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IMPLEMENTATION ASPECTS FOR A KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

**Abstract**

The demand for knowledge management systems increased significantly over the past 15 years. Although there are many papers describing the implementation of a knowledge management system and its structure with project and process phases the implementation still failed in various cases in spite of all the procedures and recommendations.

What makes the implementation difficult and risky? It is the aspect of acceptability by the staff which is one of the crucial elements and which can turn the implementation of a thoroughly structured and well designed system into a failure.

The in-house analysis of the implementation aspects started with a detailed literature survey related to implementation aspects in general and collected examples of possible barriers and proposed instruments.

In fact, the number of barriers is very high and the scope is very wide. For illustration some of these examples are quoted here, they are: knowledge as personal possession, power struggling / competition hindering knowledge sharing, lack of time, suboptimal communication, no formalized knowledge transfer, error-free instead of error-tolerated culture, rigid organizational structures, no common data structures, some documents are only known to authors.

On the other hand the number of instruments is also very high and the scope is also very wide. For illustration some of these examples are quoted here. These could be: teamwork, brainstorming, regular discussions, knowledge markets, communities of practice, networks, social events, open-door-policy, mutual multi-project management, knowledge-maps, yellow and blue pages, lessons learned, after action reviews, expert interviews, FAQ, project tandems, best practice workshops, debriefings, appropriate documentation, virtual tearooms, discussionforen, chat, web-conferences, intelligent search, thesaurus, decision-trees, E-learning, team-calendar, online-meetings, workflows, blogs. The list of examples could easily be extended.

The implementation analysis for a knowledge management system has to review the relevant barriers, their overcoming and the applicability of the instruments. For the grouping of these items well known breakdown structures (such as people, leadership, organization and IT on one axis and create, distribute, share, capture and store on the other axis) were applied. Subsequently relations between the sets of barriers and instruments were established for each of the breakdown elements. Finally priorities were assigned. Combining the relations (between barriers and instruments) for the breakdown elements a summary was produced for providing recommendations.

The proposed paper analyses the barriers, the instruments and establishes relationships between the instruments and the barriers. Subsequently a ranking of importance is established in order to facilitate the implementation procedure.