

Knowledge Management and Retention

A looming crisis for the unprepared

Presented by

VSE Corporation

Knowledge Management and Retention

Historical Attrition

- **Competition**
- **Retirement**
- **Career Change**
- **Catastrophic Accident**

Knowledge Management and Retention

Issues of the 21st Century

- Advanced Technology
- Specialized Knowledge
- Baby Boomer Generation
- Uneven Hiring Practices

Expectation: 30% to 50% Attrition within 5 Years

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Knowledge at Risk:

- Historical Products Still Supported
- Networks and Contacts for Problem-Solving
- Complex Systems Corrective Actions
- Unique Diagnostic Capabilities

Usually Not Adequately Documented

Knowledge Management and Retention

Why Is It Allowed to be Lost?

- Critical Knowledge (CK) not Documented
- CK not Shared
- CK not Recognized as Critical or Unique
- Time Required to Document or Share
- The Most Critical is Usually the Most Complex

Not a Matter of Risk – A Certainty

Solving the Problem

Step 1: Identify the CK in the Workforce

Leading Questions:

- What are our core competencies?
- Why have we been able to succeed?
- What sets us apart from the competition?
- What do we do better than anyone else?

Solving the Problem

Step 2: ID Present Method of Storing CK

- May Be Adequate
- Improvement may suffice
- Major Action May Be Needed

Solving the Problem

Step 3: Identify Who Has the CK

- Who Do Managers Rely on Most?
- Can Alternates Perform the Function As Well?
- Peer Reviews
- Who Do Employees Seek Out?

Solving the Problem

Step 4: Develop a CK Storage System

- Many Options Available
- Must Be Tailored to Organization's Culture
- Must Be Efficient
- Critical Balance

Solving the Problem

Step 5: Gather & Store CK

Difficulty Dependant On:

- Organizational Culture
- Amount of Segmentation
- Time Available
- Resources Allocated
- Number of Individuals with CK
- Amount of CK

Expected Roadblocks

The Knowledge Miser

- Status Achieved Through CK
- May Be Reluctant to Relinquish Status

Knowledge Miser Solution

KM's Interests Addressed Through:

- Org. Ability to Maintain Long-Term Benefits
- Potential Near-Term Layoffs
- Status Through Knowledge Sharing

Expected Roadblocks

The Distrustful:

- Feels ill-treated by Organization
- Resentful
- No desire to help organization

Expected Roadblocks

The Distrustful Solutions:

- Identify Source of Resentment
- Re-Establish Positive Relationship
- Assign to Project Teams

Expected Roadblocks

The Contractor

- CK Increases in Value Near Retirement
- CK Considered a Commodity
- Give Away Now or Sell Later
- Only Delays the Problem

Expected Roadblocks

Contractor Solutions:

- Exchange CK Prior to Return as Contractor
- Initial Assignment: Clarify process & Methodologies

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Knowledge Management Systems

- Training
 - Structured process
 - Results measured & evaluated
 - Significant resource requirements

- Storytelling
 - Informal, casual
 - Social activity

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Knowledge Management Systems

- Coaching
 - Provided as needed
 - Growth process

- Exit Interview
 - Most commonly used
 - Least effective

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Knowledge Management Systems

- **Critical Incident Report**
 - Easy implementation
 - Limited application

- **Network of Specialists**
 - Serious cross-training
 - Mutual support

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Knowledge Management Systems

- **Exit Interview**
 - Most commonly used
 - Least effective

- **Mentoring**
 - More structured than coaching
 - Dependent on favorable relationships
 - Most effective, most challenging

CK Management & Retention Summary

- Match Culture, System, and Resources
- System Must Be User Friendly
- Resource Requirements Increase with Time
- Management Choice:
 - Develop a System that Captures and Retains CK
 - Re-create CK at a later date
 - Lose the capability