

Analyzing a Dissertation Process

A Case Study in Theory Application

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Here's what the title page looks like:

**Toward an Understanding of Enterprise Dementia:
An Empirical Examination of Information Anxiety
Amongst Public Service Middle Managers**

by
[Name]

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of [a] University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Business Administration

2004

Background

This brief presentation chronicles the search by one of my former dissertation students for background and a model for his dissertation. He came in with a general interest in knowledge management and organizational responses.

He then constructed a survey and carried out a very interesting analysis that essentially supported his hypotheses.

He didn't stop there, but then went on to develop a stimulating and useful set of questions for both theory and practice arising from his analysis - but that's another story.

So let's begin at the beginning...

Key constructs

- Information anxiety / overload
- Knowledge management
 - Knowledge use
 - Management strategies
- Middle management
- Information accessibility

Introduction

- Background
- The General Problem
- The Specific Problem - Public Service
- Objectives
- Research Question

The research question

*Does knowledge create value in Government?
Specifically, do some types of middle
managers report lower levels of
information anxiety as a result of
knowledge management?*

Literature Review

- What is Knowledge?
- What types of knowledge exist?
- What are the Knowledge Management Enablers?
- What Knowledge Management Taxonomies Exist?

Theory: Davenport and Prusak

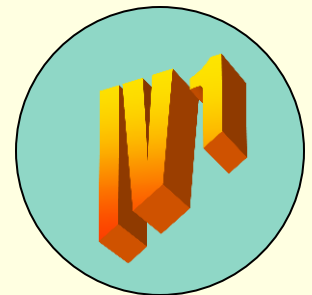
- Hierarchy of knowledge
 - Data
 - Information
 - Knowledge
- Transformational strategies AND Managers

D → I

Context
Categorize
Calculate
Correct
Condense

I → K

Compare
Consequences
Connect
Conversation



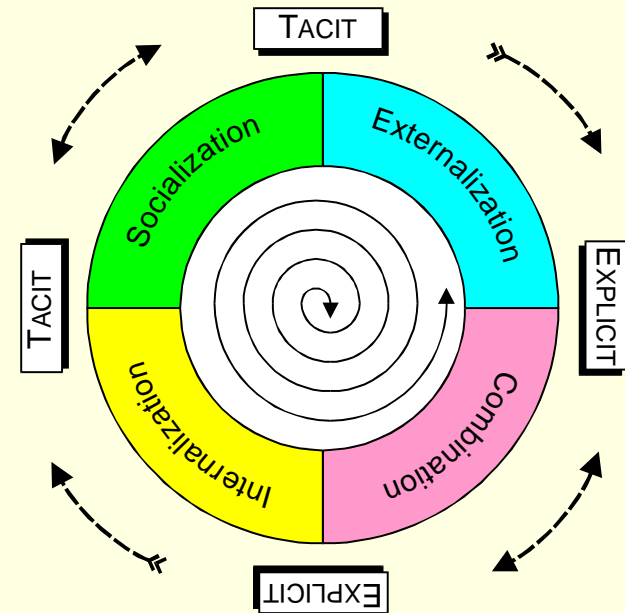
Theory: Wurman and others

- "Information anxiety"
- Overload / underload equivalence
- Five components:
 - Not understanding information;
 - Feeling overwhelmed by the amount of information to be understood;
 - Not knowing if certain information exists;
 - Not knowing where to find information
 - Knowing exactly where to find the information, but not having key to access it.

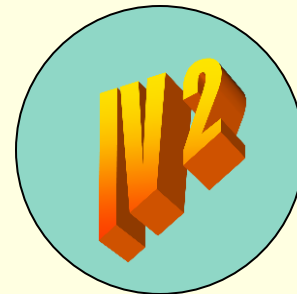


Theory: Nonaka and Takeuchi

- Two types of knowledge:
 - Tacit
 - Explicit
- Four KM processes
 - Socialization
 - Externalization
 - Combination
 - Internalization
- Two types of managers
 - Tacit - Int, Soc
 - Explicit - Ext. Comb.



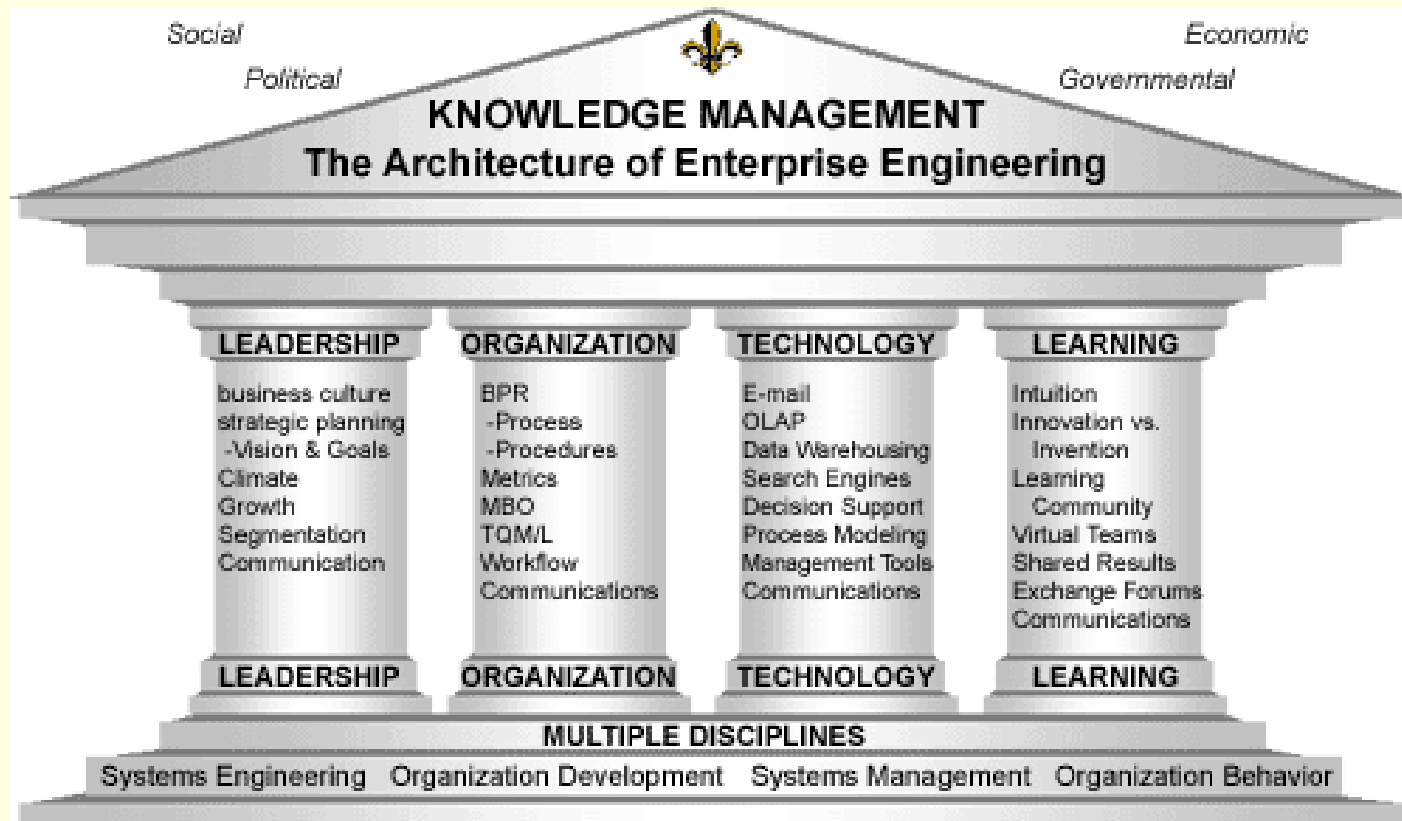
"Spiral of Knowledge"



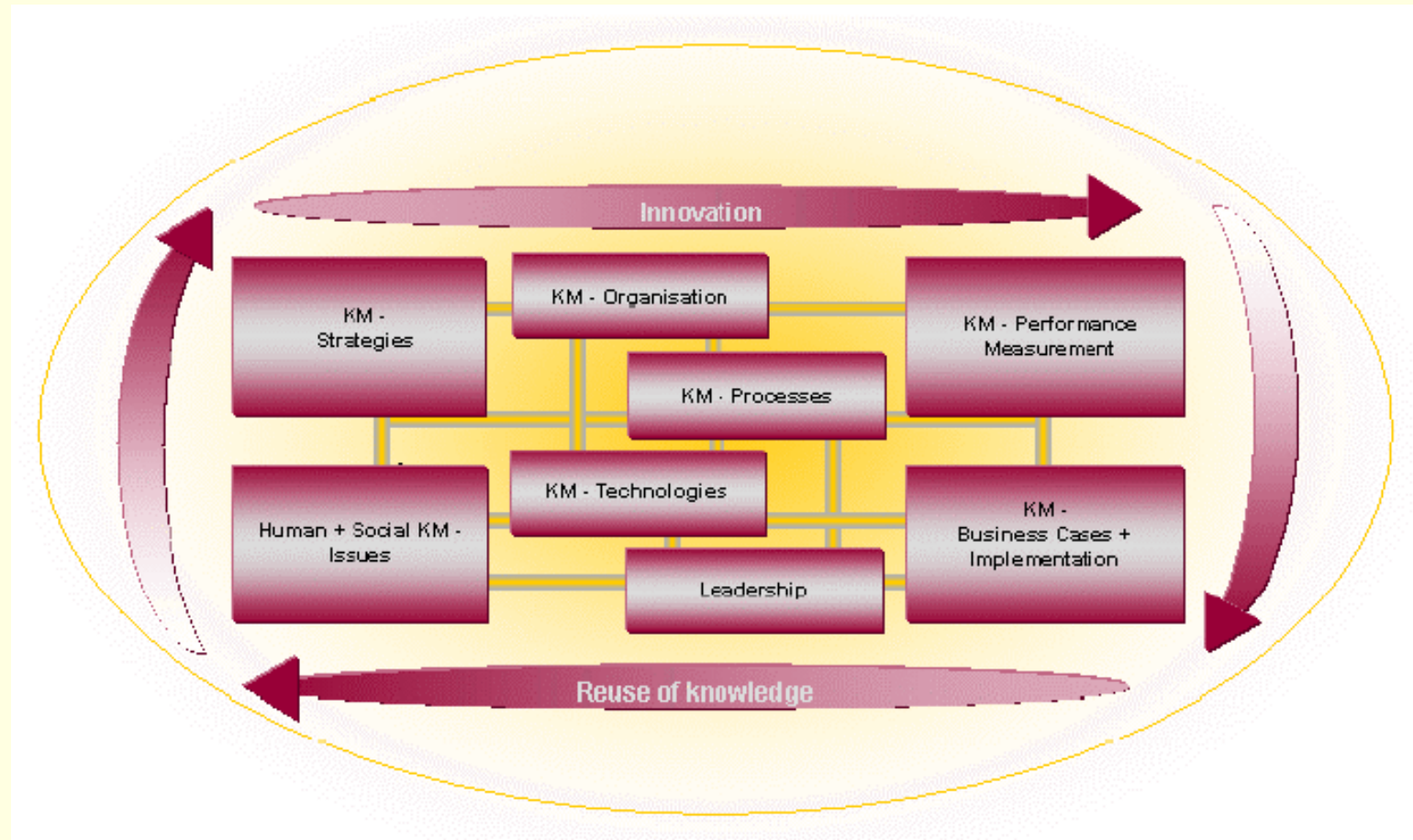
Theory: O'Dell and Grayson, and others

- Enablers of KM /transfer
- Several specific models / taxonomies
 - *Knowledge Management the Architecture of Enterprise Engineering*
 - the European network for knowledge management
 - U.S. Department of Navy's Balanced Knowledge Management model

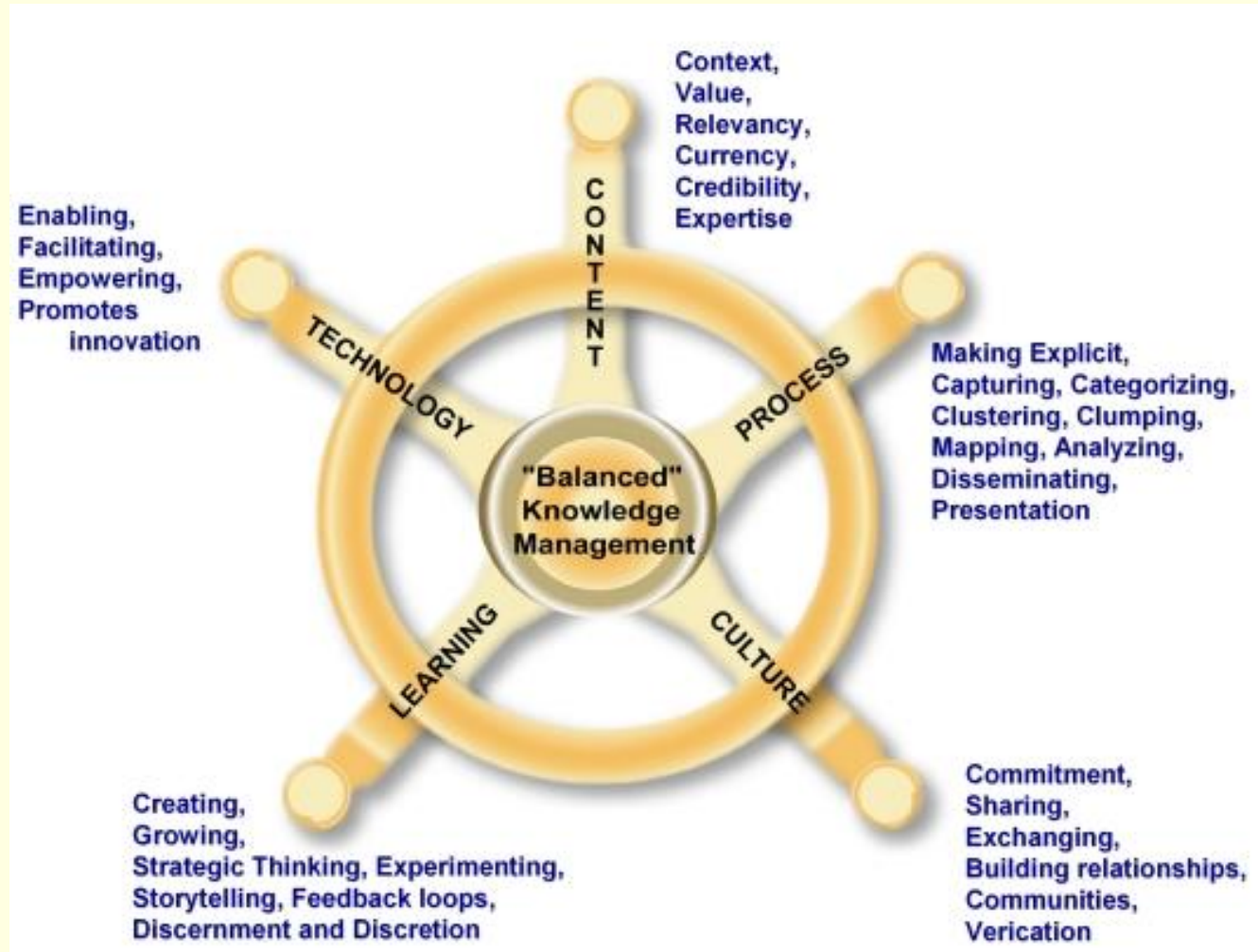
Theory: Analogical Overkill



Theory: European Fox-trot

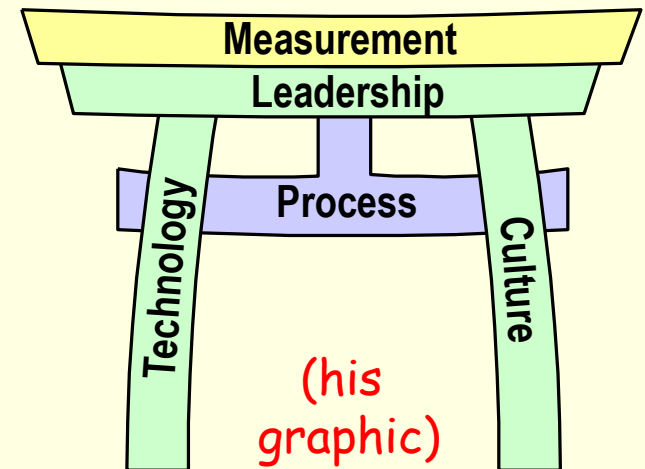


Theory: the Navy's "Conn" Job



Summarizing the Enabler models

	Technology	Leadership	Culture	Measurement	Process	Organization	Infrastructure	Learning	Content
KM Pillars	*	*				*		*	
European Framework	*	*	*	*	*	*			
DON Balanced KM	*		*		*			*	*
Enablers of Transfer	*		*	*			*		
KM Assessment Tool	*	*	*	*	*				



“...my review of the major knowledge management models conclusively indicates that the five elements of Technology, Leadership, Culture, Measurement, and Process capture the major themes presented in the various models...”

Theory: Earl

Taxonomy of strategies for knowledge management

		Technocratic			Economic
		System	Cartographic	Engineering	Commercial
School	Attribute				
Focus		Technology	Maps	Processes	Income
Aim		Knowledge bases	Knowledge directories	Knowledge flows	Knowledge assets
Philosophy		Codification	Connectivity	Capability	Commercialization

		Behavioral		
		Organizational	Spatial	Strategic
School	Attribute			
Focus		Networks	Space	Mindset
Aim		Knowledge pooling	Knowledge exchange	Knowledge capabilities
Philosophy		Collaboration	Contactivity	Consciousness

Research Hypotheses

- Hypothesis 1 - Managing the Metamorphosis of Knowledge

Knowledge Managers report a significantly lower level of information anxiety than do Information Managers.

- Hypothesis 2 - Nature of Knowledge

Tacit Managers report a significantly lower level of information anxiety than do Explicit Managers.

- Hypothesis 3 - The Role of Demographics

There is no relationship between demographics (gender, experience, training, language) and the level of information anxiety reported

Summary: Using theory well

- Define your research questions !!
- Pick your theories carefully
 - Several different streams of ideas
 - Same general domain; complementary, not contradictory
 - Similar though not identical vocabulary
- Pick and link elements by construction of your own vocabulary ("model")
- Review **SELECTIVELY** aiming at hypotheses