Knowledge Management—Emerging Concept of Education

Dr. Afroz Haider Rizvi

Maulana Azad National Urdu University

ABSTRACT

When the concept of global village has emerged and everybody gets any information in friction of second simply by clicking the Google search engine. So, the era has come how to manage the knowledge. The person who knows the art of management of knowledge is successful. In the paper, the researcher made an attempt to comprehend knowledge management.

Keywords: *Knowledge, Management, Education, Data, Information*

INTRODUCTION

The idea is that information, knowledge, and wisdom are more than simply collections. Rather, the whole represents more than the sum of its parts and has a synergy of its own. We begin with data, which is just a meaningless point in space and time, without reference to either space or time. It is like an event out of context, a letter out of context, a word out of context. The key concept here is being "out of context." And, since it is out of context, it is without a meaningful relation to anything else. When we encounter a piece of data, if it gets our attention at all, our first action is usually to attempt to find a way to attribute meaning to it. We do this by associating it with other things. If I see the number 5, I can immediately associate it with cardinal numbers and relate it to being greater than 4 and less than 6, whether this was implied by this particular instance or not. If I see a single word, such as "time," there is a tendency to immediately form associations with previous contexts within which I have found "time" to be meaningful. This might be, "being on time," "a stitch in time saves nine," "time never stops," etc. The implication here is that when there is no context, there is little or no meaning. So, we create context but, more often than not, that context is somewhat akin to conjecture, yet it fabricates meaning.

That a collection of data is not information, as Neil indicated, implies that a collection of data for which there is no relation between the pieces of data is not information. The pieces of data may represent information, yet whether or not it is information depends on the understanding of the one perceiving the data. I would also tend to say that it depends on the knowledge of the interpreter, but I'm probably getting ahead of myself, since I haven't defined knowledge. What I will say at this point is that the extent of my understanding of the collection of data is dependent on the associations I am able to discern within the collection. And, the associations I am able to discern are dependent on all the associations I have ever been able to realize in the past. Information is quite simply an understanding of the relationships between pieces of data, or between pieces of data and other information.

While information entails an understanding of the relations between data, it generally does not provide a foundation for why the data is what it is, nor an indication as to how the data is

likely to change over time. Information has a tendency to be relatively static in time and linear in nature. Information is a relationship between data and, quite simply, is what it is, with great dependence on context for its meaning and with little implication for the future.

Beyond relation there is pattern, where pattern is more than simply a relation of relations. Pattern embodies both a consistency and completeness of relations which, to an extent, creates its own context. Pattern also serves as an Archetype, with both an implied repeatability and predictability.

When a pattern relation exists amidst the data and information, the pattern has the *potential* to represent knowledge. It only becomes knowledge, however, when one is able to realize and understand the patterns and their implications. The patterns representing knowledge have a tendency to be more self-contextualizing. That is, the pattern tends, to a great extent, to create its own context rather than being context dependent to the same extent that information is. A pattern which represents knowledge also provides, when the pattern is understood, a high level of reliability or predictability as to how the pattern will evolve over time, for patterns are seldom static. Patterns which represent knowledge have completeness to them that information simply does not contain.

Wisdom arises when one understands the foundational principles responsible for the patterns representing knowledge being what they are. And wisdom, even more so than knowledge, tends to create its own context. I have a preference for referring to these foundational principles as eternal truths, yet I find people have a tendency to be somewhat uncomfortable with this labelling. These foundational principles are universal and completely context independent. Of course, this last statement is sort of a redundant word game, for if the principle was context dependent, then it couldn't be universally true now could it?

So, in summary the following associations can reasonably be made:

- Information relates to description, definition, or perspective (what, who, when, where).
- Knowledge comprises strategy, practice, method, or approach (how).
- Wisdom embodies principle, insight, moral, or archetype (why).

Now that I have categories I can get hold of, maybe I can figure out what can be managed.

This example uses a bank savings account to show how data, information, knowledge, and wisdom relate to principal, interest rate, and interest.

Data: The numbers 100 or 5%, completely out of context, are just pieces of data. Interest, principal, and interest rate, out of context, are not much more than data as each has multiple meanings which are context dependent.

Information: If I establish a bank savings account as the basis for context, then interest, principal, and interest rate become meaningful in that context with specific interpretations.

- Principal is the amount of money, Rs.100, in the savings account.
- Interest rate, 5%, is the factor used by the bank to compute interest on the principal.

Knowledge: If I put Rs.100 in my savings account, and the bank pays 5% interest yearly, then at the end of one year the bank will compute the interest of Rs.5 and add it to my principal and I will have Rs.105 in the bank. This pattern represents knowledge, which, when I understand it, allows me to understand how the pattern will evolve over time and the results it will produce. In understanding the pattern, I know, and what I know is knowledge. If I deposit more money in my account, I will earn more interest, while if I withdraw money from my account, I will earn less interest.

Wisdom: Getting wisdom out of this is a bit tricky, and is, in fact, founded in systems principles. The principle is that any action which produces a result which encourages more of the same action produces an emergent characteristic called growth. And, nothing grows forever for sooner or later growth runs into limits.

If one studied all the individual components of this pattern, which represents knowledge, they would never discover the emergent characteristic of growth. Only when the pattern connects, interacts, and evolves over time, does the principle exhibit the characteristic of growth.

Now, if this knowledge is valid, why doesn't everyone simply become rich by putting money in a savings account and letting it grow? The answer has to do with the fact that the pattern described above is only a small part of a more elaborate pattern which operates over time. People don't get rich because they either don't put money in a savings account in the first place, or when they do, in time, they find things they need or want more than being rich, so they withdraw money. Withdrawing money depletes the principal and subsequently the interest they earn on that principal. Getting into this any deeper is more of a systems thinking exercise than is appropriate to pursue here.

Note that the sequence data -> information -> knowledge -> wisdom represents an emergent continuum. That is, although data is a discrete entity, the progression to information, to knowledge, and finally to wisdom does not occur in discrete stages of development. One progresses along the continuum as one's understanding develops. Everything is relative, and one can have partial understanding of the relations that represent information, partial understanding of the patterns that represent knowledge, and partial understanding of the principles which are the foundation of wisdom. As the partial understanding stage.

In an organizational context, data represents facts or values of results, and relations between data and other relations have the capacity to represent information. Patterns of relations of data and information and other patterns have the capacity to represent knowledge. For the representation to be of any utility it must be understood, and when understood the representation is information or knowledge to the one that understands. Yet, what is the real value of information and knowledge, and what does it mean to manage it?

Without associations we have little chance of understanding anything. We understand things based on the associations we are able to discern. If someone says that sales started at

Rs.100,000 per quarter and have been rising 20% per quarter for the last four quarters, I am somewhat confident that sales are now about Rs.207,000 per quarter. I am confident because I know what "rising 20% per quarter" means and I can do the math.

Yet, if someone asks what sales are apt to be next quarter, I would have to say, "It depends!" I would have to say this because although I have data and information, I have no knowledge. This is a trap that many fall into, because they don't understand that data doesn't predict trends of data. What predicts trends of data is the activity that is responsible for the data. To be able to estimate the sales for next quarter, I would need information about the competition, market size, extent of market saturation, current backlog, customer satisfaction levels associated with current product delivery, current production capacity, the extent of capacity utilization, and a whole host of other things. When I was able to amass sufficient data and information to form a complete pattern that I understood, I would have knowledge, and would then be somewhat comfortable estimating the sales for next quarter. In this example what needs to be managed to create value is the data that defines past results, the data and information associated with the organization, it's market, it's customers, and it's competition, and the patterns which relate all these items to enable a reliable level of predictability of the future.

CONCLUSION

The value of Knowledge Management relates directly to the effectiveness with which the managed knowledge enables the members of the organization to deal with today's situations and effectively envision and create their future. Without on-demand access to managed knowledge, every situation is addressed based on what the individual or group brings to the situation with them. With on-demand access to managed knowledge, every situation is addressed with the sum total of everything anyone in the organization has ever learned about a situation of a similar nature. Which approach would you perceive would make a more effective organization?

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