Knowledge Management – on the Road to becoming a Learning Organization

Knowledge-sharing is nothing new.
And yet, we have to consciously manage our knowledge.

Objectives

The countries and SDC partners in the South and East require knowledge to ensure their independent development. The SDC's aim is to assist them by providing its knowledge and experience as a targeted contribution. Knowledge management and a culture of learning are thus understood as instruments to enhance the quality and effectiveness of international cooperation.

Together with its partners, the SDC learns from its experiences, incorporates the new insights into its activities, and fosters learning processes.

To ensure sustainable effectiveness
- Knowledge must constantly be further developed
- There should be open access to knowledge for all

Principles

The SDC as a learning organization
1. recognizes that its staff and personnel are bearers of knowledge
2. develops and secures organizational competencies related to its core tasks & roles
3. valorizes practices of knowledge development and learning
4. opens up access to knowledge and experience
5. cultivates a learning culture

"Common values, common visions and a common concern are the powerful motives for knowledge sharing."

Participant at the Dare to Share Fair 2004

Questionnaire

(freely adapted from Max Frisch)

- Will you go into retirement taking your knowledge along as private property?
- How high a price would you place on your knowledge: for the SDC, the people in the South or East, those in Switzerland?
- Do you know who knows what you know?
- With whom do you prefer to share your knowledge the most? And why?
- Do you know what others know?
- Are you one who has to reinvent the wheel? Or do you believe in pirate copies?
- Are you afraid to ask, or ashamed to learn?
- Do you believe that learning can make you happy? Or are you a know-it-all?
- Do you sometimes tell yourself stories? And what do you learn from them?
- What else would you like to learn today?
- Do you think while walking? If so, do you ever take someone on a walk with you?
- When did you learn the most? And why?
- How often would you like to make the same mistake in order to learn?
- How often would your colleagues like you to make the same mistake in order to learn?
- Do you dare to share your knowledge?
- Do you dare to share your power?
- Do you believe that knowledge helps you forget what's superfluous?
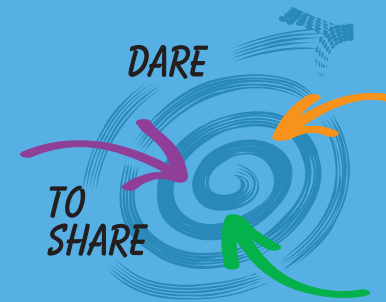
Knowledge management as a task of SDC down the line, and of all personnel and staff

The directors
- determine the strategy for knowledge management and allocate the resources necessary for its implementation
- foster a learning culture and learning practices
- set the priority action lines

Department and division heads
- define their core competencies and tasks
- orient their staff, provide coaching, and identify competence-building measures
- share lessons learned and best practices with their staff members, providing others with access to them as well
- support a culture of learning and knowledge

Every member of SDC personnel and staff
- further develops his/her competencies
- shares knowledge
- institutionalizes his/her knowledge within the SDC in cooperation with the management

The individual divisions and specialized services
- contribute by virtue of their specialized knowledge to the SDC as a learning organization:

Knowledge exchange and platforms for learning: The SDC's priority action lines

People Directory
This index located on the Intraweb includes the "yellow page" profiles with the competencies of SDC members. It facilitates rapid access to key experiences.

Communities of Practice
Platforms initiated by divisions or individuals to promote learning and exchange of experience.

Good Practices
The divisions capitalize on their experience and integrate new insight and innovations into the Organization.

Instruments
The SDC anchors its knowledge in policy documents, strategic guidelines, and operational guidelines.

Incentives for the exchange of knowledge
The exchange of knowledge and learning must be actively strengthened by institutional measures. Hence, suggestions and strategies are formulated on how individual contributions to knowledge management can be promoted.

Core competencies and strategic knowledge
The SDC secures the knowledge that it needs in order to meet the challenges of the future.

Targeted support

- You possess some very special experience in your core area of competence that you would like to share with others. How should you best proceed to do so?
- You have observed some exciting methods by which others have exchanged knowledge, and would like to have them mainstreamed in the SDC as well. To whom can you turn for support?
- You would like to create a Community of Practice, but don't exactly know how to go about it?

Your Contact Point: The Thematic Service Knowledge and Research

- advises the personnel, organizational units, and the partners of the SDC in the design of learning and knowledge-development processes
- participates in relevant SDC knowledge and learning processes and initiatives
- fosters the exchange of successful learning processes and practices, supports the SDC in the capitalization of experience, and provides info on promising approaches
- integrates new, successful methods and practices of knowledge management, as well as relevant external competencies, into the SDC

For further information, feedback, and exchange

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ICT4D Division
Supporting multilateral initiatives and advising multilateral and bilateral programmes regarding ICT4D issues.

Thematic Service Knowledge & Research
Advising SDC in knowledge management, learning and capitalisation of experiences

One Web
Providing communication tools and platforms for learning.

Information & Documentation
Securing of policy documents and information.

Principle
Learning and Knowledge Management regards each unit and every staff member

InfoRec, SAP, DMS
Securing of financial and business data of SDC and providing access to key documents.

Human Resources
Human Resources development, staff appraisal, staff rotation, career planning, taking into consideration securing of knowledge and competencies.

Evaluation & Controlling
Promoting/supporting of core competencies and development of performance and decision-making-processes as part of knowledge management.

Governance Division
Advising operational units regarding "access to information" as part of Governance questions.