

Knowledge Sharing: What is it, its Benefits, and Best Practices to promote it

Introduction

It is impossible to prevent your team members from leaving the office. So, what happens when they are out of office, on leave, or have left the organization for good? The specialized knowledge, expertise, and information they acquired over time go with them. But this information needs to be shared with the rest of the team for seamless conduction of duties. Isn't it? This is where knowledge sharing comes into the picture.

Just storing knowledge isn't enough. It needs to be shared so that every member across the team can access the information they need without losing precious time. The captured knowledge needs to be disseminated, scaled and replicated for the success of an organization. Organizations must adapt the knowledge-sharing culture to deal with the risk of forgetting, misplacing, or losing the acquired knowledge.

Whether verbal or digital, sharing the knowledge helps create a comprehensive knowledge base and embeds a knowledge-sharing culture. A knowledge-sharing platform should be such where the employees feel comfortable sharing their knowledge, views, opinions, and ideas while also seeking guidance from their peers, seniors, and experts in the organization.

What is Knowledge Sharing?

The process of transferring or sharing undocumented and documented information from one person to the other is known as 'knowledge sharing.' It is a process through which the employees of an organization can easily share knowledge, experience, observations, and inputs with everyone in the organization.

The knowledge-sharing process takes place on a common digital platform like a knowledge base that is accessible to all the employees anytime they need it.

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Importance of Knowledge Sharing

Organizations undermining the importance of knowledge sharing need to understand how vital it is to the organization’s success. Here are some reasons why it is exceptionally crucial.

1. Knowledge Sharing helps prevent ‘brain drain.’

The reality is your employees will leave the organization someday or the other. New ones will replace them, but the old employees will take some institutional knowledge with them. And the new employees will be stuck without the necessary knowledge and information. Transparency in the processes via efficient knowledge-sharing from Day 1 helps prevent any significant skill gaps when the team members are not around – whether for the day or permanently.

2. Knowledge Sharing saves time

When the organization suffers a knowledge gap, the employees have to invest a lot of time regaining the lost knowledge via several resources such as digging the internet, contacting old employees, reading old email trails, etc.

But if the required information is present in the organization on a single platform, they have everything they need to refer to and do not need to waste any time. This is how knowledge sharing saves a considerable amount of time and, in turn, an organization’s money.

3. Knowledge Sharing boosts collaboration

There are organizations where employees perceive the information they have gathered with experience over time as a type of currency and hoard that knowledge at the expense of the organization’s more significant goals.

Knowledge sharing eliminates such behavior and boosts the collaborative spirit of employees. They focus on collaboration instead of competition by sharing advice, input, and feedback.

Benefits of Knowledge Sharing Technology

Knowledge sharing means that knowledge is instantly available to the team members and the employees in general. Knowledge sharing brings several benefits that boost productivity, enable better decision-making, and improve overall performance. It is capable of bringing a fundamental change to the organization.

Let us have a look at some of the most lucrative benefits.

It paves the way for workplace innovation

Your team members feel comfortable sharing their innovative ideas within a knowledge-sharing environment. This means they are putting 110% into the work assigned to them. The idea-sharing environment helps employees be more productive

and stay on top of the new market trends, benefiting the organization with better results.

Builds and improves customer relations

The importance of knowledge management software and knowledge sharing cannot be undermined if you want to serve your customers seamlessly.

For example, suppose the support agent is unaware of the solution to a customer's problem and does not have access to the knowledge base either. It will make the agent clueless and ultimately lead to frustrated and angry customers.

The presence of a knowledge-sharing platform can reduce the time and effort taken to solve customer queries leading to better customer relations and, ultimately, happy customers.

Enables the reuse of problem-solving mechanisms among other resources

If team member A faced a particular problem, it is evident that member B or C might also face it in the future. But suppose if member A is on an extended leave, how does B solve the problem? In the absence of a knowledge-sharing platform, member B has to search for problem-solving techniques, costing the organization considerable time and money.

Now say, for example, member A has already updated the best practices to approach that particular problem in the knowledge base; member B, C, D, or Z can log in and fetch the technique using a query.

Hasn't this saved the redundant effort of employees and kept them from making the same mistake? They get the right solution at the right time. Thus, knowledge sharing helps streamline the work, increase productivity, and save precious money, time, and effort. Knowledge-sharing documents could include training documents, best practices, user manuals, lessons learned, etc.

Exchanging information equals excellent performance

Every organization has employees from different backgrounds and education who bring along a wide diversity of skill sets, experiences, and ideas. But does every organization tap into its creativity and ideas as much as it should?

When employees and co-workers are part of a collaborative, knowledge-sharing culture that thrives on exchanging information, practices, ideas, and advice, it helps them deliver their best to the organization. They can inspire each other and help them work better.

When an organization harnesses this knowledge, it turns its employees into productive resources who take the organization forward with innovative thinking and intelligent decision-making abilities.

Best Practices to Promote Knowledge Sharing Culture

Here are five different best practices you can use to improve knowledge sharing across your organization.

Knowledge Sharing Culture = Knowledge Sharing Habits

Creating a knowledge-sharing culture can happen only with small steps like cultivating knowledge-sharing habits. It is essential to educate your employees about knowledge sharing, not just by theory but by practice.

Give them real-life examples of how knowledge sharing solved a particular problem in the organization, how it has benefitted the marketing or accounts team, how it has improved the experience of XYZ employees. Make the concept relatable to help your employees understand its importance.

Along with the importance and benefits of knowledge sharing, your employees must understand the process of knowledge transfer within the organization. The lifecycle of knowledge needs to be explained or demonstrated for this purpose. The process of how data is created, organized, stored, pooled, and extended using technology for practical usage.

Using a **user-friendly knowledge base software** like **PHPKB**, you can efficiently conduct each step of the **knowledge life cycle** that allows your employees to create, organize, store and share knowledge seamlessly. It can effectively build and support a learning community and streamline internal communication and discussion.

Incentivize knowledge sharing

It is no shocker that people are averse to change. But of course, when you implement a knowledge-sharing management

system in the organization, people are bound to repel it.

But you can make it fun, exciting and attractive for them. The only way to do this is by rewarding them to adopt knowledge-sharing practices. Initially, they might do it only for the rewards, but slowly when they start seeing its many benefits, it becomes a norm within the organization.

How can you reward or motivate employees for knowledge sharing? Here are some ideas.

You can give them a small award or public recognition during the team or quarterly company meeting. You could give out a 'Knowledge Pro' of the month award with some financial benefit and a certificate. You could explicitly take a few minutes to mention their commitment to knowledge sharing during team meetings.

These rewards, recognition, and mentions will help your employees get out of the competitive mindset and get into the collaborative mindset. This way, they will not want to hoard their knowledge but want to share and contribute it within the organization.

With the search option in the PHPKB knowledge base, you can effortlessly search for the employee who has added most inputs, articles, and comments on the knowledge base for a particular duration, be it a week or a month.

Revise and customize your onboarding process

When you acquaint the employees with the knowledge-sharing processes at the beginning of their tenure with you, you embed it into their daily work habits. Customize your onboarding process to make new hires understand the prevalence of knowledge sharing across the organization.

Here are a few ways to do this.

Acquaint them with presentations of other departments and the general hierarchy to understand how everything fits together, and they don't remain isolated to their respective teams.

Use the buddy system where the new hires get a mentor or buddy from a different department to help them warm up to the office culture and solve any doubts they have in mind.

PHPKB can store the specification and documentation for the onboarding process of new hires and can be used by different human resource specialists through the common platform.

Use a cloud-based knowledge base

What is the use of the stored knowledge if your employees, users, and stakeholders cannot access them when they need it? Using a cloud-based knowledge base improves the accessibility of the knowledge and helps in many other ways. Let us look at a few of them.

It is mobile friendly

It can be integrated with third-party collaboration tools

It has a definitive authoring process and direct link sharing

It allows users to access the resources at any point and time.

It has a user-friendly interface and doesn't require technical training to operate.

It allows defining and managing multiple roles and the subsequent permissions for accessing the content

PHPKB can be deployed on the cloud and is mobile-friendly at the same time. It helps define multiple user roles and their permissions and integrates with third-party applications seamlessly.

Use state-of-the-art knowledge sharing tool

The most important and overlooked way to foster a knowledge-sharing culture in the organization is to have an easy-to-use, state of the art, knowledge-sharing tool as the organization-wide knowledge-sharing platform.

A practical knowledge base allows users to create, store and search for data easily. They can ask questions, give advice, add comments, and more using this tool. With a suitable knowledge base, you can multiply the contribution and capability of every employee in the organization.

PHPKB is a top knowledge base system that enables knowledge sharing on a single, centralized platform, accessible from multiple devices.

Conclusion

With the number of teams growing, the constant need for information, and remote working on the rise, it has become non-negotiable for every organization to use the right set of tools to embed the knowledge-sharing culture into the work environment.

[PHPKB, the leading knowledge base platform](#), helps your business create a seamless and accessible knowledge base that can work efficiently across departments, hierarchies, and skillsets. You can try a [FREE demo](#) of the software too.

The process of **developing a knowledge-sharing platform** and **building a knowledge-sharing culture** might look very different initially. But as time passes by, your organization will start benefitting lucratively from the union of both these processes that aim towards effective knowledge transfer.

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