



## **Abstract**

Successful enterprises are those that consistently create new knowledge, disseminate it widely throughout the enterprise and quickly embed it in new technologies and products. These 'knowledge-creating' enterprises understand what knowledge is and what they should do to exploit it. In other words, they successfully manage and share their knowledge throughout their enterprise.

When launching a knowledge management initiative, it is important to identify which knowledge management processes are most relevant to the enterprise's environment and systems, and steps should be taken to support these activities and integrate them into daily operations. Broader elements and issues should also be identified and recognised for the influence they have on the knowledge management process. For example that enterprises should encourage individuals to interact, to work together on projects, or to share their ideas on an informal basis and systems are needed to codify the knowledge of individuals so that others can use it. Applying these elements involves: information technology; formal and informal structures; and specific knowledge management tools.

Another important factor in the success of a knowledge management project is to ground knowledge management and knowledge sharing within the context of the enterprise's business strategy seeing that the intranet can assist in the creation of economic value and competitive advantage for the enterprise.

The knowledge sharing or knowledge contribution part of the knowledge management process seems to be the most difficult for enterprises. Knowledge sharing often takes place in enterprises via employees' informal networks. Knowledge management could turn this informal, *ad hoc* process into a more systematic process.

Creating a corporate culture where knowledge is valued and shared effectively is a challenge. Part of the solution could be for an enterprise to be aware of their specific corporate culture and how it influences their behaviour and attitude towards knowledge sharing. Because the employee's behaviour determines the sharing of knowledge, leadership has an important role to play and they could use various

motivational practices to encourage knowledge sharing. Leadership should commit to creating an environment, within which employees are able to share, assess and experiment with new knowledge gained. The corporate intranet could be used as such an environment, but employees need to be trained to use their knowledge management IT tools, making it as easy as possible for employees to contribute to the enterprise knowledge base.

Effective intranet usage should be embedded in the enterprise's general corporate and knowledge sharing culture. The intranet should be seen as an essential part of the enterprise's knowledge management system and should be designed to suit and enhance the enterprise knowledge sharing activities and culture. It is also important that intranets should be evaluated regularly to determine its current contribution to as well as future potential of the knowledge sharing capability of the enterprise.

The importance of evaluating and measuring the enterprise intranet and various measurement tools were discussed in depth, which consequently led to the formulation of an intranet evaluation tool in the form of a questionnaire. The prototype questionnaire was compiled by using measurement tools developed previously. The questionnaire brought together the concepts of knowledge management, knowledge sharing cultures and intranet functionalities. The evaluation tool was then applied to measure the effectiveness of a management consulting business's intranet in enhancing the enterprise's knowledge sharing culture. Recommendations were made to enterprises use the questionnaire when using the questionnaire in similar environments.

An intranet represents a tool of potentially high value to any enterprise, but in order to realise this value, the intranets should be properly measured and managed and every employee needs to take ownership and buy into the concept of the intranet as a knowledge sharing enabler. This calls for an employee to be motivated to participate in knowledge sharing, so that they can experience the value they could add and receive by using the intranet for knowledge sharing activities.