



The Tacit Knowledge-sharing Strategy Analysis in the Project Work

Dongmei Song

School of business

Tianjin Polytechnical University

PO box No.399 Binshuixidao Road, Xiqing District

Tianjin 300187, China

E-mail: huasong319@sina.com

The research is financed by Asian Development Bank. No. 2006-A171

Abstract

With the era of knowledge-based economy, the process of "The conversion of knowledge to effective" has become more important in the implementation of the project. Knowledge management emphasizes on innovation and sharing. Knowledge-sharing, in particular the sharing of tacit knowledge is an important component of the knowledge management. This article is therefore particularly for the tacit knowledge of the free flow and sharing in projects put forward some suggestions.

Keywords: Tacit knowledge, Tacit knowledge-sharing, Project

In today's society, the competitiveness of enterprises is paid more attention to its innovation and emergency ability. Knowledge management is a knowledge-based economy in the background, to contemporary information technology-based, is focused on the development and utilization, accumulation and innovation, to help people share information. Therefore, knowledge sharing is an important component of the knowledge management. It is the only way to play the effectiveness of knowledge, realize the value of knowledge. Academic circles believes that tacit knowledge is often greater than the potential of explicit knowledge, can be on the tacit knowledge and guide the development and utilization, will be the development of society, especially the development of enterprises have a strong role.

Tacit knowledge is personal and hard to formalize, thus making it difficult to communicate or share, One of Polanyi's famous aphorisms is: "We know more than we can tell." Polanyi(1996) also insisted that tacit knowledge is the basis of creativity. For tacit knowledge to be communicated, it must be converted into words, models, or numbers that anyone can understand. Effective transfer of tacit knowledge generally requires extensive personal contact and trust.

In project work context the significance of tacit knowledge has probably not yet been sufficiently understood. Project characteristics, the responsibility of the project manager is much important than it's power, because the people in the project come from different departments, the relationship is still attached to the original units, dedicated to a specific purpose or objective, so the project leader for the management of their difficulties and do not have enough incentive and a means of punishment measurement. The fact that a great deal of the know-how required, for example, in an engineering project is tied to knowledge that is not written in documents but realized through the expertise and understanding of the project personnel, is not taken into consideration as a whole. Also the fact that projects often last only for short time periods, which means that project people must continuously change their work situations, is not taken well into account. So the sharing of the tacit knowledge in the project is even more difficult than to achieve.

Perhaps the most important step toward the tacit knowledge of individuals and the project teams is to allow it to flow from the pull of emotional commitment and deep personal involvement. From a practical standpoint, however, individuals must have some form of strategic guidance so that they can align their creative energies with the goals of the firm.

Therefore, the challenge for project managers is to how to inspire, guide, excite, encourage, and shape, without

imposing arbitrary structure that might destroy the tacit knowledge flow in the project. This study gives some advices to the project manager on how to promote the tacit knowledge transferring and sharing in the projects better.

1. Build a working environment for the tacit knowledge sharing

A key to tacit knowledge acquisition and sharing in a project is access to a wide range of project's activities, to ideas of the other people, to information, and to opportunities for participation. In the opinion of Ruuska(1999)over half of project management problems result, entirely or in part, from poorly handled interactions. Thus, we can conclude that knowledge within a project and the ways of perceiving it is revealed through interaction.

1.1 An open-plan office is an appropriate room for a project team to work together

Face-to-face interaction is considered the richest medium because its capacity for immediate feedback and the availability of multiple cues, it enhances the use of tacit knowledge in the projects. we can conclude that the creation of shared understanding in the project is not only about the processing of objective information but it requires that subjective attitudes, views, intuitions and inklings of the individual team members are presented, tested and adapted for use. These subjective views and intuitions are mainly acquired and transferred by informal face-to-face interaction.

1.2 Provide a place for staff to communication and interaction in order to enhance the tacit knowledge exchanges between the staff

J.E Orr (p.140–169.) reported that members exchange ideas and share narratives in informal settings, thereby building a shared understanding out of conflicting and confusing information. Some companies set up a restaurant with the tall chair, gymnasium, café room, table tennis room, and other places of entertainment. In these places no formal rules to encourage dialogue between members. This problem has been studied previously (Desouza, Kevin C 2003 p. 63-74) most team members whose company established the entertainment places had said they felt that they exchanged or received job-related information

1.3 IT technology can facilitate communication between employees

Tacit knowledge exchange among team members could be enhanced through use of information technology, such as electronic networks and group support systems. In these settings individuals exchange knowledge via e-mail, online discussion, chat sessions, listservers, and thus in computer-mediated and group decision support systems(GDSS). And the video conferencing tools in place can even help people face-to-face Communication to promote knowledge sharing between employees an effective means.

So that the team members can exchange with each other, continue dialogue and for promoting reflection. Members of the team through dialogue and discussion to stimulate a new point of view (just as Brainstorming), their information will be stored together, from different angles and look for the end to unify different views, to form a new collective wisdom.

2. Establish the tacit knowledge-sharing culture in the project

2.1 To give the team's full confidence, and allowed the failure in the course of the R&D process in the project cycle

Give teams a clear message of their importance, uniqueness, and potential for success. And the project manager should allow the teams members failed during the course of the research and development, and should encourage the members understand the failure enough. In this way the members can find a better reason to solve problems in a variety way, such as the tacit knowledge sharing with other team members.

2.2 Trust in relation to project team mind and collective action is a particularly important issue

Trust ties together an attentive system, which forms the collective. Mind required for reliable performance. People in project team deal with each other more as roles than as individuals. Trust is based on expectations and is therefore formed in the consciousness of project team members (Meyerson D, Weick KE, and Kramer RM, 1996). Individual as a person and not simply as a project resource with work experience. Thus, trust has an indirect effect on the accessibility and efficient transfer of tacit knowledge. We can conclude that trust develops only with time as the result of project team's interpersonal relations within their shared situational ties.

3. Establish the organizational structure in favor of the organizational structure

3.1 The flat organizational structure as far as

Flat organizational structure just as the velcro structure(Lin. Zhao-wen,2006), The relationship of the project manager and project team members is the "employer-employee", that is, during the project cycle team members employed by the project manager. In the project cycle, the project manager command and assessment the members, they are only responsible for project manager, In other words during the project cycle the project manager is the "boss".

3.2 Establish a learning organization

3.2.1 A learning organization focused on creating a relaxed, for the atmosphere of learning and exchange, and fixed learning system, such as the Organization of regular training will help staff to communicate and share tacit knowledge is conducive to business innovation.

3.2.2 The Learning Organization can facilitate to let the knowledge and experience will be able to complement each other's employees together to jointly conduct research and development, focus and accelerate the commercial exploitation of knowledge.

3.2.3 Learning Organization can continue to absorb new information and new knowledge; at any time in order to adjust the direction and the ability to adapt to the market will help enterprises enhance their ability to adapt to the environment.

4. Establish an effective incentive mechanism

In order to encourage the sharing of tacit knowledge of individuals, enterprises should be targeted to the formulation of a number of incentives to promote the sharing of tacit knowledge can contribute to the staff to give encouragement. When employees are aware of the tacit knowledge-sharing for its own benefit, they will be happy to share their knowledge. In this study we focused on the spiritual inspiration for the role of tacit knowledge sharing.

4.1 Fully authorized by the incentive mechanism

Fully authorized to the staff can let the staff meet the pursuit of success and self-fulfilling psychological needs. The staff can accord their own characteristics in the enterprise to find a foothold for the best, to seek the best space for itself-development. To maximize their potential to make the play, in order to better dedicate their own tacit knowledge. Therefore, to achieve the purpose of encouraging.

4.2 Use the psychological hint

The psychological hint which is for the future career goal to be given is also a good way of incentives. For example, if the commitment to knowledge holders the successful implementation of knowledge-sharing, will bring its series of interest, in particular the professional development priorities, and so on.

4.3 The establishment of more effective performance evaluation system

In staff performance appraisal time manager should focus on the number of useful knowledge which he transfers to the colleagues, the role of her work in his team, and his innovative contribution, and so on, rather than to take this knowledge of the absolute amount as a standard, and it can not influence the success or failure of its work.

References

- Desouza, Kevin C. (2003). 'Strategic Contributions of Game Rooms to Knowledge Management: Some Preliminary Insights'. *Information & Management*, Vol. 41, No. 1, p. 63-74.
- J. E. Orr, Sharing knowledge, celebrating identity: community memory in a service culture, in: D. Middleton, D. Edwards (Eds.), *Collective Remembering*, Sage Publications, London, p.140-169.
- Lin, Zhaowen. (2006). 'The Harmful Influence of the Matrix Structure on Function Performance and Its Solution'. *Journal of Harbin University of Commerce* (Social Science Edition). May 2006.
- M. Polanyi. (1966). *The Tacit Dimension*, Doubleday, Garden City.
- Meyerson D, Weick KE. & Kramer RM. (1996). Swift trust and temporary groups. In: Kramer RM, Tyler TR, editors. *Trust in organizations: frontiers of theory and research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Ruuska K., Projekti hallintaan. (1999). *Project under Control*. Hel sinki: Suomen Atk-kustannus Oy.