

Service Snapshot: Knowledge Management

Knowledge Management is one of the key areas that allows organisations to gain a competitive edge. Our approach draws on experience in knowledge management to help you improve the way information and knowledge is built on and shared in your organisation.

Need

All organisations need to provide staff with the information they need, record and store information, enable information to be used to best effect – communicated, applied – and ideally use information and knowledge as the bedrock of their innovation and growth.

Many companies subscribe to expensive information sources or technologies and do not capitalise well on them for various reasons.

There are needs at two levels – at the level of people via meetings and networks internal and external, and at the level of technology so that people are supported in being able to use new technology tools effectively to manage the information they receive and pass on. Understanding how people work in exchanging information informally and formally, from impromptu meetings by the water cooler to the circulation of formal Board Minutes is as important as putting in place technology-enabling tools, data bases, news feeds and resources that keep people up to date and connected.

What is required is an analysis of how information is sourced, used and applied in your organisation and an assessment of the gap between “information needs” and “information delivery” – how the information they need is currently getting to them.

In most organisations some things work well and others do not – this audit of your own knowledge management:

- will help guide and inform your knowledge management strategy so that you can make maximum use of all the formal and informal networks and knowledge expertise locked in your organisation’s individuals and resources
- will increase information literacy so that people are more aware of where to source information, how to extract information and build on it/combine it to increase creativity

Information can be mundane (but important) or can, combined with other information and knowledge, serve to give your organisation the edge. Our job is to make you aware of what you have already and of the potential for the future.

Solution

Penumbra has extensive experience in business consulting. Knowledge management expertise is an area that is currently in demand. Our people have experience of both working with those involved in knowledge management in organisations and in putting in place approaches and systems in their own companies to improve knowledge management.

Our clients turn to us when they:

- need to understand more about what knowledge management is and does and what other companies are doing in this area
- find that they are not keeping pace with the information or knowledge needs of their staff or are being overwhelmed by information; information over-load and a need

- to distil relevant information are often equally important issues
- there are insufficient data banks or signposting and are told by those joining that it takes too long to know where to go to find things out
- sense dissatisfaction from staff in the way records are kept or information is or is not shared – in particular duplication of information or “reinvention of the wheel” can be a frustration
- find that cross-fertilisation (information sharing and building on best practice) in the organisation is not happening as much as it might so business opportunities are lost

Knowledge and Information Audit

Our Knowledge and Information audit can take a number of forms but usually is based on a dual approach

- first, reviewing what tools are used for information and knowledge management (data banks, record keeping, meetings networks etc)
- second, looking at existing statistics which indicate how much or how little staff are using current resources (physical and technology sources etc)
- third, and maybe most important, asking staff via primary research what they currently do and what they would want to do.

This primary research often takes two forms – a qualitative assessment via some focus groups or workshops with different members of staff, and a quantitative assessment via an online survey.

These provide us with a good overview on which to base our analysis. From this we can know:

- how far is knowledge management valued in the organisation and seen as a core competence
- what sources do people use occasionally and regularly and are these sources easy to access and sufficient for their day to day, and exceptional, needs
- what, if any, are the barriers in the organisation to them finding and using information most efficiently
- what are the solutions to some of these hindrances, and how can these be put in place
- what new ideas (relating to staff and technological tools) might help to make the organisation find and exchange information and knowledge more effectively to everyone's benefit

Following the audit, we will then provide feedback to you and either debrief and report or work with you in one or more workshops to develop ideas. From this, we will work with you either to formulate a Knowledge Management strategy or to develop further the one you have already.

This may mean making decisions concerning priorities – what is more important, to acquire new software in a particular area or to invest in an information scientist? Where would investment be most appropriate? Are there areas where you could disinvest (too many subscriptions, sources that are being under-used, technology that is present but under used or under-supported and so forth)?

Providing a benchmark on what the situation currently is in your organisation regarding how information and knowledge is used will help us inform your strategy and plan for the future.

It will be for you to decide, following the audit, how much you want us to help you put in place some of the recommendations. We are happy to be as involved in this as you would

wish but any discussion of this is premature until you review what you currently have and what there is to build on.

Benefits

Our mix of primary and secondary research and close partnership working with you on this will mean that at the end of the programme you have a much better grasp of how information and knowledge is used in your organisation and what can be done to optimise it. Living as we do now in an "information economy", such examination and knowledge management development is becoming an essential in order to thrive.

strategy people performance

Penumbra is a strategic business consultancy. We bring clarity by using research to drive understanding and direction. We deliver success by balancing experience and innovative thinking.

Whatever your aspiration, we'll provide the tools, information and analysis to turn your strategy into operational reality, in a way that motivates your people to outperform the market.

Overview

Our expertise lies in helping our clients to execute robust strategies and deliver results.

We achieve this by combining a robust management planning system with a focus on people which drives alignment and commitment

We work in partnership with talented and committed leadership teams to help organisations build corporate value with a wide range of customised, cross-functional advisory programmes and services delivered from four complementary service groups:

Strategy

(Development, formulation, implementation and alignment)

Our innovative **Penumbra Balance** approach creates dynamism, drives and sustains momentum and makes strategy real for stakeholders

Organisational Development

(Behavioural issues)

We call our holistic approach **Balanced Motivation** which encompasses activities that improve performance both for the organisation and the individual

Research and Insight

Our stimulating **Clarity** approach draws on our business consulting skills to deliver a mix of business analysis and market research which provides compelling insights for winning decisions.

Operations

The Operations group brings all of our hands-on practical experience to bear on execution and delivery of results.

Our technology enabling approach called **Totality** facilitates business focussed services and solutions, aligned to business needs, for people, processes and tools.

Why Us?

Organisations turn to us when they:

- Want to find a new strategic direction
- Have created a strategy and now need to execute it
- Need to drive more value from existing initiatives
- Have a big issue to resolve, usually dependent on lasting employee buy-in
- Need to explore new ways to drive value
- Need a breakthrough result
- Are seeking measurable results

Our Experience

We have real world experience spanning 20 years with our clients. This includes working with:

BP, Citibank, Morgan Chase, WestLB, RBS, UBS, Bankers Trust, Kleinwort Benson, Coutts, Natwest, Intel, Nokia, Adobe, Kall-Kwik, Glaxo Smith Kline, Dupont, Pfizer, Savills, British Council, Clifford Chance, British Airways, Gillette, Unilever, Shell, Volvo,

Vauxhall, British Gas, TradeStation, MWB Business Exchange, Investors in People, University of Cambridge

On projects such as:

Strategic Planning, Strategy development and implementation, Culture change, Post-Merger Integration, Vision, Purpose and Values, Current State Analysis, Organisation Re-design, Transformational Change, Client Focus Strategies, Perception Studies, Client and Staff Engagement surveys, Global Rebranding, Know your Customer, Market Forecasting, Consumer Insight, Market Segmentation, Process optimisation, Lean/Six Sigma, Project Management, ERP Systems Roll-out, Market Research, Financial Modelling, Franchise Start-up Evaluation models, Cost Benefit Analysis, Implementation Alignment, Strategic Alignment, Complex Database development, Custom Application development, Supply Chain Optimisation

Covering diverse sectors such as:

Financial Services, Pharmaceuticals, Manufacturing, Energy, Mobile Telecoms, Travel and Tourism, Aviation, Property, Hi-tech and Business Services