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THE INFORMATION KNOWLEDGE FLOW WITHIN A KNOWLEDGE ORGANISATION: IT'S ALL
ABOUT PEOPLE. A CASE STUDY OF THE GERMAN AEROSPACE CENTER DLR

Abstract

Since last year German Aerospace Centre - DLR – started to reorganize its knowledge management processes. DLR faces a huge necessity of knowledge gaining but has also the need for knowledge logistics, e.g. capturing, storing and distributing. Knowledge that flows along these processes is not concentrated within one organizational unit but flows along several units across the whole organization. The process-oriented knowledge flow gives a different view of the organizational and behavioral attitude of how an organization shares and captures its knowledge. There is a huge knowledge database regarding all the different aspects of knowledge in DLR. The first idea was here to install a pure project database. But this could not be enough. Knowledge is more than data and information and can only be created by individuals. We found out that not the Information Technology is the key to a successful knowledge management but the people are. Therefore a new project was launched: “Establishing an integrated knowledge management system”. Within this and among other activities a more social-network oriented but based knowledge sharing platform is going to be introduced within DLR. This is not only an IT-based platform but deals also with ideas, events, trainings, discussions and so on. By asking the employees we learned a lot about their needs concerning knowledge. Many synergies could be found and still can be raised out of the knowledge pool which consists mainly of employees. Their special needs focused on a more social-network based knowledge sharing platform, that is going to be introduced within DLR. The purpose of the paper is to show how DLR plans to organize knowledge along processes and people within its organization. One important outcome of the analysis is the clear need for transparency of the interfaces, and the chance for the employees to publish their knowledge to other employees easily. An overview over this project named “Establishing an integrated knowledge management system” will be given.