

Know-how of retiring generation

Business



The moment professionals are laid off as part of the retirement plan, they usually take everything they have learned in their profession.

Those who actually replace them gradually regain the on-the-job knowledge former employee's spent years accumulating. For instance, in industries where significant technical information is a custom, a retiring person may be the only technician who has the ability to expertly mix certain chemicals or operate certain heavy machinery. To avert loss of the valuable information and knowledge accumulated on the job, HR professionals in many companies are finding ways and practice of retaining employees know-how and the best practices, so that knowledge can be passed on to the future workers. One of the types of knowledge discussed in details in this case is tacit knowledge. This is a type of knowledge that is unwritten, unspoken, and in vast storehouse of every normal human being.

This type of knowledge is usually on bases of emotions, experiences, intuitions, insights and observations that are internalized. Tacit knowledge is usually integral to the wholeness of the person's consciousness and is usually acquired largely through association and interaction with other people in their profession. For this knowledge to be shared or imparted from one person to another, it usually requires repeated, shared and joint activities. For instance, when the company decide to transfer knowledge to its new employees. The company selects a group of employees and sends for several months study in existing production system where they work alongside experienced production line workers. The new workers are then sent back to the new production unit with a small team of experienced employees.

Eventually the new employee gain complete experience and technical know-how. Another type of knowledge outlined in the case study is explicit knowledge. This is type of knowledge that can be codified, articulated and stored in a certain media. It normally includes; documents, audio visual, manuals, videos and procedures. Furthermore, product design and art work is usually viewed as a form of explicit knowledge especially where human skills, knowledge and motives are externalized. This type of knowledge is normally easy to store and transfer as it is usually found in the web and books.

In an organization explicit knowledge normally emphasizes on processes that are meant for articulating new knowledge and, the development of systems including the information systems to disseminate articulated knowledge within an organization. For instance, an organization in United State spent more than \$1million in videotaping their retiring employees, in order to tap their expertise so that it could be passed on to the future workers. There are various unique characteristic of knowledge that makes its capture and use by employee's difficult and problematic. Knowledge and experience in most company is usually distributed. This means that different employees are usually likely to possess distributed knowledge about a certain specific aspects of the process with which they work on, and with adjacent processes but not actually other parts. Hence, there is interdependence in operation this makes it hard to capture knowledge about a certain process because it's distributed among several actors.

Another characteristic that make it hard to capture knowledge for future use is that knowledge is disruptive. Although knowledge is the source of power, it <https://assignbuster.com/know-how-of-retiring-generation/>

may make one resist change in practice that undermines his or her knowledge. For instance, in a project that involved a pharmaceutical company that was trying new prostate cancer treatment. The new prostate cancer treatment would no longer require surgeon treatment by removing the tumor but the radiologists who would burn the tumor from inside using radioactive iodine. This change was difficult to introduce in the markets, because surgeons resisted the technology as it actually undermined their own knowledge and their power base.

Another difficulty is actually the fact that, many companies has yet to adopt technology that is flexible enough to support the real knowledge management across its employees. Ambiguity of the knowledge makes its transfer and capture for future use difficult. For instance, in the concept of football, everyone outside USA knows that football involves kicking the ball with your feet, hence the name football. However, those from the US know football as a game that involves handling and throwing of the ball to the team mates which is an illegal action in real football. This means that it is crucial to create common knowledge understanding in order to facilitate knowledge transfer.

Without this common understanding, it will be difficult for those receiving the captured knowledge to understand it.