

## Knowledge sharing strategies employees can capitalize on part 1

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*Knowledge sharing* is the act of exchanging information or understanding between individuals, teams, communities or organizations. Knowledge may be explicit (procedures and documents) or tacit (intuitive and experience-based). Sharing *knowledge* is an intentional process that not only bolsters an individual's understanding, but helps create or enhance an archive of accessible knowledge for others. Van Den Hooff and De Ridder (2004) defines *knowledge sharing* as a process where individuals mutually exchange their implicit (tacit) and explicit knowledge to create new knowledge. Haas and Hansen (2007) claim that knowledge sharing has been shown to improve individual and organization performance and innovativeness. They add that knowledge sharing is a practice that has become increasingly important to organizations as most organizations are now considered to operate in a knowledge economy. Knowledge sharing in an organization not only occurs at the individual level but also at the collective level (Obembe, 2010). Obembe further states that an organization's capacity for knowledge sharing is crucial as a factor in the ability to generate new knowledge as well as its ability to utilize the resources and capabilities of its members.

### Knowledge sharing process

KS can be represented as a two-dimensional process with members of staff sharing and exchanging their tacit and explicit knowledge. Regular KS creates new knowledge through the process of knowledge donation and collection (Hooff & Weenen, 2004).

**Knowledge Donation:** It represents the willingness and eagerness of individuals in organizations to give and share their knowledge with others through listening, talking to others to develop their self-knowledge and solve problems more quickly (Cumming, 2004; Lin, 2007)

**Knowledge collection:** It indicates the receiver of knowledge who must consult colleagues through observation, listening or practicing from internal and external sources, and also to encourage them to share their intellectual capital (Hooff & Weenen, 2004; Lin, 2007).

Donation and collection processes increase trust and mutual respect as well as facilitate the flow of individuals' knowledge assets to capitalize for performance development (Kamasak & Bulutlar, 2010).

### Knowledge sharing strategies

Although the choice of *knowledge-sharing strategies* will depend upon available resources, where possible, using more than one strategy may be the best option. Using multiple strategies may increase knowledge sharing success by:

- Providing very specific, tailored messages for diverse audiences based on their specific knowledge-sharing needs.
- Highlighting different components within the body of knowledge being shared and increasing opportunities for collaborative thinking rather than just presenting information.
- Encouraging community members to connect in diverse ways.
- Increasing the likelihood that a message is heard and considered during decision-making by making the knowledge accessible at multiple times and in multiple ways.

**Consider the audience** - *Knowledge sharing* is a process that requires guiding the audience in a particular way of thinking. To do so requires an understanding of the problems they face, the level of detail they need, and the style of thinking they use. Planning effective *knowledge sharing* requires understanding the audience, not just the message.

**Use Plain Language:** Researchers, service providers, and policymakers may talk about their work in diverse ways. Researchers may communicate with one another in highly technical terms, whereas service providers may discuss similar issues in language based on their daily work, and policymakers in political jargon. If a community of people sharing knowledge spans several disciplines and contexts, a common language is needed. Plain language is the use of straightforward language written for the sake of clear communication.

**Tell Stories:** Evidence itself is not sufficient; it must be communicated in ways that make it compelling. If the presentation of findings capture listeners' imaginations, they will be more likely to apply that knowledge in practice and decision making. Telling stories may be one way to present research and other forms of knowledge in a way that is appealing to diverse audiences.

*Part 2 of this article is coming, stay tuned. This will be comprising with knowledge sharing platforms, knowledge sharing tools, knowledge sharing sessions as well as research statistics around knowledge sharing as well as the associated benefits of effective knowledge sharing strategies.*

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