

APPLYING SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS TO KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

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Tacit knowledge is either learnt through repeated experience on the job or by being transferred through example or verbally from one individual to the next in informal and often unplanned meetings (Raghuram 1996). Not only is tacit knowledge typically transferred in this manner within an organization, but in order for the knowledge to be passed, the groups are on average required to be very small (von Krogh, Ichijo and Nonaka 2000). This teamwork then permits knowledge to be transmitted back into the organization, through various but characteristically social means. An excellent means of gauging the flows of knowledge between groups of people, is that of Social Network Analysis (SNA) (Scott 1991). Thus, we have adopted the use of SNA as a means of determining how well people in the organization are transferring their tacit knowledge. We have examined three organizations with regard to how their tacit knowledge is being transferred. The outcomes from the research suggest that factors such as organizational size, level of usage of IT and type of meetings employees have with one another will affect how likely tacit knowledge can be transferred within the company.

References

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