

## Definition and features

### Audit

A Knowledge Management (KM) Audit can identify what knowledge an organisation has, where it resides (who has it) and how it flows throughout the organisation. It is different to a Financial Audit where the focus may be on measurements against standards to produce a dollar amount. Ratings in knowledge audits are *guides*. The focus is on personnel attitudes, and behaviours regarding knowledge sharing, distribution, storing etc.

A KM Audit can identify required changes in business processes, personnel behaviour and KM enabling technologies so as to improve competitive advantage. It can also identify valuable intellectual assets as well as identifying cultural and other barriers to knowledge flows within the organisation. A KM Audit is generally conducted together with a KM Mapping exercise.

### Mapping

Knowledge maps help discover the location, ownership, value, and use of organizational knowledge. They also provide information on the roles and expertise of personnel.

A KM Mapping exercise involves taking an inventory of what people in the organization have recorded (codified knowledge) as well as external knowledge resources used by personnel (eg public or university libraries, Web sites or subscription services).

KM Mapping identifies the organisational network. Knowledge networks are limited to 2 steps out from an identified target (ie limited to *your* direct contacts and *their* direct contacts). Unfortunately, if the knowledge sought isn't within the immediate network horizon, then the assumption is that it is not held *anywhere* within the organisation. This results in 'reinventing the wheel'.



### Needs Analysis

A KM Needs Analysis differs from an Audit or a Mapping exercise. Whereas the latter provide information on the current situation ('what is'), the Needs Analysis covers 'what should be'.

The focus of a Needs Assessment should always be the person/s whose needs are to be met (ie the 'user'). This can include customers, the executive, stakeholders, supporting areas (eg IT, Training & Development), knowledge workers and 'champions'.

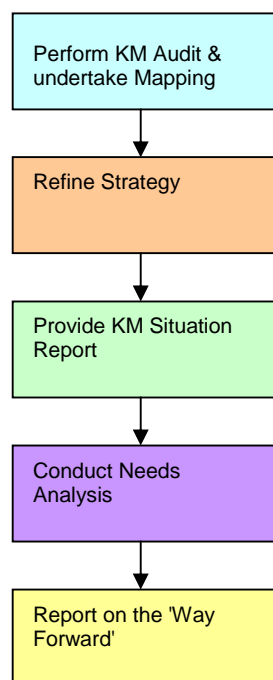
A Needs Analysis answers questions about users - their tasks and goals AND what they expect (or would like) from KM. It is important to remember that actual needs may not always be the same as perceived needs or wants.

The critical success factors for an effective Needs Analysis are:

- Access to all users
- Structured contact with users
- Ability to learn (and synthesise) about work problems, issues and activities
- Immediate and meaningful communication
- Commitment and support from managers

### Steps

After the KM Strategy has been prepared and the scope of the KM work has been agreed, the following steps can be undertaken.



**Please turn the page for more information.**

# Audits, Mapping and Needs Analysis cont.

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## Tools & Techniques

The tools and techniques differ depending on whether the project concerns auditing, mapping or needs analysis. The types of techniques used can include the following:

- ethnographic observation to determine informal knowledge and communication channels
- knowledge flow analysis to gain an overview of knowledge exchanges, losses, or inputs to business processes
- interviews with subject matter experts
- on-line or hard copy questionnaire-based knowledge surveys to obtain broad overviews of the organisation's knowledge status
- consultation with persons in key positions, with specific knowledge
- review of relevant literature including records & report studies, analysis of work samples, and **customer data**
- interviews and focus groups
- management target group sessions to identify knowledge-related conditions that warrant management attention
- tests to determine the actual need for KM components
- task environment analysis to identify which knowledge is present and its role
- critical knowledge function analysis to locate knowledge-sensitive areas
- knowledge scripting and profiling to identify knowledge intensive work

Within each of these categories there are specific techniques. For example, a card sorting technique is often used to elicit customer requirements in relation to web-site access and content management.

Some techniques such as interviewing, facilitating focus groups or undertaking ethnological studies could be undertaken by personnel trained in social science, anthropology or psychology. At a basic level, personnel involved in conducting interviews generally require relevant skills and expertise.

## Adept KM Value Add

Adept KM has personnel skilled in Knowledge Audits, Mapping and Needs Analysis and in particular in undertaking-

- ✓ field studies & observation
- ✓ interviewing
- ✓ facilitating focus groups
- ✓ content analysis
- ✓ information design
- ✓ questionnaire design and analysis
- ✓ statistical interpretation of results
- ✓ user requirements documentation
- ✓ associated technology techniques such as using a Groupputer to elicit individual needs
- ✓ executive and stakeholder presentations
- ✓ role mapping and scripting to determine key concern areas

## Other Service Links

Information on the following Service Delivery Components is also available:

- [Business Process Management](#)
- [Information Design](#)
- [Usability Testing](#)