

Interactive Guide

# KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT TRAINING FOR KIBS SMES - KNOWMAN

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# Introduction

Recent developments have made entrepreneurial activities even more complex and uncertain. The ongoing developments in the field of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) have also made it clear that these developments are not only positive but also negative, for example, the increase in cyber-attacks. This does not only mean that the availability of up-to-date business knowledge has become even more important, but it also underlines how important it is to actively manage this knowledge. Since knowledge is something dynamic, the durability of knowledge is also subject to constant fluctuation, an aspect that must also be considered in knowledge management (KM). Furthermore, knowledge per se is not necessarily always positive, in the sense of valuable, which poses further challenges to KM. KM is a challenge for all companies, but especially for smaller companies which, due to their structure, are not comparable with large companies. However, given the importance of these companies for the majority of countries, it is particularly important that these companies manage their knowledge as well as possible in order to be best prepared for current and future challenges. Many of these small enterprises offer products and services that are the result of specialized knowledge and know-how, so-called, knowledge-intensive business services (KIBS), for these enterprises a systematic handling of knowledge is even more important to be able to survive.

Thus, a solid understanding of knowledge and KM and how to deal with potential challenges related to KM is therefore considered an essential part of the overall competences and skills of professionals of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) so that they can act confidently, critically, and responsibly.

This interactive guide is one of the outcomes developed in conjunction with the Erasmus+ project “Knowledge Management Training for KIBS SMEs (KNOWMAN)” which was intended to support KIBS SMEs in expanding their skills in the field of knowledge management.

The guide is based on insights collected from KIBS SMEs located in four different EU countries (i.e., Estonia, Italy, Poland and Romania). These firms represented different sizes (i.e., micro, small and medium-sized) and industries. The primary aim of the present guide is to help decision makers in KIBS SMEs to learn from the experience of other SMEs as to how to operate and approach a number of selected KM challenges.

The partners of the "KNOWMAN" project wish potential readers a pleasant and informative reading!



# Knowledge management - Why does it matter?

In order to set an appropriate framework, we will give a short introduction to knowledge and its management.

Knowledge has been coined as the most important strategic factor in business operations and is thus often associated with a firm's capability to achieve a competitive advantage.

In everyday language, people use the term knowledge all the time, however, it seems to make sense to differentiate more precisely between the terms data, information, and knowledge. Data refers to facts, symbols and figures which are not organized in any way. Information paints a bigger picture as it represents contextualized, categorized, calculated and condensed data. Knowledge, on the other hand, is closely linked to doing and implies know-how and understanding. Knowledge originates and is applied in the minds of people (the knowers) and in organizations, knowledge is often embedded or found not only in documents and (online or offline) repositories but also in the organizations' routines, processes, practices and norms.

Knowledge management can be viewed as a systematic way of creating, sharing and leveraging knowledge within and around organizations and is often discussed through so-called KM processes such as knowledge identification, knowledge creation, knowledge storage and documentation, knowledge dissemination, knowledge protection and knowledge application.

Even though the construct of knowledge can have positive and negative outcomes, in our everyday language it appears that knowledge is mainly associated with something positive, something of value. Potentially negative aspects, like knowledge as a liability, seem to be underestimated. This leads to the danger that knowledge is only considered and treated in a one-sided way, which in turn significantly affects the potential of KM.

The increasing research on KM in smaller companies indicates that KM has many advantages including increased organizational success, growth in sales, fewer losses, increased productivity, and process improvements. Some studies have also shown that KM activities can contribute to employee development and improved customer satisfaction while KM appears to improve innovation and creativity too.

Although this is promising, research on KM in SMEs<sup>1</sup> also suggests that these firms often lack both dedicated approaches to knowledge management and the necessary skills as well as competencies needed to do KM. At the same time, these firms are exposed to several challenges such as skills shortage, climate change (keyword circular economy), progressive digitalization, and increasing geopolitical risks to name a few in addition to the still ongoing pandemic.

<sup>1</sup> In this study, the SME definition as proposed by the Commission of the European Communities (2005) is followed. Accordingly, firms can be classified as micro, small, or medium-sized depending on the number of employees and annual turnover or balance sheet totals. Referring to the number of employees, a company with fewer than ten employees is considered to be a micro firm, with between ten and 49 employees a small firm, and with between 50 and 249 employees one speaks of a medium-sized firm.

This not only increases the danger of non-optimal business processes and operations, but also the need for a stronger focus on KM.

In the following several KM challenges are presented. They were derived from the data collected in conjunction with the KNOWMAN project and brought together with past and other ongoing research activities conducted by the members involved in this project.

# 1 Knowledge Identification and acquisition

## The situation

The rapid digitalization among SMEs and intensive role of knowledge has led to several new opportunities such as improved resource management, increased agility, and innovativeness as well as new streams of revenues. This progressive digitalization requires facing new and old challenges that threaten the firm's survival since there is a huge availability of resources and information everywhere, thus it is a critical factor to know where and what knowledge to search in those sources. Knowledge identification is generally concerned with the activities that help a company to detect the knowledge necessary for its success (Durst & Edvardsson, 2012). However, the question of where and what knowledge to look for is often a challenge for KIBS due to a lack of time, both for identifying relevant knowledge and for navigating through the multitude of available sources, especially on the internet:

*Well, I think it is largely the Internet - the main source of knowledge and the main source of verifying it. However, you must sacrifice a bit, because you can wander around on different sides - not everything is always adequate, but usually it is verified in various sources, but on the Internet. It seems to me that these are more informal activities (Organization member of a small Polish company).*

Another employee from small Polish company stated on the matter:

*Certainly, it is a time challenge, because the characteristic of small companies is that each person has a lot of different duties. When focusing on a given problem, we don't focus on our other responsibilities. Surely the biggest challenge is time.*



*I think the second challenge is also communication in the team. I think this is a challenge in any company.*

*The fact that we are quite close helps us for sure, so this communication can happen at any time. It is not a problem to gather a meeting - we try to bring about the fastest possible communication between the key people involved in it.*

*The consequence of not addressing these challenges: our organization would certainly suffer. So, it could happen that a customer's need would not be addressed quickly - it could risk losing that customer.*

A common challenge pointed out by KIBS SME members is the lack of time, as well as the difficulty to identify and select knowledge that is critical to the business. This can lead to a lack of motivation by the employees to accomplish this task.

In addition, the large number of technological tools available and the overabundance of information sources pose a challenge when it comes to understanding what knowledge is critical or reaching a common understanding of critical knowledge in the organization, which in turn requires a lot of time for all activities related to knowledge identification.

*A challenge is trying to unify the technological choices or to normalize them, in order to apply them in a different context and also keep the knowledge within the company as a common one (Organization member of a small Italian company)*

*The main challenge is theme related to the fact that having a lot of material it is difficult to understand what you really need. It is a twofold problem: to put order and identify the material. Because if I need one thing, the risk is that with the search criteria I have, I will waste more time looking for it than doing it again. We are experimenting a sort of bulimia of knowledge. Another question is to understand what is valuable and what is not. Hence the crucial issue is having so*

*much stuff and not distinguishing and not being able to estimate its value: this makes the search process very expensive process. A possible solution would consist in having some sort of automatic (even paid) pre-filtering of the material, where the few important concepts of a document are identified (Organization member of a small Italian company).*

## Possible consequences

A possible consequence is the acquisition of useless or even dangerous knowledge. There is also the possibility of acquiring knowledge too late, resulting in companies being unable to resolve a client's problem in a timely manner. Another potential risk associated with a lack of proper knowledge identification and acquisition is knowledge mismatch, which refers to a discrepancy between the knowledge sought by companies and the knowledge possessed by them at a given time.

## Possible solutions / countermeasures

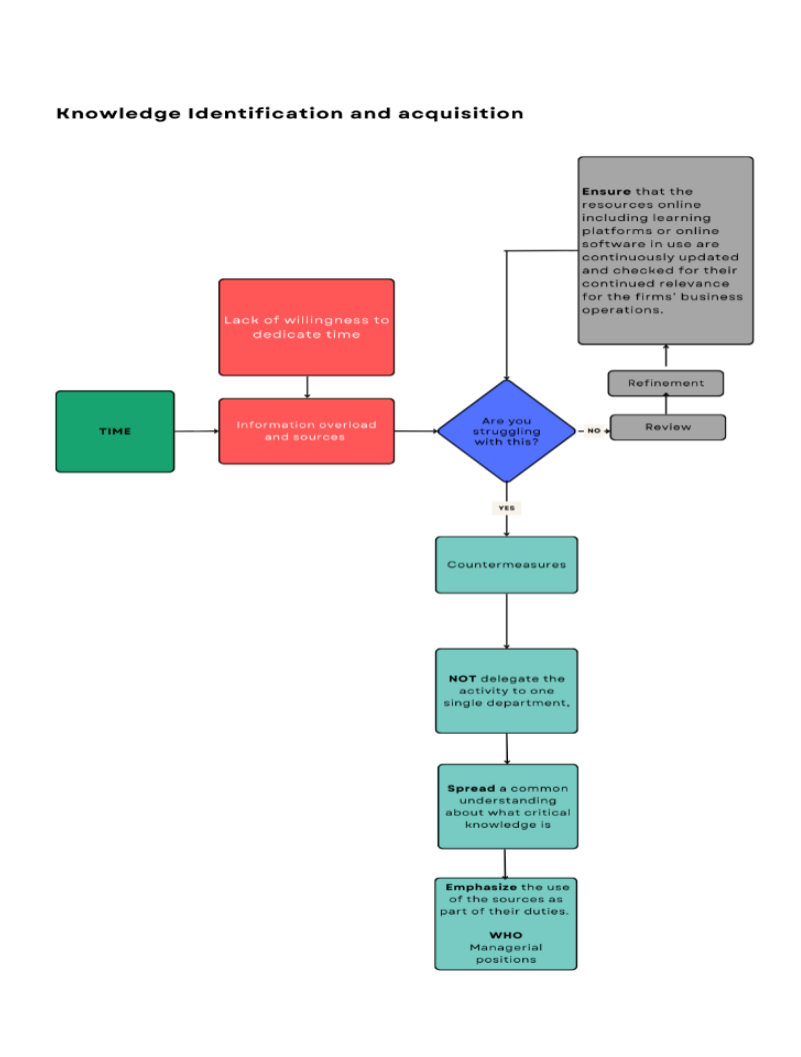
First, the challenges related to time and misunderstanding of what is critical knowledge must be understood as a top priority and thus a matter for the leadership of employees in managerial positions since they are responsible for these activities according to the participants.

These challenges should not be delegated to one single person or department, as the first goal should be to spread a common understanding about what critical knowledge is and how relevant dedicated time to identify and get familiar with the practices and tools available.

The firm's leadership should involve the employees in decision-making processes to increase the likelihood that solutions are developed that address the challenges at hand from a broad(er) perspective. The leadership should also transmit to the employees the relevance of this activity for the organization and its sustainable development.

To make available resources online where employees could find new or existing knowledge that needs to be renovated does not imply that they will be used. Because of that, it is worth mentioning that leaders should emphasize the use of them as part of their duties. As a possible solution to address the danger of increased inefficiency and thus costs, small firms should make sure that the resources online including learning platforms or online software in use are continuously updated and checked for their continued relevance for the firms' business operations. For a summary Knowledge Identification and acquisition challenges and countermeasures a flowchart has been elaborated (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Summary Knowledge Identification and acquisition challenges and countermeasures QR



## 2 Knowledge documentation and storage

### The situation

The process of documenting and storing knowledge is a critical business activity. Particularly in the case of KIBS SMEs, where there are often more tasks than there are people and time available to accomplish them. Therefore, documenting the knowledge that the company considers critical can boost its organizational performance efficiency. Managing your digital or physical documents means benefiting from increased security, access control as well as centralized storage and streamlined search keeping under control any possible challenges that may arise.

Fundamentally, the challenge associated with documentation and knowledge storage comes down to ensuring that the process is carried out appropriately.

In many KIBS SMEs documentation and storage happen through shared online workspaces such as SharePoint. For instance, forms and/or templates online could offer standard operating procedures for employees. Another issue associated with having a proper documentation and knowledge storage is to keep these documents updated and people committed. Therefore, makes documentation and storage activities that require continuous monitoring.

*It is very important to us. (...), we use such a database on SharePoint, where virtually all files of all employees are located. So, in the case of sick leave as such, when another employee has to suddenly take over the job of an absent person - the fact that these files are in one place, to which everyone has access, makes it very easy and we all feel safe with the fact that it's located somewhere, and everyone will know how to get there (A small Polish company).*

*(...) we have a server which we use and distribute amongst us. Internal network, Sharepoint, Teams. Our server is split in different sections: creation, public (where everyone has access), library (where event presentations are saved). There is a rule not to save info on personal computers. We save all relevant information in case some of the employees are leaving the company, other times certain projects can be put on hold and revisited by clients in the future. Also, client's feedback is relevant in the creation process, and we store the different versions (A small Romanian company).*

It is worth mentioning that knowledge documentation is very important to share experiences, after all it is the combination of different skills that come up with solution to recurrent mistakes. This helps to preserve an organization's efficiency and correct business functions development. Good document management is a challenge since this implies a team that understands the importance of maintaining an organized and easily accessible document collection.

Additionally, employees' unwillingness to document and store knowledge is also a challenge related to knowledge documentation and storage, due to individual attitudes and time constraints. In particular, this is true of professionals in the technical field, who are perceived to dislike writing documents. It is important to note that the writing style of individuals, as well as the heterogeneity of languages among professionals of different backgrounds, could present a challenge to the documentation and storage of knowledge, since it makes the archived knowledge hard to retrieve for future use.

## Possible consequences

Poor or lack of knowledge documentation may lead to an excessive amount of time spent on retrieving knowledge, for instance, good practices in the past for a current project, thereby reducing efficiency and effectiveness. Considering the worst-case scenario where knowledge documentation is not practiced at all, this increases the risk of a perpetual reinvention of the wheel, resulting in unnecessary costs for the firms. Finally, it increases the risk of knowledge concentration in the hands of a few individuals within the firm.

## Possible solutions / countermeasures

Simple checklists can be useful in ensuring that information or organizational knowledge is documented and stored for future reference and can be used by staff who are temporarily taking over a process or task. It should be emphasized that these checklists should be dynamic, meaning that they should be regularly updated, including the addition and removal of items as necessary. In this regard, it may be useful for succession planning and human resource management (HRM), as there is evidence that KM may have a positive impact on HRM.

Ideally, these checklists could be stored in cloud technologies, such as SharePoint, customer relationship management (CRM), virtual disks, internal Wikipedia, or shared folders to make them ubiquitous and easily accessible. A related problem, namely the heterogeneity of the languages used in documenting knowledge, can also be addressed through training as well as the sharing of a minimal common vocabulary. In addition, companies may want to consider incentivizing their employees through recognition and rewards, which would be a valuable tool in encouraging others to contribute to knowledge documentation.

## 3 Knowledge sharing

### The situation

During an unexpected situation, for example an external crisis, the need for information could be translated into critical knowledge for the company, and thus sharing knowledge increases proportionally to uncertainty. Although the ability to share knowledge in regular situations is relevant too, it becomes a challenge for some companies increasing exponentially in situations like the mentioned pandemic. Therefore, it is a relevant aspect sharing knowledge and keeping it in the entire company, for KIBS, which should give special attention in order not to be obsolete in accordance with the market.

Besides the pandemic, sharing activity has become (even) more difficult recently because, despite the advantages, the arrival of digital meetings after remote work became regular has significant limitations. For example, getting people's attention or motivating them to interact during meetings, or transferring tacit knowledge becomes more complicated. This situation represents one of the challenges stressed by KIBS SMEs.

*The lower presence at the company determined by smart working is hindering knowledge sharing. As said, video pills can be of help in facing this problem. The bad consequences are being late in responding to customer requests (a medium-sized Italian company)*



The environment created in a business to encourage sharing knowledge is very personal because it involves enormous trust and trust can be gained through personal meetings. When personal meetings are off, then you must explain, and you must be convinced you must be trustworthy. It is much harder via an online meeting, as the level of concentration, attention and commitment during online meetings are different from those in face-to-face meetings.

*Knowledge asymmetry is a problem: there is someone who knows a lot more, and someone (generally new hires) else who knows only a few things. We try to share knowledge by making people work on several different projects. But this is not done formally (A small Italian company)*

## Possible consequences

The problems in sharing or inappropriate sharing of knowledge described above can lead to any operational failures (internal conflicts, holding critical knowledge that delays the completion of processes) resulting in an inefficient workflow. They can also impede a company's future growth because solely focusing on digital meetings for developing new ideas and concrete projects disregards face-to-face interactions to increase the engagement or to reach a common understanding about what to share.

A consequence of lack of knowledge asymmetry could be a bottleneck where knowledge is held somewhere within the firm until that is no longer critical and becomes obsolete. In addition, the relevance of sharing knowledge is not something instituted in the firm from the top; the entire company will be developing too slowly in terms of skills. They will not be able to perform certain managerial functions using the competences of employees, then you are not aware of the knowledge and its potential available in your company.

### Possible solutions/countermeasures

The KIBS decision makers may invest in the development of a fluent sharing knowledge atmosphere strategy as an integral part of its overall approach to knowledge management starting with promoting the relevance of shared knowledge across departments and setting a common language for doing that where a certain number of concept important for the company are defined and spread to all employees. This type of strategy is targeted to provide a common awareness about what and where to share it. Also, it is relevant to achieve an effective distribution of information avoiding information overload, more meetings, more files about the same topics since it will be a challenge to keep sharing as a routine since employees could associate that with an unproductive activity.

Organization members should also be aware of the pros and cons of both digital meetings and physical meetings for knowledge sharing and based on that understanding know when to apply to what format.

It also encouraged that dedicated time to sharing knowledge is provided and part of day-to-day work of every member of the company.

## 4 Knowledge protection

### The situation

In recent years, incidents of data, information, or knowledge leakage have led to the importance of knowledge protection, particularly among companies that depend on knowledge for their competitive advantage. However, knowledge protection does not appear to be a common practice among KIBS SMEs. A member of a medium-sized Italian company stated:

*Not very important (referring to knowledge protection). We don't have patents or anything like that, so we have no particular needs. Another point is that evolution is very rapid and hardly there is any knowledge that belongs to only one person.*

It was learned that the issue of knowledge protection is not particularly critical. One may argue that KIBS SMEs do not fully understand the need for and/or tools and practices involved in protecting knowledge.

Consequently, some challenges were identified with respect to knowledge protection. One of them is embedded knowledge, which is knowledge contained within processes, products, cultures, routines, or people. An employee from a medium-sized Polish company mentioned:

*The knowledge is in our processes and the heads of our employees.*

While a person from a small Estonian company reported on the matter:

*I think here again, the biggest challenge is the technical knowledge of personnel... then for sure we are not able to detect them or protect.*

Among the challenges companies face, as they work to protect their intellectual property, is the issue of hacking. In some cases, even with the best of security measures, an attack may breach a company's firewalls.

*(...) in the event of a hacking attack or in the event that an employee shares this knowledge with someone from the outside, the company will not have a way to deal with it (Member of a small Polish company).*

One of the reasons that knowledge protection fails is when employees share confidential data in an unethical manner or, in some cases, intentionally leak confidential knowledge. In addition, the use of freelancers to perform business functions also poses a challenge in protecting knowledge.

*(...) the fact that freelancers who work for us and use our resources will use these resources in their work for other companies, which is inevitable - we, of course, prepare our contracts with relevant clauses, but this is essentially undetectable (Employee of a small Polish company).*

Overall, it appears that knowledge protection is underdeveloped in KIBS SMEs. There is evidence that most of these companies do not engage in systematic knowledge protection.

## Possible consequences

A foreseeable consequence of poor or inadequate knowledge protection is the possibility of cyberattacks against companies. These attacks may take many forms, including malware, password attacks, and phishing attacks, all of which attempt to steal information/data, for example, login credentials. Even companies that are proactive in protecting their confidential information, knowledge, or data cannot entirely prevent attacks from hackers, let alone those for which knowledge

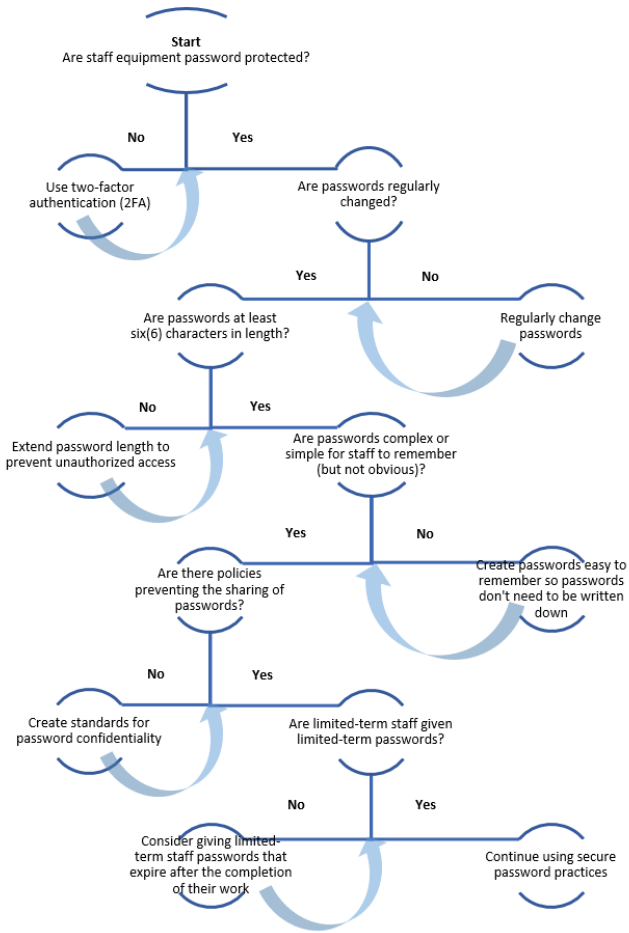
protection is not a standard practice. In addition, there is also the possibility of knowledge leakage/spillover due to employees unintentionally disclosing sensitive information. In most cases, this occurs when there is little awareness of knowledge protection, or when a knowledge protection culture does not exist.

### **Possible solutions/countermeasures**

As a possible means of preventing these undesirable consequences, particularly knowledge leakage, it is prudent to reduce the scope of cooperation. This is more effective for SMEs since small businesses tend to be more likely to execute a manageable number of duties. In addition, it is recommended that SMEs engage with their external stakeholders in a careful communication style in order to avoid unintentionally disclosing confidential information.

It is possible, for instance, to restrict access to sensitive data to a few employees (different levels of access for different teams or groups), to provide legal statements about employees and cooperators, as well as copyright and property protection. Last but not least, to combat cyber-attacks, it is recommended that companies strictly adhere to cyber-security practices such as using anti-virus software, keeping their software up-to-date, and not opening suspicious emails, and password management (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Password management



## 5 Knowledge application

### The situation

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the business environment has been heightened by increasing competition. As a result, one of the effective ways for companies to remain competitive over their competitors is the speed and rate at which knowledge, especially external knowledge, is translated and internalized. Nevertheless, this is not an easy task, as numerous challenges are involved in the process.

It is widely believed that the difficulty of assimilation is one of the challenges companies faces, which is a result of employees' inadequate ability or incapacity to analyze, interpret, and comprehend externally acquired knowledge. This challenge can be attributed to a lack of time for the knowledge to be translated into action, creating products/projects for specific customers. An employee of a small company from Poland mentioned in this context:

*(...) the challenge is how to quickly and effectively use the accumulated knowledge in the past.*

It was also found that many of the companies interviewed described recollecting past practices and applying them to new projects as a challenge, as a result of the risk of forgetting. There have also been reports of misunderstandings and frustration caused by the "trial and error" process as common pressing issues before and during knowledge application: As a small company from Romania reported:

*Pressure occurs within creative projects, frustrations can occur as well in the creative process, if you do not have a set of skills to explain the choices. In these situations, we try to help each other. (Member of a small Romanian KIBS)*

There were also challenges related to the unsuccessful integration of different types of knowledge and the misapplication of knowledge by clients as a result of difficulties in communication. Further, budgetary constraints on the part of customers are considered to be an unusual knowledge application challenge, as well as employees' skills and abilities that are not aligned with company responsibilities/tasks.

### **Possible consequences:**

A possible consequence is that knowledge may become obsolete, thereby hindering innovation activities, including product/market/process development. In some cases, this may lead to products or services that do not meet the needs/demands of the market. There is also the risk of failing to apply the knowledge that would best solve a customer's problem, even if the company had it. Additionally, there is a risk of reinventing the wheel, which is rather costly, so the practice of knowledge application aims to make sure that existing knowledge is applied, rather than having to create something entirely new.

### **Possible solutions/countermeasures**

First, to address the difficulty in knowledge assimilation, companies are recommended to offer their employees opportunities to take training courses to help grow/update their professional knowledge and improve their skills and competencies. Openness to continuous learning through MOOCs and regular team activities are possible avenues. Besides learning, a further advantage of



regular training/team activities is that it fosters a healthy cooperative environment among employees, which allows them to easily turn to their colleagues in times of misunderstandings and frustration because of trial and error. Finally, companies should promote capacity-building initiatives to empower their employees to cultivate a learning attitude while creating a learning culture in the workplace.

# Summarizing recommendations

Knowledge management matters to all companies regardless of sector, business cycle and size. In addition to traditional internal business challenges, increasing external challenges bring a variety of old and new challenges, often occurring simultaneously, a systematic approach to knowledge management is required.

Below there is a checklist to provide a set of guidelines for knowledge management in KIBS SMEs to be better prepared for present and forthcoming internal and external challenges. These could also be relevant for the partners of KIBS SMEs.

- The KIBS SME is aware of the relevance of having implemented a knowledge management approach / certain crucial knowledge management measure.
- Knowledge management is a top priority of the company's management or leadership, and it is firmly anchored in the firm's overall business strategy.
- This knowledge management approach/measures does / do consider a variety of KM processes and is aware that knowledge can be both an asset or a liability depending on the situation.
- The company constantly monitors its knowledge management approach and adjusts it when necessary.
- KM affects the entire company, and all members of the organization are aware of the relevance of KM and actively contribute to the continuous improvement of the KM approach. The success / failure of the KM measures

is constantly discussed and remedial action is taken in the event of an unfavorable situation.

- The company has a good understanding of how to manage the relevant knowledge at hand.
- Depending on the type of KM challenge the company has some countermeasures in place and is ready to introduce these measures to cope with the challenges at hand.
- The company continuously monitors the outcomes of the measures introduced and takes countermeasures in the case the measures do not perform as expected, i.e., do not meet the objectives set (e.g., reducing the danger of knowledge attrition or even knowledge loss).
- The company documents the activities related with KM, the KM challenges in particular, and their development over time and thereby learns step by step to improve its KM approach.
- Knowledge management is laid down in the KIBS's day-to-day business operations and every organization member is aware of his/her role in this.
- The company trains its organization members regularly on KM and KM related issues to keep its business operations running smoothly and sustainably.

# WHAT CHALLENGES ARE YOU FACING?

## KNOWLEDGE IDENTIFICATION AND ACQUISITION

- ENSURE A COMMON UNDERSTANDING WHAT CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE IS?
- FIRM'S LEADERSHIP SHOULD INVOLVE THE EMPLOYEES IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES
- CONTINUOUSLY UPDATE AND CHECK AVAILABLE RESOURCES ONLINE FOR THEIR CONTINUED RELEVANCE FOR THE FIRMS' BUSINESS OPERATIONS.

## KNOWLEDGE DOCUMENTATION AND STORAGE

- USE A SIMILAR CHECKLIST TO THIS ONE TO ENSURE THAT INFORMATION OR KNOWLEDGE IS DOCUMENTED
- THE CHECK LIST SHOULD BE REGULARLY UPDATED, INCLUDING THE ADDITION AND REMOVAL OF ITEMS AS NECESSARY
- ENSURE THAT CHECKLIST IS UBIQUITOUS AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE.

## KNOWLEDGE SHARING

- TO INVEST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FLUENT SHARING KNOWLEDGE ATMOSPHERE
- TO PROMOTE THE RELEVANCE OF SHARED KNOWLEDGE ACROSS DEPARTMENTS
- TO AVOID INFORMATION OVERLOAD, MORE MEETINGS, MORE FILES ABOUT THE SAME TOPICS SINCE IT WILL BE A CHALLENGE TO KEEP SHARING AS A ROUTINE SINCE EMPLOYEES COULD ASSOCIATE THAT WITH AN UNPRODUCTIVE ACTIVITY.

## KNOWLEDGE PROTECTION

- TO REDUCE THE SCOPE OF COOPERATION.
- TO EXECUTE A MANAGEABLE NUMBER OF DUTIES
- TO ENGAGE WITH THEIR EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS IN A CAREFUL COMMUNICATION STYLE IN ORDER TO AVOID UNINTENTIONALLY DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION. .

## KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION

- TO OFFER THEIR EMPLOYEES OPPORTUNITIES TO TAKE TRAINING COURSES TO HELP GROW/UPDATE THEIR PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND IMPROVE THEIR SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES.
- TO PROMOTE CAPACITY-BUILDING INITIATIVES TO EMPOWER THEIR EMPLOYEES TO CULTIVATE A LEARNING ATTITUDE WHILE CREATING A LEARNING CULTURE IN THE WORKPLACE.

[www.knowmanproject.eu](http://www.knowmanproject.eu)

# GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

## KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

- THE KIBS SME IS AWARE OF THE RELEVANCE OF HAVING IMPLEMENTED A KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT APPROACH / CERTAIN CRUCIAL KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT MEASURES.
- KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IS A TOP PRIORITY OF THE COMPANY'S MANAGEMENT OR LEADERSHIP, AND IT IS FIRMLY ANCHORED IN THE FIRM'S OVERALL BUSINESS STRATEGY.
- THIS KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT APPROACH/MEASURES DOES / DO CONSIDER A VARIETY OF KM PROCESSES AND IS AWARE THAT KNOWLEDGE CAN BE BOTH AN ASSET OR A LIABILITY DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION.
- THE COMPANY CONSTANTLY MONITORS ITS KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT APPROACH AND MAKES ADJUSTMENTS TO IT WHEN NECESSARY.
- KM AFFECTS THE ENTIRE COMPANY, AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE ORGANIZATION ARE AWARE OF THE RELEVANCE OF KM AND ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF THE KM APPROACH. THE SUCCESS / FAILURE OF THE KM MEASURES IS CONSTANTLY DISCUSSED AND REMEDIAL ACTION IS TAKEN IN THE EVENT OF AN UNFAVOURABLE SITUATION.
- THE COMPANY HAS A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO MANAGE THE RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE AT HAND.
- DEPENDING ON THE TYPE OF KM CHALLENGE THE COMPANY HAS SOME COUNTERMEASURES IN PLACE AND IS READY TO INTRODUCE THESE MEASURES TO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES AT HAND.
- THE COMPANY CONTINUOUSLY MONITORS THE OUTCOMES OF THE MEASURES INTRODUCED AND TAKES COUNTERMEASURES IN THE CASE THE MEASURES DO NOT PERFORM AS EXPECTED, I.E., DO NOT MEET THE OBJECTIVES SET (E.G., REDUCING THE DANGER OF KNOWLEDGE ATTRITION OR EVEN KNOWLEDGE LOSS).
- THE COMPANY DOCUMENTS THE ACTIVITIES RELATED WITH KM, THE KM CHALLENGES IN PARTICULAR, AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT OVER TIME AND THEREBY LEARNS STEP BY STEP TO IMPROVE ITS KM APPROACH.
- KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IS LAID DOWN IN THE KIBS'S DAY-TO-DAY BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND EVERY ORGANIZATION MEMBER IS AWARE OF HIS/HER ROLE IN THIS.
- THE COMPANY TRAINS ITS ORGANIZATION MEMBERS REGULARLY ON KM AND KM RELATED ISSUES TO KEEP ITS BUSINESS OPERATIONS RUNNING SMOOTHLY AND SUSTAINABLY.

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Further information about the project “Knowledge Management Training for  
KIBS SMEs (KNOWMAN)”

[knowmanproject.eu](http://knowmanproject.eu)



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