therefore, should be understood as a process that 'organizationally' amplifies the knowledge created by individuals and crystallizes it as part of the knowledge network of the organization

Types of Organizational knowledge-

- Procedural knowledge, such as manuals and other documented processes.
- Expert knowledge, as gained from experienced librarians
- Community-generated knowledge, where users provide valuable information.

Systemic Organizational knowledge includes-

- Competitive and organizational position and perceptions of
- Core competencies
- Documented context including annual reports, industry prospectus etc.
- Documented systems, processes, practices and policies
- Formal decision process i.e. governance structure
- How to get things done i.e. influence networks, coalitions etc.
- Interpretations of the 'official word'



- Know-how
- Organization charts, roles and responsibilities
- stakeholders
- Status and role in industry, society and community
- Unspoken rules and meanings associated with the policies, processes etc. Socio-Political
- Values, norms and behaviors Strategic
- Who does, what, where
- Who's powerful and who isn't

Knowledge of Problem Solving-

Problem solving takes away crucial time of library professionals in their working day. Major goal of library professionals is to improve problem solving skills. Researchers like Beyer (1984) e DeBono (1983) found that mastery of generalized problem solving skills did not differentiate well between good and poor problem solvers. In fact, they concluded that knowledge of context was the most critical feature of problem solving. Thus, research supports problem solving as a situational and context bound process that depends on the deep structures of knowledge and experience.

Here are “Real Causes” of Conflicts-

- **Communication**--If you reflect back upon conflicts you have encountered over the years, you'll quickly recognize many of them resulted from a lack of information, poor information, no information, or misinformation. Communication relies on clear and complete messages being sent as well as being received. Problems can be reduced by paying attention to how well you send messages and how well you receive them. Both managers and workers are responsible for ensuring that these issues are considered. Unclear communication from staff is another common source of conflict. It is vital that "house rules" are written down for staff, and that there are no variations in the interpretation of those rules. Distressed staff can very quickly become confused and angry if they feel that they are not being listened to especially by those who say they care. It is natural and unavoidable to have miscommunication and misunderstanding. The key is to reduce it by creating an atmosphere where any team member can ask even the silliest of question without being frowned upon



- *Competition for supremacy--This occurs when one person seeks to outdo or out-shine another person. You might see it when two employees compete for a promotion or for comparative power in your organization. Depending on personalities, this type of conflict can be very subtle sometimes.*
- **Different perceptions, ways of working and biases--**We all have heard the saying “perception is reality.” Every individual creates his or her reality according to how he perceived the world. Therefore, he or she develops his/her own ways of working and develops their own biases.
- **Disagreeing about responsibility and accountability--**Accountability is one requirement of an effective and influential leader in the workplace. It is defined as taking ownership to ensure responsibilities are achieved as expected. This means that librarian as leader must clearly understand expectations before making commitments. People trust leaders who aren’t quick to blame others if things don’t go as planned, but who instead take accountability for their role in the consequences.
- **Ego and personality clash--**Ego and personality are an integral part of human beings. And, librarian should aware of ego and personality to manage people and get things done. But excessive ego or disordered personality which can overwhelm others, rather than make them comfortable can ruin a project.
- **Emotions--**Another common mistake made in workplace communications which leads to conflict is letting emotions drive decisions. This occurs when a person, because of low self-esteem, insecurity, or other factors in his or her personal life, sometimes feels attacked by perceived criticism or other interpersonal directness.
- **Frustration, stress and burnout--**When people become frustrated or stressed they are more irritable and more likely to create conflicts than at other times. It is important to recognize the signs of stress in people's work situations in order to prevent burnout. These factors could include Overcrowding or lack of privacy, dirty or untidy work space, noise, lack of support, lack of direction from management etc.
- **Goals Differences-Disagreeing about priorities and importance--**Every employee faces a time at work when they are swamped and need to figure out the most efficient way of climbing out of a pile of work by quality – making sure it meets specific standards. They may be behind on readers demands and have a new



work/project to lead at the same time. How they function under stress and find a solution to an overload of work is a tough test that will say a lot about their work ethic. The Conflict arises when one person has expectations that don't coincide with the other person/senior/head of the institution.

- **Informational Differences- Having different facts or understanding--**The parable of the blind men and the elephant illustrates this. Of course, each had a different impression. Library staff have different levels of motivation, different attitudes about work and different responses to specific work environment and work practices. The more thoroughly librarian understand the differences, the better chance , to have of meeting the diverse informational needs of all of staff members.
- **Lack of planning--**Lack of planning often means an organization moves from one crisis to the next. This sense of disorganization and lack of direction can be stressful and can create many problems including misunderstandings. The time spent in planning will be recouped many times over in the more efficient use of staffs' time, and in real and long-term benefits to readers.
- **Lack of trust and respect between team members--**Apart from communication project management is also about collaborating together to get things done. And, without trust and respect between team members it is a futile attempt to collaborate together. In the realm of project management, collaboration thrives when team members understand and encourage each other and are benevolent to each other.
- **Misunderstandings--**Conflict can arise from misunderstandings about the nature, aims and objectives of a job, Differing expectations about how things should be done, Work conditions and wages, The different responsibilities of management and employees, Differences in values, beliefs, needs, or priority.
- **Perceptual Differences- Seeing things differently--**A common example is when two people can view the same event and have different perceptions. People do interpret things and that too differently because they have different levels of understanding and different aspects and perceptions for things. Observation differs. ... It will depend on your level of understanding thing and explaining it to the other and then the opposite person's understanding power too.



- **Personality Differences-Behaving and communicating in different ways--**Librarians have a tricky job of understanding their staff as individuals who require flexible management styles. Different personalities evidently work better under different conditions. Librarians also have to keep a broad understanding of team dynamics and organisational problems. Personality types are important to address, but not at the expense of overburdening some people with particular tasks, or under utilising other team members. Similarly being responsive to personality preferences can't be the expense of addressing discrimination that stops women and minority groups from fully participating within the organisation.
- **Poor staff selection--**Inappropriate selection of staff can result in ill-feeling and conflict. Feelings of ill-will may be increased by dismissing staff members.
- **Procedural Differences-Having different ways of doing thing--.** Even though this is true that staff who exercise autonomy regularly at work are happier and more productive. The right staff in the right role can transform an entire department--maybe even an entire organization but only if their ability to act on their intuition and creativity is unleashed. Employee morale is lower when employees believe among them there is unfair and inconsistent process, which goes beyond their immediate senior for dealing with procedures.
- **Religious indoctrination--** Indoctrination is the process of inculcating a person with ideas, attitudes, cognitive strategies or professional methodologies. In the esoteric teachings of all religions one can find amazing pearls of wisdom and guides towards living a good, loving, compassionate, beautiful life. However, when religion becomes organized and dogmatic, with its esoteric aspect being ignored, it can fill one's life with shame, hatred, misery, and immense existential anguish.
- **Strong psychological tendencies--**Some of the strong psychological tendencies, that drive the way we usually approach conflict in groups and society. Among them are Our need to belong to a tribe/group, Our desire to be distinct/unique, Xenophobia-Xenophobia.
- *Unfulfilled expectations--Many of the causes contribute to one person not fulfilling the expectations of another. Unfulfilled expectations are the ultimate cause of divorce,*



firings, and other forms of relational breakdown. The major reason that expectations go unfulfilled is that they are unreasonable, inappropriate, too numerous, or unstated.

- **Vested interests of certain people**--When conflicts become a cash cow because of the vested interests of certain people, then any amount of sense or wisdom does not work because all that appears to such a person is ‘There is a conflict, and I am getting something from this conflict, so I want to keep the conflict going on’.

People with a high degree of emotional intelligence to know what they're feeling, what their emotions mean, and how these emotions can affect other people. Emotional intelligence or EI is the ability to understand and manage your own emotions, and those of the people around you. For leaders, having emotional intelligence is essential for success. After all, who is more likely to succeed – a leader who shouts at his team when he's under stress, or a leader who stays in control, and calmly assesses the situation? Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Motivation, Empathy, Social skills are the key elements of emotional intelligence are more important.

Conflict Management Skills are-

- Addressing problems quickly before they reach crisis stage
- Asserting feelings without blaming
- Brainstorming solutions that accommodate both parties
- Compromising to accommodate others
- Commitment to resolving problems
- Convening a meeting of the parties involved in a conflict
- Creativity in problem-solving
- Demonstrating understanding regarding the feelings and needs of the parties involved
- Designating sanctions for non-compliance with agreements
- Drawing out the perspective and feelings of reluctant participants
- Forgiving transgressions
- Formalizing an agreement between combatants (in writing when feasible)
- Identifying non-verbal cues indicating frustration and anger
- Identifying triggers to conflict
- Integrating goals for harmonious collaboration into performance plans
- Listening without interruption as parties share their perspective



- Mediating
- Meeting with parties individually to identify grievances
- Modeling reasonable dialogue
- Monitoring compliance with agreements
- Negotiating
- Recognizing improvements on the part of antagonists
- Recognizing the existence of a problem
- Reconfiguring relationships and roles to avoid conflict-prone interactions
- Reflecting significant conflict provoking behaviors in performance appraisals
- Setting ground rules for productive dialogue
- Showing respect
- Teaching alternative behaviors to avoid triggering conflict
- Willingness to modify behavior

Conclusion:

Much of the confusion and disappointment concerning KM comes from a confusion between information and knowledge because, knowledge is not linked to action, even by KM experts. There is no clarity. People are investing in systems to capture, organize, and disseminate information, and then calling it knowledge. Knowledge management must be seen as a priority which will enhance academic activity. Knowledge sharing must be fostered. Responsibility for the coordination of the whole of knowledge management is required..The real challenge is the documentation, management and transfer of huge knowledge. The idealistic writings in books cannot solve the real problems which are encountered in library management. For this reason, it would be better if Library professionals attempt to solve problems, instead of paying attention to applications which are fashionable in the field of library management and the theoretical ideas in books.

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