

Horst J. Lechner, 2023

Volume 9 Issue 1, pp. 23-39

Received: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Revised: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Accepted: 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023

Date of Publication: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023

DOI- <https://doi.org/10.20319/pijss.2023.91.2339>

This paper can be cited as: Lechner, H. J. (2023). *The Knowledge-Sharing Culture in An Operational Excellence Plant as Competitive Advantage for Forward-Thinking Organizations*. PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences, 9(1), 23-39.

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## **THE KNOWLEDGE-SHARING CULTURE IN AN OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE PLANT AS COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE FOR FORWARD-THINKING ORGANIZATIONS**

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### **Abstract**

*Although knowledge sharing has been discussed quite a bit in the literature, the mediating and moderating mechanisms that influence team members in knowledge sharing to move from connecting with each other to building social capital and consequently engaging in knowledge sharing are still largely unexplored. This paper aims to shed light on the currently poorly understood knowledge flow of project managers across the value chain in the food-mass-production industry and to show the significance of competitive intelligence for plants in the mass-production industry, the influence of competitive intelligence on strategic decisions, especially on positioning decisions, and the extent to which this process is influenced by the development of external influences and framework conditions. The findings are based on a literature review and the author's five years of action research in the food-packaging industry, supplemented by his annual audits. Unfortunately, literature examining the influence of organizational culture on knowledge sharing behaviours is not widely available. Thus, this paper is a methodological-theoretical attempt to review the literature on knowledge sharing examples, and thoroughly parses the knowledge gaps and potential pitfalls of misunderstanding.*

*Unfortunately, literature examining the influence of organizational culture on knowledge sharing behaviours is not widely available. The results of this paper enrich the theory of organizational culture and knowledge management and help policy makers in providing measures to develop knowledge sharing behaviours.*

## **Keywords**

Knowledge Sharing, Competitive Intelligence, Effects, Organisational, Learning

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## **1. Introduction**

It is of enormous importance for companies in the mass-production industry to know both the structures of the market and the competition, as well as the forces and influencing factors that affect them. A company in the mass-production industry must have an idea of which factors affect the competition in order to formulate strategies and be successful. In terms of successfully establishing and asserting oneself in the market, it is of enormous importance to know both the position of one's own company and that of the competitors (Paulin & Sunesson, 2012). To do this, the company must know its own strengths and weaknesses and those of its competitors. The same applies in this context to the opportunities and risks. Knowledge of the strategies of the market participants, possible changes in the strategy or the reaction of the competitors to possible strategic changes of their own company or to changes in the environment are also of enormous importance. The dynamisation of the markets intensifies the competitive situation. In addition, the homogenisation of products and the ever-increasing variety of brands and products make it more difficult to differentiate oneself from the competition and to establish one's own brand. It is becoming increasingly difficult for companies to plan for the long term. Nevertheless, companies are striving to minimise uncertainties, dangers and risks as well as to identify opportunities and competitive advantages. This is where competitive intelligence comes in. This paper aims to show the significance of competitive intelligence for plants in the mass-production industry, the influence of competitive intelligence on strategic decisions, especially on positioning decisions, and the extent to which this process is influenced by the development of external influences and framework conditions (Aboelmaged, 2018; Malik & Kanwal, 2018; Tuan, 2020; Ganguly et al., 2020).

## **2. Literature Review**

In a comprehensive literature review, various hurdles and barriers in the knowledge transfer sharing culture and corresponding influencing factors were first identified. Subsequently, selected contributions were analysed in more detail and the barriers they contain were compiled.

The selection of the contributions was based on the following three criteria: (1) Inclusion of both theoretical contributions and empirical studies, (2) Consideration of meta-studies and individual studies, (3) Selection of contributions from different disciplines.

Subsequently, further empirical and theoretical contributions on knowledge barriers were analysed to obtain an indication of the relevance of knowledge sharing through the number of mentions in the various studies. The meta-studies were weighted more heavily in each case. The relevance of knowledge sharing as described in the research literature served as a further assessment criterion. The knowledge-sharing papers identified as significant were then described in more detail and systematized. For this purpose, various systematization sets were first compiled from the literature to select a suitable approach. Subsequently, a literature and online search were conducted to find suitable methods and tools for reducing the knowledge-sharing papers identified. The search included both theoretical and practice-oriented publications. The criterion for the selection of the tools was that they either directly address specific knowledge-sharing topics or were considered suitable in principle. The main focus was on the most promising approaches to knowledge-sharing.

### **3. Objectives**

Knowledge-sharing behaviour in the workplace is a topical and relevant issue for today's working world. With increasing decentralisation and rapid change, it is becoming increasingly important for employees to take control of their careers and work environment. Such behaviour will not always be positive, as the author's review suggests. But the price of non-knowledge-sharing could be even higher than occasional misguided knowledge-sharing. Most importantly, the author's research shows that one can influence employee knowledge-sharing through work structures, leadership behaviours and work climates that foster employee trust, activate challenging goals and promote positive affect. The author hopes that his overview will help researchers and practitioners to gain further insights into knowledge sharing in the workplace.

### **4. Environment of Observed Mass-Production Plant**

The observed plant is a medium-sized company in the mass-production industry. The case-plant used for illustration are taken from the real context of the plant but formulated in such a way that it is not possible to draw conclusions about the company from the facts. It is not the intention here to reproduce the entire competitive analysis carried out earlier by the case-company, which served to identify competitors. Only some basic characterisations of the competitive

environment should be taken up. Against the background of increased cost-cutting, the focus of market cultivation has been increasingly extended to large companies since the 2000s. A stronger orientation towards the production of regularly updated standard products is also noticeable. In the area of strategy, the company can claim certain unique selling points due to its elaborate, research-based production approach. Tough competitors here, however, are the plants directly linked with the plant and therefore not completely independent, which by their very nature can compete primarily on pricing. The observed plant with a rather European orientation is thus predominantly confronted with competitors who are internationally or globally active.

## **5. Competitive Intelligence (CI)**

### **5.1. Competitive Intelligence Defining**

The term *Intelligence* originally comes from the military vocabulary and was translated as early or enemy-reconnaissance. Information about the enemy was necessary for survival in times of war in order to adjust one's own troops correctly and to optimally prepare surprise attacks. Analogously, companies also need information about competitors, the market, customers and technologies in order to make the right decisions and position themselves optimally. The term *Competitive* characterises the competitive orientation of entrepreneurial activities (Romppel, 2006). CI is the methodical procedure of gathering and analysing information, through which split, raw information about know-hows, competitors and markets is used to provide decision-makers with a vivid understanding of their corporate field and thus a foundation for decision-making. Intelligence is thus the result of the procedure of competitive intelligence, namely the acquired information about the market and the competition with the aim of being able to make the right decisions (Smith et al., 2010).

### **5.2. Competitive Intelligence Aiming**

The main goal of CI is the legal and ethically correct acquisition and assertion of competitive advantages (Smith et al., 2010). CI is particularly important for strategy developments or corporate developments and their tasks (Romppel, 2006). Today the challenge of CI is the acquisition of information, because it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain up-to-date information on competitors. Nevertheless, it is part of the procedure of CI to process the information obtained and to structure it so that the observer can make decisions on the foundation of this information (Smith et al., 2010).

## 6. Knowledge Management (KM) Approach of CI-Process

A KM approach limited exclusively to the knowledge area *Competitive Intelligence* (CI) is basically not to be regarded as meaningful, since interventions at one point in the organisation will have effects on other points (Luthans, 2011). When implementing knowledge sharing in organisations, on the other hand, there is no universally valid ideal way or model (Caldwell, 1967; Ramaswami & Yang, 1990; Attewell, 1992; Szulanski, 1996). Depres and Chauvel (2000) therefore suggest first developing a reasonably plausible model and then learning from it in order to improve it step by step. The pre-conceptual approach to KM in a mass-production company developed in this paper suffers from the fact that it was developed unilaterally from the author's knowledge of the case-company. When it comes to real implementation in a company, such an approach should of course be approached in close coordination with the knowledge carriers and users involved. Depres and Chauvel's proposal of a step-by-step approach, however, provides the framework in this particular case to first develop an approach that can then be adapted and optimised in practice (Depres & Chauvel, 2000). In any case, the example should serve in this situation to take the first steps in the direction of corporate knowledge sharing and to illustrate it in part with examples. CI is to be considered as an application of KM in the context of this paper (McLaughli et al., 2008; Hermann, 2011). However, the actual analysis of competitor data is not part of the KS-instruments, but there are separate methods available for this (Porter, 1995). However, KS's contribution to this process can make the development and transfer of competitive knowledge more effective and faster. Though, the selected application only offers a suitable demonstration field for some methods used in KS, and thus also imposes limitations in some respects.

### 6.1. Knowledge Management Aiming

The basis of every KM-strategy is normative, strategic and operational knowledge aims. Normative aims stand for the vision that overrides the entire approach, strategic goals define the core knowledge and core competencies for the organisation. Operational KM's aims are derived from the strategic and ensure the practical concretisation of the strategic goals (Ayo et al., 2019). Porter (1995) distinguishes between the identification of existing and potential competitors. New entrants in the mass-production industry find it difficult to attract a relevant number of customers, as mass-production performance is largely sold through customer awareness, acquired reputation and earned trust. The greatest benefit for the start will therefore be to monitor the activities of existing competitors. Regarding the definition of a knowledge sharing strategy, it should be noted that this should be chosen to match the company's competitive strategy. Firestone (2001)

establishes correlations between the competitive strategy and its effects on the knowledge sharing strategy and other strategy levels of a plant. The competitive strategy should correspond to the knowledge sharing strategy, but the two types of strategy are by no means mutually exclusive and can complement each other. Companies that are primarily geared to the rapid reuse of standard solutions should ideally not work with a KM strategy of personalisation (Firestone, 2001). The case-plant under observation is clearly assigned to the competitive type of creative, individual problem solver, mainly because of its special, research-based production approach. In addition, an expert culture is established in the plant, in which the individual specialised knowledge of the employees is highly valued in the project work. The importance of standard products is to be assessed as rather marginal. It can therefore be assumed that with a personalisation strategy, the highest added value for the knowledge base of the company can be achieved. Therefore, a normative knowledge aim is now taken from the corporate vision statement as an example, from which strategic and operational aims for a personalisation strategy are derived with regard to competitive knowledge.

## **6.2. Knowledge Management Identifying**

The identification of knowledge sharing serves to create transparency about the sources of knowledge available in the company, structural- and personnel transparency (Prusa, 1999). This involves identifying core competences, competence gaps and the resulting knowledge needs. In the example case, the aim is therefore to identify the relevant knowledge sources and sinks for competition-critical knowledge. For the purposes of the knowledge objective set here, an expert directory on an information technology system should be suitable. In the case-plant, it is possible to build on an employee qualification matrix already created by the HR-department, which contains general qualification profiles, education, professional experience, etc., of all employees, but which cannot be used meaningfully so far, as it is only linear, descriptive texts in an Excel-file. Pragmatically, this information system could first be set up centrally, but the profiles should then be presented to the staff members concerned themselves for validation. For example, an employee's contributions to KM can be included in the annual staff development discussions as relevant to career or further training. The competitive knowledge that is generally known in the organisation and the individual competitive knowledge of the employee can be partially mapped in categories. The level of knowledge in terms of type, quality and scope could be determined by self-assessment of the employee concerned (Liyanage et al., 2009). Davenport (1998) reports on a practical example of complex knowledge carrier maps in which four levels of competence were distinguished, which in turn were each divided into explicit knowledge and tacit skills competences, and four levels of ability per skills competences and, for each type of competence,

into four levels of ability. The identification of knowledge sinks and knowledge needs will not be carried out practically here, as basic information about the knowledge base of the example company is still missing, which is normally collected through preliminary interviews. Knowledge sinks and gaps in competence, the resulting and competence gaps and the resulting knowledge needs, result from the difference between the defined by the operational knowledge aims and the quantity and quality of the existing knowledge. A type of knowledge map is used to compare qualification profiles of employees in relation to their knowledge of competitors. This makes it possible to approach them specifically about participating in knowledge development projects. These knowledge maps thus do not attempt to the individual and collective knowledge of the organisation itself but offer meta-information about knowledge carriers and places of knowledge. Only in a holistic KM approach, however, can knowledge maps show their particular strengths. With their help, it is not only possible to reflect qualification profiles, but also to map core processes of an organisation.

### **6.3. Knowledge Management Gaining**

What has not been considered so far is the existence of knowledge sources and knowledge carriers. The aim of using these sources is the acquisition of external knowledge. services such as online databases are also referred to as knowledge products (Luthans, 2011). Although they do not contain knowledge in the sense of the knowledge definition, but they can be used by people to generate knowledge. The familiar criteria for the selection and evaluation of information sources must of course also be considered here: Timeliness, evaluability, subject area coverage, documentation, availability, form of aggregation of the information, etc. (Nonaka, 1995). Persons such as experts or consultants can also be considered as external knowledge carriers in the sense of nodes of a knowledge network extended to the external world of an organisation. Now important required information elements are to be identified using the example of company information and the corresponding possible sources of information are to be compared. The concentration will be specifically on hard facts. The assumption, underlying the idea of KM, is that soft factors such as rumours, opinions and anecdotes can be incorporated into problem-solving approaches much more effectively through KM-methods. This kind of knowledge, which is difficult to codify, is at the heart of KM. Now, that the sources of required external information have been identified, they must be evaluated and an appropriate and a suitable acquisition strategy must be defined. This requires a detailed knowledge of the information market. Required information can usually be obtained from many different sources. The preference should be given to those suppliers whose information products meet the information products are most likely to

meet the requirements with regard to later use. Evaluation criteria are, for example, ease of access and availability in principle, the availability of the data in a suitable aggregation form, a favourable cost-benefit ratio and a high degree of reliability and accuracy. Current sector reports, which usually contain statistics in the form of tables, or time series from statistical databases, tend to have the right focus in terms of content as well as the right form of aggregation, but are relatively expensive. The question of the aggregation form of information to be acquired is extremely important. For example, the effort to use an information source with an unsuitable form of presentation can be extremely high. The search for suitable sources of information also includes the question of the procurement and handling costs associated with their use. For market and competitor monitoring search profiles in specialist and press databases or news tickers from news agencies can be used.

#### **6.4. Knowledge Management Developing**

Within the case-plant itself and at the interfaces to the outside world, knowledge is always exchanged between people through communication relationships and through continuous learning. But these situations of knowledge exchange usually occur rather randomly and sporadically and are also localised. One of the challenges of KM is therefore to initiate and control these communications in a targeted manner. From the perspective of competitive analysis, knowledge development is to be assigned to the analysis step of the intelligence cycle. Of course, there must first be sufficient time available for communication and reflection that is not filled by other tasks, a marginal condition that is difficult to realise against the background of the demand for ever-increasing productivity. The actual benefit of a KM approach is created primarily when externally acquired information is fruitfully brought together with internally already existing, individual and collective knowledge in human communication relationships to generate new knowledge (Luthans, 2011; Davenport & Prusak, 2000). A practical example for the development of competitive knowledge is the further development of the competitive strategy with regard to the company's own mass-production products. For this, it is necessary to bring together the implicit knowledge available in the company about the nature of comparable products of competitors with the corresponding externally acquired information. Methods used in KM can be demonstrated particularly well, which in this case are to integrate externally collected information and internally available tacit knowledge about the competitive environment and thus expand the company's knowledge base about competitors' products.

#### **6.5. Knowledge Management Distributing**

The distribution of acquired knowledge is a prerequisite for its broad use in solving current problems in a plant. Essentially, organisational and technical approaches are available for



the distribution of knowledge (Christensen, 2003). The distribution of knowledge initially takes place directly during its development in the context of sharing. But as a rule, the communication approach is not suitable for distributing knowledge across the organisation according to the watering can principle. The temporal and spatial scope of such communication is usually insufficient and leads to informational overload again, this time with knowledge that is irrelevant to many employees. An important aim of KM is to make knowledge that exists in isolation, among individual employees or organisational units, widely available. Other organisational possibilities for multiplying knowledge within an organisation are discussed by Davenport (1998). However, KM strategies of codification must often be used in addition to strategies of personalisation in order to be able to use potential knowledge when there is a current need. Especially in the area of competitive knowledge, a distinction must be made between secret and public knowledge in view of the explosive nature of some facts.

#### **6.6. Knowledge Management Using**

If knowledge is available in explicit form, this does not mean that it will be used. This can be an expression of the not-invented-here-syndrome that is particularly widespread in knowledge-intensive companies. Organisational arrangements must be made to integrate the use of knowledge into the processes and to bring about a cultural change. Reinhardt's report (2005) of culturally aware leadership measures such as the internal communication a slogan or formula that emphasises the importance of knowledge in the company. A suitable measure for cultural change could be the expansion of the corporate mission statement. Organisational precautions can also be taken, e.g., the closest possible proximity between facilities and employees that are relevant to the use of knowledge (Luthans (2011).

#### **6.7. Knowledge Management Preserving**

Knowledge retention is directly related to the distribution of knowledge available in the organisation. By multiplying know how to other members of the organisation members of the organisation, the risk of a total loss of this expert appraisal is correspondingly reduced. Reinhardt (2005) identify three main processes of knowledge retention. In simple terms, this is documenting or archiving, which should ensure that organisational knowledge is preserved and kept up to date. The information or documents created at many different points in the organisation and the knowledge generated and made explicit by learning processes must be evaluated according to which rules it is considered worthy or unworthy of documentation and who is responsible for it. In the case of competitive knowledge, it would therefore have to be determined at the level of

documents or central knowledge objects who updates or deletes which documents and when. Each object central to the knowledge aims of the organisation is assigned to an owner.

## **6.8. Knowledge Management Evaluating**

The measurement of successes associated with successful KM is a central criterion for the recognition of this approach in the business-oriented environment of the mass-production - plant. However, the methodological instruments and tools available for evaluating knowledge problems and knowledge successes have not yet been very well developed and struggle with the problems of measuring and evaluating context-specific, elusive knowledge (Reinhardt, 2005). Knowledge and changes to a company's knowledge base cannot be measured directly to begin with. Therefore, attempts are made to measure indicators that indirectly influence the organisation's knowledge base, such as the number of training days available per employee per year. The effort required to use knowledge assessment methods is of particular importance, as they usually do not have a dedicated controlling or KM unit. In the observed case-company, the idea has existed up to know that central KM tasks, as well as controlling, should additionally be carried out by the information and documentation department without employing new personnel. In this context, a tool is to be used that is also based on the model of knowledge building blocks as a structuring framework and at least supports the diagnosis of knowledge problems in the company or a company unit, which also reveals barriers. This analysis and diagnosis tool (Malhotra & Galletta, 2003) makes it possible to localise areas where knowledge problems exist by means of a preliminary assessment in the planning phase of the introduction and then to address these by prioritising fields of action accordingly. The tool is easy to integrate and operate in the KM process and can therefore also be used by employees who have not been specially trained, or possibly serve as a guide when designing interviews in specialist departments. Since the diagnostic tool is not yet available in the case-company, the measurement of success cannot be carried out practically here.

## **7. Methodology**

The research is based on systematic comparative case studies of eight multinational companies in the food packaging industry in eight different European countries. Each case was selected to provide contrasting results for predictable reasons (Yin, 2003). The study sought to maximise diversity in terms of the institutional contexts and economic development of the countries.

### **7.1. Knowledge Sharing Behavior**

Most of the research on knowledge-sharing behavior to date has focused on self-assessment of workplace (Bateman & Crant, 1993). As with all, there are the usual problems

associated with self-assessment of knowledge-sharing. However, assessment of employee knowledge-sharing by other sources such as supervisors or peers has its own drawbacks, including egocentric biases as a means of impression management and observational errors. A more specific problem with knowledge-sharing is that it may involve questioning instructions and challenging accepted practices, and it may not always be welcomed and negatively evaluated by supervisors or colleagues (Frese et al., 1997). Much of the previous research on knowledge-sharing in the workplace has focused on cross-sectional studies with interindividual measurement approaches (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2007; Parker et al., 2006b). Several studies have attempted to overcome the limitations of such designs by conducting rigorous, longitudinal studies (Frese et al., 2007). However, a challenge with longitudinal studies is the choice of the appropriate time frame. Currently, little is known about the temporal relationships between knowledge-sharing antecedents and, such as how long it takes for work characteristics to promote or inhibit knowledge-sharing, or how long it takes for to unfold and influence well-being or performance. Parker and Ohly (2008), for example, suggested that "job design may affect positive affect, which may have a relatively immediate effect on job crafting, consistent with broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001). However, job crafting may also have an impact on employees' self-esteem or ambitions, which is likely to have longer-term and more permanent effects on role innovation and job design." Another problem associated with some longitudinal studies is that the independent and dependent variables were sometimes not measured and controlled consistently at all time points (Seibert et al., 2001). It is important to control for both the independent and dependent variables at all measurement time points in order to be able to separate out the proportion of variance caused by the measure of interest over time (Zapf et al., 1996).

## **7.2. Summary**

A high-quality exchange between manager and employee should foster a climate of trust in which employees dare to be change-oriented and self-initiated. Knowledge-sharing between manager and member is positively related to individual innovation behavior ( $r=.34$ ,  $p<.01$ ; Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004) as well as to the evaluation of the supervisor's voice ( $r=.25$ ,  $p<.01$ ; Burris et al., 2008). Surprisingly, the results regarding the relationship between supportive leadership and knowledge-sharing behavior have been inconsistent across studies. While some studies have found that supervisor support brings higher levels of initiative ( $\beta=.15$ ,  $p<.05$ ; Ohly et al., 2006) and implementation of ideas ( $\beta=.18$ ,  $p<.05$ ; Axtell et al., 2000), other studies have found non-significant relationships between supportive leadership and implementation of ideas (Parker et al., 2006). Similarly, while Axtell and colleagues (2000) found no significant relationship between

supervisor support and employee idea suggestions, Ohly et al., (2006) found a significant negative relationship between the two constructs (parameter estimate = -2.05,  $p = 0.04$ ). Parker and colleagues (2006b) suggested that supervisors may experience an "initiative paradox" (Campbell, 2000) in which they feel threatened by the knowledge-sharing behavior of their employees, which could explain why supportive leadership is not necessarily beneficial. Morrison and Phelps (1999) found that top management's openness to change was positively related to employees' willingness to embrace change ( $\beta = .15, p < .01$ ). Similarly, in a qualitative research approach based on grounded theory, Dutton and colleagues (1997) found that top management's willingness to listen to employees, and to lead a supportive organizational culture were positively related to employees' perceptions. Frese and Fay (2001) proposed in their seminal work that personal initiative, a particular type of knowledge-sharing at work, predicts performance not only at the individual or team level, but also at the organizational level. They argued that knowledge-sharing initiative means actively addressing organizational and individual problems and applying active goals, plans and feedback. This promotes individual self-development and contributes to organizational success.

## **8. Limitation and Conclusion**

### **8.1. Research limitations**

As with most research approaches, there are limitations to the methodology used by the author. The major limitation in the context of this study stems from the research methodology - focusing on self-assessment of the workplace. Self-assessment of the workplace is known to involve subjectivity and the results are not generalisable. In other words, since the data is from a small sample, the results cannot be generalised to the wider population. However, this study has limitations. The number of articles studied was only 31 articles from the Scopus® database. The result will certainly enrich the theory of organisational culture and management knowledge, if the object of study is broader. This can be done in future research.

### **8.2. Conclusion**

The strategic planning and control of information processes is also gaining importance in OE-initiatives. But up to now, the control aspect has too often been related to the immediate present in the sense of reacting to imminent challenges. KM, such as in the case-plants, is still at the beginning of its development. The publication situation also reflects the young topic, which, however, often still deal with aspects of this topic in a relatively general way. The meanwhile high number of articles in more general public newspapers and magazines, however, indicates that the topic of KM is now widely perceived. The approach to planning and dealing with competitive

knowledge presented here should be seen only as a first approximation to the practical problems of KM. Classical strategy-building methods can be imagined as useful extensions of the KM approach (Gebert et al., 2002). A sensible further development of the described KM approach could therefore be to restructure the information gained through competitive observation by forming scenarios and thus use another possibility to generate knowledge about competitors and thus prepare strategic decisions. Treating knowledge as an instrument of power or, in the context of this paper, as a means to competitive advantage, is therefore more like to the common role of knowledge. Knowledge and ideas, like information, are therefore seen today as economic resources and their free dissemination is restricted by legal protection or by economic barriers. A different kind of limitation of this work should also be mentioned: Here, knowledge was understood as a conscious means to achieve a purpose, which is of course a narrowing of the perspective (Rastogi, 2000). The acquisition and exchange of knowledge can also be guided at any time by disinterested pleasure (Krogh et al., 2000). Therefore, the acquisition of purposive knowledge must be contrasted with the acquisition of non-purposive knowledge. The conscious or unconscious, personally and socially induced motives that can drive knowledge sharing and knowledge acquisition should not be underestimated. The knowledge considered there may not necessarily belong to the realm of professional expertise and therefore may not be ascribed the same economic importance. And yet there are strong motives behind the acquisition and exchange of such knowledge, a significant increase in the general quality of life, expressed for example in a broadening of personal intellectual horizons, the achievement of self-affirmation and recognition. In view of the practical implementation problems of KM approaches, it would therefore certainly be interesting to investigate what role personal motivations of acquiring knowledge not directly related to a specific purpose play in the context of organisational KM. As has been shown, the difficulties often lie in issues of organisational communication culture.

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