



Organisational and Personal Values Impact **on Knowledge Transfer**

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“Here is a thousand men gathered together in a common purpose, each one seeing that purpose from a different angle, each giving something of himself and receiving in return the common food of training and tradition imparted by the service. It was this personal element of their lives, pressing up through the service scene, that transformed it from a soulless exhibit of cloth and fleshly automata to a living organism complete with spirit and meaning.”
– A. R Grimwood, Flight Lieutenant, R.N.Z.A.F, 8th of December 1943, Flights and Fancies.

Abstract

This case study research showed that employees' values were having a greater impact on the transfer of knowledge than those of the organisation. The result was due to limitations faced by employees in adopting organisational values. Semi-structured interviews were carried out to discover employee values and knowledge asset creation behaviours. The interviewees faced difficulties with the organisations knowledge repositories available. The transfer of knowledge was limited within the organisation, which hindered knowledge creation and the interviewees relied on their own values to provide direction to their knowledge actions.

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Introduction

This case study research considers the impact of organisational and personal values on knowledge transfer between individuals in a department within a professional IT services organisation. Many organisations state their core values in value statements. While an individual brings with them their past experiences, and value and belief arrangements. When an organisation's values are communicated well, the culmination of these two standpoints should result in a level of acceptance by an individual of the organisation's core values into their routine operating values and would guide their behaviours in the organisation, including the transfer of knowledge.

Understanding the gap between the organisation's core values and the routine operating values of its employees is important, as there is a link between employee value behaviour and its impact on knowledge transfer within the organisation. Furthermore, in the age of the knowledge economy, how effectively an organisation can create and manage its own knowledge assets can influence its competitive position in the marketplace.

The organisation's core value statement was reviewed to discover what values the organisation expected to instil in its employees. Semi-structured interviews were carried out to discover employees' routine operating values, whether they were aligned with the organisation's values and whether the organisation's values have contributed to their knowledge behaviours. In addition, the interviews aimed to find out what employees knew about knowledge management and whether they felt that there were any issues with how the organisation enabled its employees to adopt the organisation's core values. The interviewees were also asked about their workplace social connections.

A section of the information audit framework was applied to the interview results to emphasize the difference between the 'what is' picture of employees working with knowledge assets and the 'what should be' picture outlined in the organisation's policies (Orna, 2004, p. 41). The initial three stages of the six stage approach to fostering values within an organisation was used to analyse how effectively the organisation was promoting and instilling organisational values (Argandoña, 2003). The knowledge creation theory was used to explore the responses for how employees and groups learn, and create knowledge within an organisation (Nonaka, 1994).

This research is presented firstly as a review of literature to set the context of why this research is important, and how the values of organisations and its employees have become relevant to the competitive nature of organisations. This section is then followed by an explanation of the research methodology used. Research findings are then discussed, followed by the conclusion reached.

Literature Review

The Rise of the Knowledge Economy

Before the term knowledge economy was coined, Ginmen (1987) stated that for a marketplace orientated organisation to thrive, it must continually transform its resources from both intellectual and material sources into an output. Ginmen (1987) noted that many organisations were focusing solely on the optimisation of material transformations and not on the development of intellectual resources, which left the organisations vulnerable over time. Organisations go through a lifecycle of change. At each stage, certain challenges are faced, and how well an organisation comes through is dependent on how flexible its knowledge behaviours are (Ginmen, 1987). Organisations now still face this lifecycle. As products change, employees move on and different management models are implemented. As was the case then, knowledge behaviours are at the heart of how organisations adapt to their own lifecycles (du Plessis, 2005; Jankowicz, 2000; Malbašić & Brčić, 2012).

The world economy has evolved considerably from a century ago, when the economy relied on primary sector goods such as timber and farming (Jones, 2011, pp. 228-229), which all depended on material transformations. How efficiently and effectively an organisation could carry out the production of products led to organisational profit (Drucker, 1999; Ginmen, 1987). However, the number of people employed in knowledge related jobs has increased (Drucker, 2002; Oppenheim & Stenson, 2003), compared to labour-intensive jobs, though these jobs are also changing with technological advancement (OECD, 1996). The OECD recognised that, knowledge is a driver of productivity and economic growth, and has led to an emphasis on the roles of information, technology and learning to support economic performance (OECD, 1996). This acknowledgement has led to the term *knowledge based economy* (OECD, 1996) or *knowledge economy* (Krogh, Nonaka, & Aben, 2001; Oppenheim & Stenson, 2003; Tocan, 2012). The significance of the knowledge economy, is that many of

the roles that now support organisational productivity are knowledge based, rather than involving material transformation (OECD, 1996).

Competitive Advantage and Knowledge Management

Competitive advantages of the past such as strategy, technology, finance and marketing are diminishing (Krogh, et al., 2001; Lencioni, 2012). The reasoning behind this statement is that organisations have focused their efforts for so long on these topics that they have become ubiquitous, and they no longer necessarily act as differentiators (Lencioni, 2012; Maister, 2001; Moon, 2010, p. 214).

Research has suggested that there is a substantial association between competitive advantage and knowledge management (Chuang, 2004). Employees play an important role in creating knowledge resources that can be managed (Chuang, 2004). This is due to their acquisition of knowledge through gaining skills and experience and when this knowledge is shared within the organisation, the organisation is able to create and implement innovations faster than competitors (Chuang, 2004; Kang, Kang, & Rhee, 2010; Nonaka, 1994). This is an important point, as knowledge by itself cannot be considered to be a source of competitive advantage until it is successfully transferred to others within the organisation (Kang, et al., 2010). Porter (2004) agreed with this assertion, “the transference of just one insight can sometimes make an enormous difference to competitive advantage” (p. 352).

Resource-based theory concentrates on the features of organisations which have an associated cost, but enable competitive advantages, as they are organisation specific and hard to imitate (Chuang, 2004; Voelpel, von Krogh, & Nonaka, 2006). Knowledge management is an organisational resource because an organisation can create unique knowledge capabilities for itself which are difficult for other organisations to imitate (Chuang, 2004; Pearson & Saunders, 2010, p. 63). This is done through careful management and development of technical knowledge, an energised organisational culture, and management experience with how a firm functions. While these factors do take organisational effort and generate financial cost to bring about (Burke, 1995; Oppenheim & Stenson, 2003; Voelpel, et al., 2006), knowledge management capabilities add to an organisation’s overall effectiveness because knowledge is a unique resource (Chuang, 2004; McGivern & Tvorik, 1997; Oppenheim & Stenson, 2003; Pearson & Saunders, 2010, p. 347). Access to a unique resource in this instance, is the result of having access to a particular combination of knowledge resources that other organisations cannot easily replicate (Szulanski, 2003). Resources are assets,

which an organisation has built up in the past which it can control for possible future economic benefit (IAS Plus, 2010). With this in mind, knowledge resources should be seen as knowledge assets. Which encompass an organisation's past created knowledge, knowledge creation in the present, knowledge visions of the future and the overall capacity for the organisation to innovate using knowledge (Drucker, 1999; Takeuchi & Shibata, 2006, p. 49; Voelpel, et al., 2006).

A study by Ndlela and du Toit (2001) carried out semi-structured interviews with senior managers at an organisation which had implemented knowledge management practices. Senior managers at the organisation had gained an appreciation of the importance of knowledge management through previous experience of lost opportunities, organisational inefficiencies, and wasted employee time (Ndlela & du Toit, 2001). They had come to the realisation that knowledge management was critical to ensuring a competitive advantage and had created a strategy for improving their knowledge management capabilities. Failure to implement knowledge management, or to implement it effectively, can leave organisations at a competitive disadvantage (du Plessis, 2005). One of the key points to come out of the findings of the research by Ndlela and du Toit (2001) was that for knowledge management to succeed, the organisation needs to begin with the cultivation of a culture which encourages knowledge sharing.

Knowledge Management and Organisational Culture

If an organisation's culture is crucial to successful knowledge management as Ndlela and du Toit (2001) discovered, then what defines an organisation's cultural setting? Pearson and Saunders (2010) provide the following as a definition of culture, "a shared set of values and beliefs about what is desirable and undesirable in a community of people" (p. 89).

For an existing employee, they have become institutionalised (Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999) and exist as part of the organisation's culture. Employee induction and socialisation among new and institutionalised employees acts to foster a sense of stability and continuity by conveying organisational values and beliefs (Antonacopoulou & Guttel, 2010). The socialisation process of new employees to align with the organisation is known as enculturation (Bourne & Jenkins, 2013; Tishman, Jay, & Perkins, 1993) and once enculturation is complete, the employee can be considered institutionalised. The institutionalisation into an organisation's culture is the "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one organisation from others" (Hofstede, n.d). Put

another way they have learnt and moulded to the culture through observation, experience and instruction.

Culture is not permanently set and culture evolves over time (Pearson & Saunders, 2010, p. 89). The addition of new employees allows for a review process to occur during socialisation (Antonacopoulou & Guttel, 2010). During socialisation new concepts and thought processes can be integrated into the organisation allowing for organisational learning. What is learnt affects the organisational culture and allows for change and renewal (Antonacopoulou & Guttel, 2010). However, changes should be incremental to allow for adaptation, learning and congruency resulting in a stable enduring culture (Bourne & Jenkins, 2013). Too much upheaval at once, or an unclear culture, can result in the collapse of organisational culture into disarray (Schein, 1993) or organisational failure (Malbašić & Brčić, 2012).

To understand organisational and employee values and their impact on knowledge transfer, it is crucial to understand the factors of how the organisational culture is influenced and defined. Organisational culture is essentially a loop between the organisation and its employees, who will acquire an impressions from each other and the actions displayed by the organisation (Antonacopoulou & Guttel, 2010; Hultman, 2005; Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). The values and beliefs of both play a key role, this is visualised in Figure 1. A full visual representation of this section can be seen in Appendix 3.

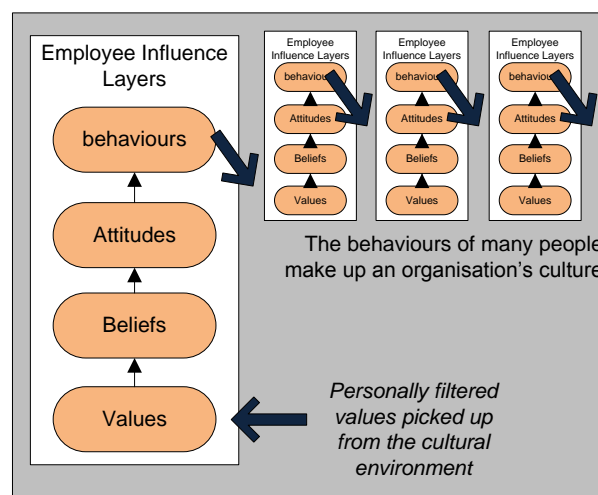


Figure 1. The influencing layers from employees on an organisation's culture.

Figure 1 has been based on work by Connor and Becker (1975), and Malbašić and Brčić (2012).

The actions of the organisation are driven by management and they must be careful to practice what they preach (Hultman, 2005; Maister, 2001). Employees will detect inconsistencies, which can harm the credibility of management and can result in a disengagement with the organisational culture and its stated values (Lencioni, 2002).

Values, a Key Factor of Organisational Culture

Values are something to strive for, and that the thought of the obtainable is consistent across different situations. For example, if a person had a value of being helpful, no matter the situation they would seek to be helpful. Because of the consistency of approach, people are able to evaluate against values to seek direction in their decisions, which in turn defines the character of who they are (Argandoña, 2003).

Values represent a normative point of view, they are what should be (Pearson & Saunders, 2010, p. 89; Suhay, 2008; Tavani, 2013, p. 21). Values are aspirations for the future (Argandoña, 2003; Tavani, 2013, p. 38) and not only relate to the individual, they have social meaning and context as well (Rokeach, 1969, p. 157).

Values are acquired from the social groups people are members of, such as their ethnicity, religion, family, gender, work place, education, and online virtual communities (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004). All these different groups combine to provide and shape the values people each have, and in turn people shape the groups they are involved with their own values (Antonacopoulou & Guttel, 2010). As an organisation can be considered a social group, the values an organisation promotes and the values of its members (as informed by various other social groups), shape the organisation's overall culture (Antonacopoulou & Guttel, 2010; Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004; Tracey, Tannenbaum, & Kavanagh, 1995).

Beliefs, another a Key Factor of Organisational Culture

Pearson and Saunders (2010) state that "Beliefs are the perceptions that people hold about how things are done" (p. 89). Beliefs form a descriptive point of view, they define what actually is (Pearson & Saunders, 2010, p. 89; Tavani, 2013, p. 21). For instance, if employees perceive knowledge sharing to be important for the organisation through tangible outcomes of creating and sharing knowledge (Ndlela & du Toit, 2001), then employees will have the belief that knowledge sharing must be performed.

The influence of Values and Beliefs on Behaviours

The behaviours of an individual or community are the result of fulfilling a need (Hultman, 2005). The way in which a need is fulfilled is shaped by the attitudes of those involved and the primary influences on attitudes are values and beliefs (Hultman, 2005). An attitude, as defined by Rokeach (1969), “is an organisation of several beliefs focused on a specific object (physical, or social, concrete or abstract) or situation, predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner.” (p. 159). Suhay (2008) adds that, because beliefs are descriptive, they are generally associated with particular attitudes, while values, being normative, can be associated with multiple attitudes. This is significant as, when values change, this has an impact on multiple attitudes be supported by certain beliefs. A change in value could call the beliefs into question, resulting in a change of attitude, and in turn behaviour (Rokeach, 1969, p. 147). This is the same process that was illustrated in Figure 1.

The Importance of Personal and Societal Values

Individuals, and their communities, which in turn make up society, have acquired values and shared values (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010) which facilitate socially beneficial behaviours.

Human society and individual minds have been reinforced over the generations to have predisposition towards, being social, trustworthy and co-operative (Ridley, 1996, p. 249). People discovered that by working together they could thrive while individuals failed (Ridley, 1996, p. 175). As a society people are generally able to discriminate between the trustworthy and the treacherous, to be able to exchange goods, knowledge and divide labour among themselves to bring about their collective aspirations (Ridley, 1996, p. 249). However, society is a reflection of its cultural ideals, and these are influenced and shaped by its members values and beliefs (Argandoña, 2003).

The values that influence and shape the members of society can be broken down further. Taking a sociological point of view, Rokeach (1973, p. 7) described two kinds of values, *terminal* and *instrumental* values. Terminal values are the end goal, which is personally and socially worth striving toward, for example, world peace, comfortable life and happiness (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998; Rokeach, 1973, p. 84; Tavani, 2013, p. 38). They are what society would like to develop into (Hultman, 2005). Terminal values are valued for their own sake, they are big picture matters. Instrumental values are favoured methods of conduct in all situations, for example, honesty, courage and politeness (Hultman, 2005; Rokeach, 1973, p. 7). Instrumental values are the method by which people plan to accomplish their purposes

and dreams opposed to what they would like to become (Hultman, 2005). Rokeach (1973, p. 28) created a list of values which is shown in appendix 4.

The Purpose of Organisational Core Values

Organisations are made up of different people, with different experiences and values; together they become a conglomerate of differing value perspectives (Hultman, 2005). What binds these differing perspectives together, are the values instilled into the organisation by its founders (Collins & Porras, 2008; Lencioni, 2002). These values become the cultural cornerstone of organisations by which all decisions and actions are made (Lencioni, 2002). However, once the founders have passed into history, their legacy of values needs to be maintained (Collins & Porras, 2008; Malbašić & Brčić, 2012) and one of the common ways in which organisations do this is through their value statements (Nelson & Gardent, 2011).

The organisation's value statement forms the core values which are considered to be essential for survival (Collins & Porras, 1996; Moor, 1997). In this case, survival is the long term success of an organisation. An organisation able to consistently endure in the long term only when its core values are adopted by all of its members, not just a few certain individuals (Collins & Porras, 2008). Core values should be seen as the drivers of unified purpose for an organisation; they provide its direction and a solid foundation for decision making by its employees (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Lencioni, 2002). It is critical that organisation's management get these enduring values correct, as they will play a large part in the on-going success and prosperity of the organisation (Malbašić & Brčić, 2012).

Impact of Values and Beliefs on Knowledge Creation

Knowledge is a combination of situational information, experiences, rules and values (Pearson & Saunders, 2010, p. 349). Knowledge can be seen as part of a progressive continuum of data, information, knowledge and wisdom (Bierly III, Kessler, & Christensen, 2000; Davenport, 1997, p. 9). Progression along the continuum requires effort, and knowledge creation is the result of a process to filter, interpret and analyse, data and information using other knowledge and wisdom. The end result is the creation of the most valuable information from multiple sources that has been thoughtfully interpreted (Davenport, 1997, p. 132). The very process of knowledge transfer and knowledge creation provides an essential mechanism for the development of wisdom (Bierly III, et al., 2000). Wisdom comprises the interaction between an individual and his or her knowledge of the environment and allows for the selection of optimal knowledge to apply to certain situations.

This ability is gained through trial and error using the lenses of values and beliefs to gather a deeper understanding of the environment (Bierly III, et al., 2000).

Kinds of Knowledge that can be Created

Knowledge can be broken down into two kinds of knowledge: *tacit* and *explicit*. Tacit knowledge is highly personal, situational specific and difficult to capture and communicate to others (Inkpen & Dinur, 1998; Pearson & Saunders, 2010, p. 350; Takeuchi & Shibata, 2006). Principally, tacit knowledge is stored in the minds of people and is the result of experience, values, beliefs and skills (Pearson & Saunders, 2010, p. 89; Takeuchi & Shibata, 2006). Because so many factors contribute to the creation of tacit knowledge, this kind of knowledge should be thought of as complex, and requires strong connections for successful transfer to others (Bourne & Jenkins, 2013; Wu, Waber, Aral, Brynjolfsson, & Pentland, 2008).

Tacit knowledge is considered the most valuable kind of knowledge to possess due to its nature (Bierly III, et al., 2000) and because it takes time to develop (Chuang, 2004). It is also the kind of knowledge associated with wisdom as it requires experience and insight to act upon (Bierly III, et al., 2000; Schein, 1993; Takeuchi & Shibata, 2006). For example, when faced with a new situation, previous knowledge and experience can be drawn upon to find a solution; the solution in turn becomes a process of knowledge creation. The ‘here and now’ is the domain of tacit knowledge (Nonaka, Toyama, & Byosiore, 2001). Tacit knowledge can be divided into three areas: (1) conscious, which are notes created during a knowledge process that could be given to others; (2) automatic, which is implicit knowledge which is taken for granted or assumed; and (3) collective, which is knowledge of social or community complexion (Inkpen & Dinur, 1998).

Explicit knowledge is knowledge that can be easily captured, articulated, and stored. Explicit knowledge can be thought of as simple, as it can be applied relatively easily without the need for experience (Bierly III, et al., 2000). The ‘there and then’ is the domain of explicit knowledge and is thought of in the past tense (Nonaka, et al., 2001). For example, if a situation that has occurred before is encountered, explicit knowledge could be sourced in order to follow a process to an expected solution for the situation.

Competitive Advantage from the Cultivation of Knowledge

To extract a competitive advantage from an organisation's knowledge assets, an organisation has to become adept at the difficult task of transferring complex knowledge between its members (Szulanski & Jensen, 2004). However, it is not enough to store knowledge in documents, that may languish in repositories, which is a western tendency (Takeuchi & Shibata, 2006; Tocan, 2012). The knowledge should flow collaboratively through social interactions in order for it to make a difference (Tocan, 2012). To place knowledge in a social setting, rather than knowledge being held by an individual or as a digitally stored artefact, is a Japanese concept (Takeuchi & Shibata, 2006). The distinction between western and Japanese thinking about knowledge was succinctly stated by Nonaka, et al. (2001). Western thinking tends to regard knowledge as explicit while Japanese thinking see it, as tacit.

The congruency of organisational values and employees' value's was studied by Posner (2010). The conclusion of the research was that alignment of organisational and personal values had a positive impact for the motivation and performance of employees. Other research (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Burke, 1995; Huang, Cheng, & Chou, 2005) endorsed the same conclusion. Authors (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Nonaka, et al., 2001; Porter, 2004; Szulanski, 1996; Yakhlef, 2007) have differing opinions on how knowledge transfer can be supported. However, they all agree that a source of competitive advantage is how effectively an organisation is able to carry out its knowledge activities, and this effectiveness is based on the values of its employees and their resulting behaviours which form the organisations culture.

Knowledge Transfer and Sharing by Organisational Employees

Porter (2004, p. 252) took a managerial stance when it came to knowledge transfer. He saw that one of the shortcomings of organisations is when they fail to place value on intangible relationships within or between divisions. While the relationships at first look have no intrinsic value to the organisation, their importance can only be understood once the methods of knowledge transfer are identified and how they make a difference to the organisation are known. Porter states that the transfer of knowledge will not occur without the active efforts of leadership within the organisation. A similar conclusion was emphasised by Szulanski (1996). His research into the impediments to knowledge transfer found that managerial consideration of relationships in and between divisions is significant. How relationships

foster communication and learning capabilities has an impact on how an organisation can leverage knowledge for the benefit of the entire organisation. Organisational culture was also considered by Porter (2004, p. 390). He argued that cooperation and communication between business units can be very difficult if they have different cultures.

The concept of knowledge stickiness was suggested by Szulanski (1996), which took into account the context of knowledge transfer, being the characteristics of the situation in which knowledge is transferred (Szulanski, 2003, p. 59). For example, the transfer of knowledge from one engineer to another could be easy, i.e. low stickiness, while the transfer of knowledge between an engineer to a salesperson could be hard, i.e. high stickiness. The factors that Szulanski (2003, p. 59) related to knowledge stickiness are: the characteristics of knowledge (e.g. tacit or explicit), the characteristics of the source of knowledge and the recipient, and the social relationship between the source and recipient. By utilising the concept of stickiness, an organisation could enhance the transfer of knowledge and its frequency, by reducing the levels of stickiness encountered during knowledge transfer situations.

In order to understand the stickiness of knowledge situations, the organisation would need to review the expected knowledge transfer routines, against the actual routines of employees (Szulanski, 2003, p. 20). The social context of the transfer would be shaped by the organisation's core values, which state the aspirations of the organisation for its employees, provide direction for the decisions employees should make and the values of the employees involved. Through understanding and improving the knowledge transfer context, this should enable an organisation to increase its internal knowledge base, leading to the generation of new combinations of knowledge (Szulanski, 2003, p. 19).

The new combinations of knowledge could result in unique knowledge assets, which is a crucial factor to gaining competitive advantage (Chuang, 2004). These views of social context, knowledge transfer between people, and their links to competitive advantage are supported by Argote and Ingram (2000). They saw knowledge in organisations as reservoirs, which, if tapped into through strong social connections, could be sources of competitive advantage. The study of the social characteristics of employees, and how they react in a particular knowledge sharing context, should lead to the discovery of methods to improve the chances of successful knowledge transfer (Argote & Ingram, 2000).

The context of a knowledge transfer situation was also seen as crucial by Yakhlef (2007). Building upon the conclusions of Szulanski (2003, p. 68), Yakhlef (2007) carried out research at an international firm, to discover how the context that employees find themselves in dictated to how effectively knowledge content could be transferred. When employees from different countries were placed in a knowledge sharing situation it was found that the context could be improved through social translation and negotiation. Even though their values at a personal level were different, they used the organisation's values, to create a common ground to set their knowledge transfer context.

Similarly, Coughlan, Lycett, and Macredie (2002) found that negotiation of context can be assisted through the use of common ground, such as an organisation's values. The technique of common ground was also highlighted in a study which observed employee behaviour before and after training (Tracey, et al., 1995). This study found that a combination of training context and the culture of the organisation affected the transfer of knowledge and the ability for the knowledge to be applied. Training was designed to create common ground through shared perspectives between employees to encourage behaviours which supported knowledge acquisition. Once employees returned to their work places, these behaviours became the basis on which the employees became involved in the wider organisation's culture.

The organisation in the study above had instilled instrumental values, which changed the routine behaviours and conduct of its employees to each other (Kolekofski Jr & Heminger, 2002) and their approach to knowledge (Bourne & Jenkins, 2013; Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). If an organisation wishes to instil values such as continuous learning, innovation and competitiveness, It is important that the organisation examines itself to see if changes are required to the organisation's culture (Tracey, et al., 1995).

The contextual view of knowledge transfer considers the tacit or explicit transfer of knowledge in a given context and the characteristics of the employees involved (Lin, 2006). This can be seen as a process of communication; knowledge is transferred from one individual to another in a particular situation. This is shown in Figure 2.

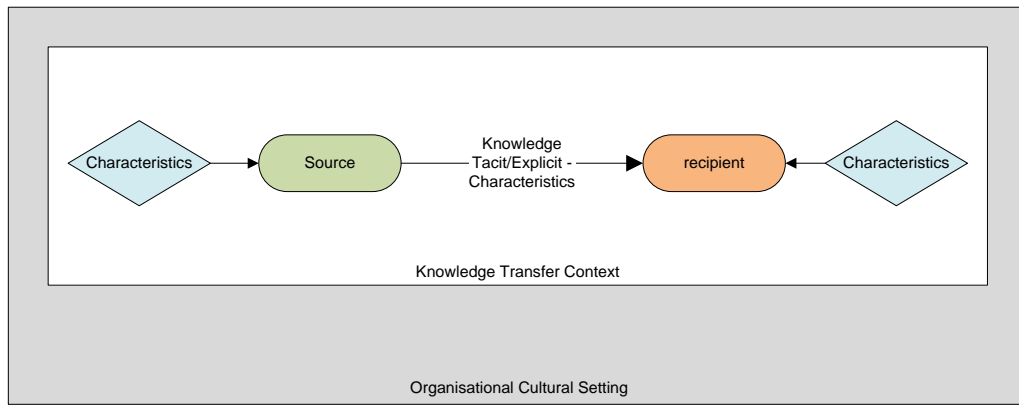


Figure 2. Contextual knowledge transfer.

Figure 2 is based on the description of the predictors of stickiness by Szulanski (2003, p. 59).

An alternative viewpoint is, to see knowledge transfer as a process of knowledge creation, rather than as a one way process (Bedward, Jankowicz, & Rexworthy, 2003). The study by Yakhlef (2007) showed that international employees were able to overcome differences resulting from being thrust into an unfamiliar context through social translation and negotiation and by creating two-way rather than one-way dialogue. Not only was knowledge transfer taking place, new knowledge about each other was being created through mutual collaboration to create a common ground using shared perspectives. Through socialisation they were changing from taking a mechanistic attitude to merely processing information, to a human-centric approach where they created knowledge through mutual collaboration, based upon their values (Bedward, et al., 2003; Nonaka, et al., 2001).

Knowledge creation theory (Nonaka, 1994) can be thought of a dynamic, interactive process of translation and negotiation of meaning between individuals conveying different forms of knowledge and comprehension (Yakhlef, 2007). The knowledge creating theory also does not focus on the individuals' appropriation of knowledge, as with knowledge stickiness. The process, involves the individual, group, and organisation from the outset (Nonaka, et al., 2001). The organisation's vision for knowledge activities is not an aloof set of policies that should be monitored and applied to knowledge situations. The organisation itself is seen as part of a holistic knowledge creation process. The organisation passes its core values through the actions of management to foster alignment of employee's values to the commitment of knowledge creation (Nonaka, et al., 2001). The knowledge creation theory involves three layers: (1) the process of knowledge creation along the SECI spiral (shown in Figure 3); (2) Ba which is the context in which knowledge is shared, created and utilised; and (3) the

knowledge assets of the organisation (Nonaka, et al., 2001). A visualisation of the three layers is shown in Figure 5.

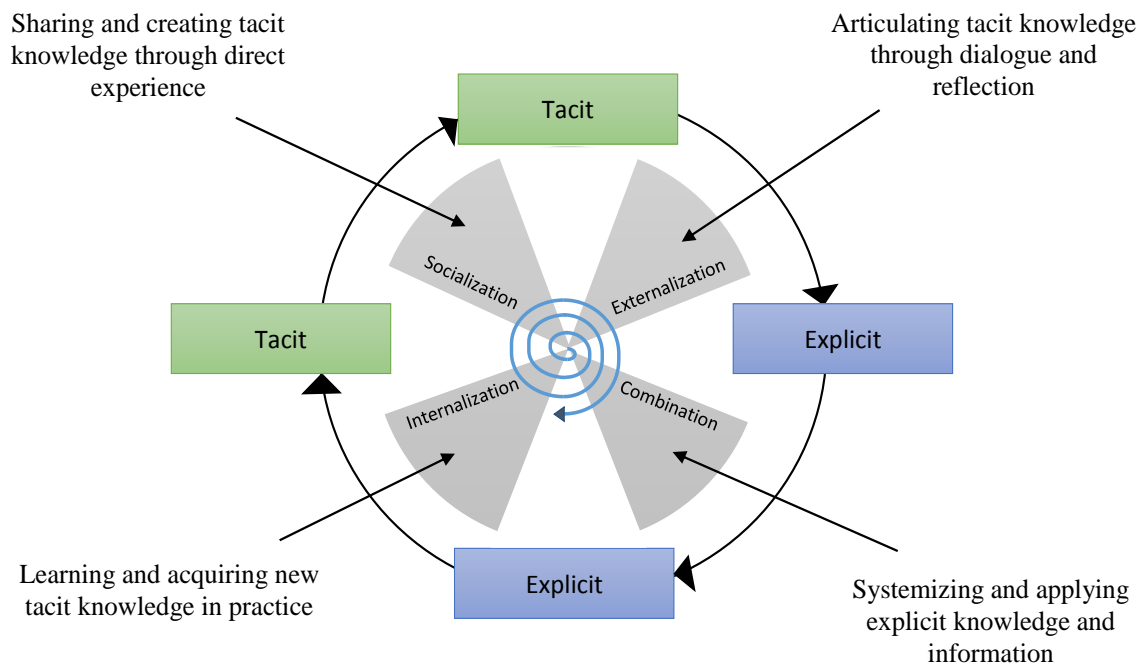


Figure 3. SECI spiral.

Figure 3 is by Takeuchi and Shibata (2006).

The key finding from the literature review is that, if an organisation is able to produce knowledge assets from an effective knowledge environment (Davenport, 1997, p. 4) it can influence its competitive position in the marketplace. An effective knowledge environment is reliant on a holistic knowledge creation process. The holistic knowledge creation process itself is a combination of the organisation's core values, its knowledge management capabilities, social interaction, mutual collaboration, leadership and its employees' routine values.

Methodology

Research Question

The purpose of this case study is to investigate the relationship between organisational and personal values and how they contribute to the behaviours of employees in transferring knowledge.

Research Design

Based on the exploratory reading for the literature review, organisations are made up of different people, with different experiences and values. An organisation therefore is a conglomerate of different value perspectives.

To provide direction for the different value perspectives, many organisations have implemented the concept of core values as proposed by Collins and Porras (1996). Many organisations have created value statements and these are the explicit source of organisational values for employees.

The statements of the organisation that this research was performed on were used as a reference point for the values the organisation would like its employees to aspire to. This reference point is used for a comparison between the organisation's core values and the routine operating values of its employees.

Research Methods

The results of semi-structured interviews provided data for qualitative research.

The research analysis was carried out using the triangulation method (Remenyi, 2013, p. 97). The method utilises three different viewpoints of data, which are used to support each other to enhance the understanding of the organisation. The method allows for a richer and deeper picture of the organisation's value and knowledge position by looking at the overall picture using three different lenses. The lenses are the, information audit framework, knowledge creation theory and the six stages of fostering values in organisations.

The hermeneutic approach was used to analyse the transcribed interviews when applying the triangulation method. The hermeneutic approach uses an holistic method, whereby all of the answers for each interview question, were considered at the same time to create an overall picture relating to the question (Remenyi, 2013, p. 119).

A subset of the information audit framework was applied to the interview and core value results (Orna, 2004, p. 41) This was to highlight any gaps between what the organisation and employees consider 'what is', and 'what should be', regarding behaviours for knowledge management within the organisation.

The knowledge creation theory (Nonaka, 1994) was used to explore the responses about how employees and groups learn, and create knowledge within an organisation.

The initial three of the six stages of fostering values in organisations method were used to critique how effectively the department within the organisation is applying the concepts identified by Argandoña (2003). The additional stages are about adapting the organisation to foster values successfully and were not used.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to commencing the research, permission was obtained from the organisation and Victoria University's School of Information Management Human Ethics Committee.

The research was carried out at a large organisation that has earned market place respect for its brand, thought leadership and organisational capabilities. Close examination of a particular part of the organisation highlights both positive and negative points. The research data presented has had all references to the organisation or other identifiable elements removed.

Organisational policies and documentation were also referenced as part of this research. These artefacts make up parts of the organisation's intellectual property and unique processes. Instead of using direct quotes from these sources, paraphrasing and generalisations are utilised to obscure the original sources.

To protect the identities of the employees who were interviewed, the transcribed interviews were not included in this essay. Any quotes or references used from the transcribed interviews were anonymised. This is to protect employees from being identified by the organisation, its employees or other sources.

Answers and views given by the employees during interviews were not used in any form of performance appraisal. This was communicated to the interviewees in the information and consent forms.

Each employee who was interviewed was given the opportunity to decline at any time during the process, and up to 10 days after receiving their interview transcripts back. This was communicated to the interviewees in the consent form, which the interviewees signed, and the information form.

All the written and recorded material for this research was stored in password protected files and folders. Any written material that was emailed was encrypted prior to sending to the interviewees' personal email address and the password sent using a different communication path.

Before the case study was submitted to Victoria University for final marking, the organisation asked for and was provided a near final draft of the case study for review.

Data Collection

Data was collected in semi-structured interviews that were carried out in person with a duration of between seventeen to sixty three minutes. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for later analysis.

The semi-structured interviews were carried out to discover employees' routine operating values, whether they were aligned with the organisation's values and whether the organisation's values have contributed to their knowledge behaviours. In addition, the interviews aimed to find out what employees knew about knowledge management and whether they felt that there were any issues with how the organisation enabled its employees to adopt the organisation's core values. The interviewees were also asked about their workplace social connections.

After each interview, notes were created from the researcher's perspective for later reflection (Remenyi, 2013, p. 98). These field notes enabled capture of the researcher's impressions over successive interviews and were used as a source of evidence for concepts that needed to be included in the literature review.

Interview Questions

The interview questions were designed to elicit data required to apply the three different frameworks which provide the basis for the triangulation analysis method.

The interviewees were provided with some additional information to assist with answering the questions. For question eight, interviewees were shown a list of the organisation's values.

To maintain anonymity, this list has not been included in the appendices. For question eleven, to keep the interview time reasonable, two lists of values were shown to the interviewees to prompt their thoughts on their own values. These lists are shown in appendix 4 and 5.

The below table (and associated key) displays which questions were expected to provide data for which frameworks.

	Information audit framework by Orna (2004, p. 41).
	Knowledge creation theory by Nonaka (1994).
	Six stage approach to fostering values within an organisation by Argandoña (2003).

Key 1. List of methods.

	Question	Why the question was asked	Relating Framework		
1	In your view, what knowledge management behaviours do you think the organisation expects of employees?	To identify the gap between what the organisation expects of its employees, and what the employees think the organisation expects of them.			
2	When you share knowledge at work, who is it most likely to be with?	To find out who the employee is sharing knowledge with. For example, do they only share knowledge with neighbours or do they have larger networks of people?			
3	When you learn or find something new, where do you store the knowledge?	To understand where employees are storing their knowledge. Where the information is stored will have an impact on who else can gain access and use the information.			
4	Consider when you share knowledge. How do you explain the knowledge to someone else?	To discover what methods employees use to share information with others. Do they explain in person, with written notes, or by a combination of these, or by other means?			
5	After communicating knowledge, what do you think happens to it?	To determine how far employees expect their knowledge to travel. Will the knowledge stop at the next person it is			

		given to, or will it get further than that?			
6	The organisation has a number of ways to share knowledge such as the Intranet or electronic file systems. Do you use these and what do you think about them?	How are staff using the tools that are provided by the organisation to work with knowledge? Are these tools assisting or creating knowledge obstacles?			
7	Researchers suggest that social interaction forms an important basis for knowledge sharing. How do you socially interact with others, and where are they usually from in the organisation?	To discover the spaces (Ba) where employees are sharing knowledge. Additionally who do they meet in these spaces?			
8	The organisation provides training on organisational values. What do they mean to you? (A list of the organisation values will be provided to assist with reflecting on them)	To find out what employees thought about the organisation's stated values and what they mean to them. Are the values of the organisation providing direction to the employees' knowledge creating endeavours or not?			
9	Do you think you are successful with applying the organisational values?	To find out how the employees are implementing the organisational values and whether they found the process easy or hard.			
10	Do you feel that the stated values of the organisation have an impact on how you share knowledge?	To determine whether the organisational values have an impact on how employees share knowledge or not.			
11	What values of your own do you think compel you to	To find out what employees thought about their own values and whether these values			

	create and share knowledge? (A list will be provided to assist with reflecting on them)	were providing direction to the employees' knowledge creating endeavours or not.			
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Table 1. Interview questions.

Research Participants

The research focuses on IT professionals from an organisation, who were all members of a department situated on a single floor. How these professionals work with knowledge and socialise with each other was studied in the context of the organisation's workplace environment.

Within the department, there are technology speciality areas, and eight employees were selected from across these different areas. These employees had different contacts with other employees or teams in the organisation. This shed light on how employees were communicating knowledge with each other, and how far knowledge travelled.

The roles of the interviewees varied across different aspects of IT support and included systems engineers, storage engineers, reporting engineers and database administrators. Some of the interviewees were also immigrants to the country. The employees interviewed can all be considered knowledge workers. Their primary focus during the work day was on knowledge related activities, rather than physical effort.

Employees in senior management positions were not be selected as the literature suggested that employees in those positions act as a conduit for organisational values to other employees (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Huang, et al., 2005). The role of management is to break down the values and the organisational vision into concepts, symbols and actions that guide employees (Krogh, et al., 2001). Given this role, including managers would prevent a clear analysis of how non-managerial employees apply values when working with knowledge.

The length of time that an employee have worked for an organisation can have an effect on their degree of institutionalisation. This aspect may have an influence on the organisational citizenship behaviour of employees (Chou & Pearson, 2012), however values are the focus of this research.

Reflections on the Research Process

After each interview had taken place, the recording of the interview was stopped. At this point some interviewees asked questions about how the research was going and what insights were being discovered. While these questions were not expected, the brief discussion did assist the researcher to conceptualise the reflective notes created following the interviews.

The reflective notes displayed similarities to many of the topics that had been covered in the literature review. For instance, many of the interviewees spoke about the social nature of working with other people, and the community connections they felt to their teams and department. Some of the interviewees also spoke of the importance of common ground and the ability to meet and socialise with others. Overall the reflective notes acknowledged that the literature review had covered relevant topic areas.

Research Analysis

Applying the Information Audit Framework

The part of the information audit framework applied in this research is an analysis of the ‘what is’ picture contrasted with the ‘what should be’ picture (Orna, 2004, p. 41). The ‘what is’ picture provides the routine experience of interviewees working with knowledge.

Whereas the picture of ‘what should be’ is the knowledge objectives of the organisation in the form of policies that provide direction to employees routines.

Below is a selection of policy directives from the organisation’s information and knowledge management policies which are relevant to this case study.

What should be - Policy Documents
Employees have read and can locate the document management and knowledge management policy documents.
What is
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Interviewees understood that they were required to create documentation.2. A few of the employees interviewed had read the document management and knowledge management policy documents.3. Most of the employees interviewed assumed that these documents existed.4. None of the interviewees knew of the policies’ location or sought the policies out.

Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.1.
What should be - Control Measures
Custom document control measures should not be implemented. The organisation's document control methods must be used.
What is
The document control measures of the organisation were not explicitly stated by any of the interviewees. However, they were following what they thought were the document control measures. These control measures appeared to be the ones set in place when the customer began with the organisation and the interviewees have continued to add to what was there originally. Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.2.
What should be - Retrieval
Documents should be stored so they can be protected and easily retrieved when required.
What is
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interviewees were having trouble searching for documents. • Unless a file location is directly known, the interviewees were not searching for documents because the search results were too large and usually irrelevant. <p>Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.3</p>
What should be - Common Location
Documents regarding customers should be stored in one common location for each customer in an online portal.
What is
The use of online portals is not consistent. Some interviewees were using shared drives while others are using online portals.
Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.4.
What should be - Restrictions
Access to customers in the online portal is restricted to the customers the employee is working on.

What is
<p>The interviewees realised that online portals are restricted to those working on that particular customer. Knowledge assets were very much considered as ours and theirs. Most of the interviewees spoke about their own customers' knowledge assets rather than accessing the knowledge assets of other customers of the organisation.</p> <p>Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.5.</p>
What should be - Document Management System Purpose
<p>The purpose of the organisation's document management system is to enable employees to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolve routine enquires more effectively using previously applied methods. • Learn topics faster. • Base decisions on previously tested and applied solutions. • Trust previously documented routines. • Expect consistent outcomes using captured knowledge.
What is
<p>The interviewees were using the document management system to be able to do the items listed above. The document management system is appreciated as it saves more time than not having it. However, knowledge is only used when someone knows where it is stored and the interviewees were not referencing each other's knowledge assets often. One person interviewed had difficulty with others accurately updating their document repository with revised documents.</p> <p>Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.6.</p>
What should be - Document Categories
<p>Documents should be categorised consistently so that the correct document policies can be applied.</p>
What is
<p>None of the interviewees mentioned document categorisation directly. However there was some concern about the storage structure of documents in general.</p> <p>Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.7.</p>

What should be - Knowledge Responsibilities
Everyone is responsible for knowledge management.
What is
<p>All the employees interviewed understood that they were responsible for knowledge management. Those interviewed understood the need for knowledge management, especially when it came to knowledge about supporting their customers.</p> <p>Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.8.</p>
What should be - Historical Knowledge
Historical corporate knowledge are important assets.
What is
<p>The interviewees understood the importance of historical corporate knowledge, however, most had difficulty in locating it in the online portal. They knew it was there somewhere, but did not have much expectation of locating the material.</p> <p>Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.9.</p>
What should be - Knowledge Asset Access
Knowledge assets will be freely available to all employees.
What is
<p>This requirement contradicts the requirement of “Access to customers in the online portal is restricted to the customers the employee is working on.” Depending on the kind of knowledge required interviewees gave different answers. It would seem some kinds of knowledge are more freely available than others. If someone does not have access to knowledge, the person who knows where it is obtains it and emails them a copy.</p> <p>Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.10.</p>
What should be - Central Storage
All knowledge is stored in the central knowledge management system. Knowledge should not be stored on local drives or unsupported systems.

What is
The interviewees had adapted their documentation storage processes to the limitations they had encountered or perceived with the tools supplied by the organisation.
Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.11.
What should be - Knowledge Asset Updates
Knowledge asset items are the responsibility of the originator. Knowledge assets created by a department are the responsibility of that department and they are required to own and maintain those assets.
What is
The interviewees took a more collaborative approach to knowledge assets, they saw themselves as the instigators of written knowledge. Once they had started a knowledge document or asset, they considered it appropriate that others added to it as they saw fit.
Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 1.12.

Applying the Stages of Fostering Values in an Organisation

The six stage method of fostering values in organisations is intended as a way for identifying and developing values within the organisation from a management point of view. The six stages are shown in Figure 4.

It is important for an organisation to have stated values, but it is the employees who give substance to those values. How effectively the values are adopted and how thoughtfully the employees participate in the organisation's value's, is dependent on the employees' environment formed by the organisation's formal and informal rules (culture) (Argandoña, 2003).

Below is the critique of the organisation and the thoughts of its employees against the initial three of the six stages of fostering values in organisations.

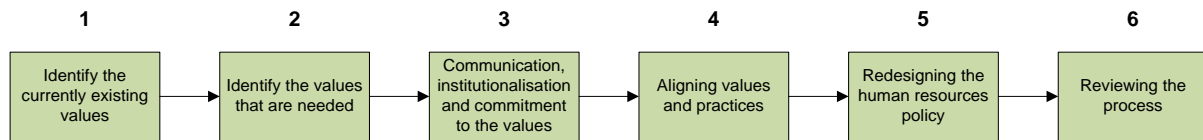


Figure 4. The six stages to foster values in an organisation.

Figure 4 is by Argandoña (2003).

Stage 1. Identify the Currently Existing Values
This stage is to identify the stated values of the organisation and to elicit the personal values of the employees.
Analysis
<p>The organisation's stated values were located in policy documents on the organisation's Intranet and public website.</p> <p>The values covered topics such as the importance of employees, relationships with customers, green sustainability, and significance of technology in relation to the organisation and its customers. The values of the organisation are of big picture matters, they focus on how the efforts of the organisation can assist to improve the circumstances of customers, employees and the world.</p> <p>The personal values defined by the interviewees are located in appendix 2.1.</p>
Stage 2. Identify the Values that are Needed
<p>This stage is to bring to light the discrepancies between the organisation's values and those of its employees. The discrepancies describe the gap, between "the reality of the values practiced and the ideal of the values needed" (Argandoña, 2003) and the impediments that the structure, policies and culture impose on employees.</p> <p>The interviewees were asked what they thought about the organisation's values, whether they felt they had adopted the values and how successful they thought they were at employing the values in challenges they face in their routine work.</p>
Analysis
All of the interviewees conveyed their commitment to supporting their customers on behalf

of the organisation. This was the most consistently accepted and adopted value of the organisation across those interviewed.

Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 2.2.

The impression from some interviewees was the values were outward focused. Rather than existing for the benefit of the employees, the values were for the benefit of effective marketing.

Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 2.3.

The interviewees who had a high level of interaction with other parts of the organisation felt more in touch with some of the values and realised the importance to their roles.

Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 2.4.

For green sustainability a value alignment was struck. The interviewees felt they had the value personally outside of the organisation and also sustained the value at work.

Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 2.5.

The adoption of all of the organisation's values was inconsistent, however, as many of the interviewees felt unsure of how the values applied at their level within the organisation. The values were viewed as distant elements of the organisation. Overall, the interviewees gave the impression that they were uncertain how to relate the values to the challenges that they routinely faced.

Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 2.6.

Stage 3. Communication, Institutionalisation and Commitment to the Values

This stage looks at how the values are communicated to employees, how the culture reflects the values, and the commitment levels to the values by employees.

The values of the organisation are available to employees on the organisation's Intranet, public website and are incorporated into annual online training.

Analysis

All of the employees interviewed knew of the values.

Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 2.7.

Some of the interviewees suggested the organisation did not fully support employees commitment to its stated values.

Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 2.8.

As the interviewees adoption of all of the organisation's values were inconsistent, commitment levels were also inconsistent.

Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 2.9.

Applying the Knowledge Creation Theory

Knowledge creation theory is a method to analyse the conditions facilitating knowledge creation.

The theory defines the context of knowledge sharing as Ba, which is a Japanese concept which approximately translates into 'space' (Nonaka & Konno, 1998). The space can be anywhere where knowledge originates. For example, in online forums in virtual space, physical places in time, such as meeting rooms with face to face interaction with particular people and mental space, where knowledge is conceptualised through internal dialogue or common ground with others (Nonaka & Konno, 1998; Voelpel, et al., 2006).

Ba sets the stage for the SECI spiral. The SECI spiral is made up of four modes of knowledge conversion (Nonaka, et al., 2001). A diagram is shown in Figure 3.

1. Socialisation (from tacit knowledge to tacit knowledge)
2. Externalisation (from tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge)
3. Combination (from explicit knowledge to explicit knowledge)

4. Internalisation (from explicit knowledge to tacit knowledge)

The spiral is a process for knowledge conversion that starts with the individual and expands from there through the different stages. The spiral does not need to be completed and many spirals of knowledge conversion can exist at the same time (Nonaka, et al., 2001).

The process begins with the individual's subjective viewpoint and their own values (Nonaka, et al., 2001). As they interact with other people and knowledge assets, knowledge connections are formed and knowledge is synthesized into new forms (Nonaka & Toyama, 2005).

At the socialisation stage, people connect with each other and communicate tacit knowledge, or thoughts with each other. In the externalisation stage, these thoughts are synthesized and formed into explicit written concepts. In combination stage, different written concepts are connected together forming new explicit knowledge assets. During the internalisation phase, written knowledge is read and considered forming new tacit knowledge in the minds of the readers. The process at this point can alter the subjective viewpoint and values of the individual. Then the process begins again.

During the SECI spiral knowledge assets used and formed. These are the past knowledge of the organisation, present knowledge, future knowledge and the capability to apply knowledge (such as using technology to work with knowledge). Knowledge assets have a moderating effect on the potential of the SECI spiral to create knowledge, as they can enable or constrain the process (Nonaka, et al., 2001).

Below is an analysis of the interviews using knowledge creation theory to see how effective the organisations knowledge creation process is. A diagram of the layers including Ba, knowledge assets and the SECI spiral of the knowledge creation theory is shown in Figure 5.

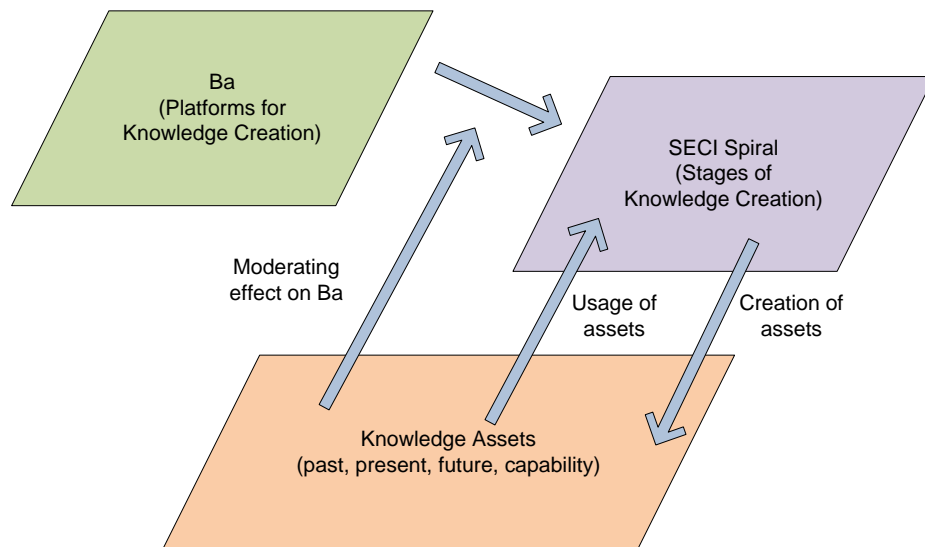


Figure 5. The three layers of the knowledge-creation process.

Figure 5 is by Nonaka, et al. (2001).

Ba	
Analysis	
<i>Examples of knowledge spaces observed during research:</i>	
Physical Ba Meeting rooms A small kitchen area on the floor Workstation areas (Desks) Organisational Posters	Virtual Ba Instant messaging Email Email newsletters Intranet (online portal) Internet Enterprise social media
Mental Ba Music Common ground	
<p>The interviewees used a mixture of methods to create Ba for their thoughts and dialogue.</p> <p>Physically, employees employ impromptu face to face meetings between desks, which some interviewees found distracting. The more structured physical spaces were scheduled team meetings. Some interviewees felt that there was no place to hang out together except at</p>	

Friday night drinks, which some people do not attend.

In the workplace, employees had displayed many of the awards they had received for good work. Most of these were from the last couple of years. A few employees had displayed the organisational values in their work areas. Some of the wall posters that were supplied by the organisation were old. One set showed what must have been the organisation's previous values, while another showed a manager who had long left the organisation.

For virtual spaces, the interviewees chose themselves which method to use when engaging with others. These methods mentioned were, email, web portals, instant messaging and enterprise social media, which were all supplied by the organisation. All interviewees mentioned limitations of the provided virtual spaces, some come down to a lack of understanding on how to use the tools while others mentioned a lack of appropriate tools. The main space where the organisation takes a direct hands on approach, is the weekly email newsletter, which informs employees of different organisational topics.

In terms of mental spaces, it was observed that some staff listen to music on personal headsets. This may have an impact on their own mental Ba, however this topic was not covered during the interviews. One interviewee spoke of common ground being formed with other employees when working on a project as they shared their experiences about working with a client.

Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 3.1.

Socialisation (From Tacit Knowledge to Tacit Knowledge)

Analysis

The interviewees primarily conversed with members of their own teams. When people dealt with other people from different teams, it was either because their role or project required the contact or they had met the other person through a prior project. Networking with other people outside of their own teams or with other departments was passive, no active socialisation seemed apparent from the interviews. However, many interviewees placed importance on meeting other people to get to know them first, before communicating knowledge. The interviewees understood the importance of social interaction to create and

share knowledge and they gave the impression they enjoyed the process.
Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 3.2.
Externalisation (From Tacit Knowledge to Explicit Knowledge)
Analysis
<p>The interviewees were open to writing down and sharing any knowledge that they have. However, they did not do so unless they were asked to. Many of the interviewees kept their own notes that they could later use as a base for a more complete piece of work to answer someone's query. This meant that while the knowledge existed in a written form, it was not necessarily available without request to the right person with the knowledge.</p> <p>The knowledge that interviewees were using was team oriented, rather than organisation oriented. This meant that when knowledge was stored in accessible location such as the online portal, it was structured to give meaning to the team but may be cryptic to someone else.</p> <p>Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 3.3.</p>
Combination (From Explicit Knowledge to Explicit Knowledge)
Analysis
<p>Only a few of the employees interviewed mentioned reusing or combining other knowledge assets into new ones. The interviewees considered it too hard to locate previously created knowledge assets, unless they knew of the author. Once they knew the author, they would pay discuss with them what had been done and whether there was any documentation. At this stage, the documentation was placed into context and used.</p> <p>The impression gained from the interviews was that it was easier to use the Internet to locate knowledge than it was to locate internal knowledge assets.</p> <p>Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 3.4.</p>
Internalisation (From Explicit Knowledge to Tacit Knowledge)

Analysis
<p>The interviewees that took the time to write down their knowledge did not always feel appreciated for having had done so, or were unsure whether what they had written was ever read. This seemed to depend on the amount of importance placed on the knowledge. One person noted that their team largely ignored their knowledge assets, while another noted that when knowledge was dispersed, the receivers did not bother updating the knowledge asset with additional related knowledge. Some interviewees mentioned they would like to find certain knowledge, but were not sure whether it was written down.</p> <p>If an interviewee sought out knowledge and a direct connection was made with the author of the knowledge asset, the interviewee was able to go back to the author for clarification when required.</p> <p>Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 3.5.</p>
Knowledge Assets
Analysis
<p>The knowledge assets of the present and future are being created by employees (See Figure 5). Some of the interviewees can see the benefits that knowledge assets can bring in the future for new staff and to facilitate support of the organisation's clients. However, past knowledge assets are not being updated or reused by employees, because of the limitations of capability knowledge assets. The interviewees understood the importance of the capability assets and how they make work easier, however the employees were having difficulty with using them to retrieve past knowledge.</p> <p>Relevant extracts from the interviews are set out in Appendix 3.6.</p>

Discussion

Discussion through the Lens of the Information Audit Framework

The comparison of 'what is' and 'what should be' (Orna, 2004, p. 41) provided a clear picture of the difference between the organisation's knowledge management policies and the actions of interviewees.

The organisation had placed effort into creating knowledge management policies. However, the employees were not using them as a reference for direction. This quote sums up the opinion of many interviewees well , “... I don’t remember if I’ve read, gone through the little training stuff we have done, it usually refers to this policy and that policy but in a lot of cases personally I would not go off and look at them unless I felt inclined that there was some additional benefit to be [*sic*] ...” The interviewees were relying on what they thought was the correct action to take, rather than basing it on the organisation’s policies. What the interviewees thought was the correct action to take was a mixture of what they believed should be done, what had been done in the past and the technical limitations that they faced.

The interviewees recognised that the creation of knowledge in a written form was important. However the knowledge was often only written as unstructured notes. It was only transformed into a beneficial knowledge document when requested by another employee, or if the interviewee thought the knowledge would have a high chance of reuse. For instance, one interviewee said “... if it’s something that I know is going to be repeatable and I get asked it more than once I will try to document it.” Another interviewee said, “... like if you are new to that client you need to know how to access that client so I would document that sort of information.” The interviewee believed that documented information would be beneficial for an employee joining their team, hence their attitude was to create documentation (See Figure 1).

The technical limitations that the interviewees faced came from the options of where employees could store their documentation and how they or others could locate the knowledge.

Nearly all interviewees described problems with locating documentation in the online portal. The following quote reflected a common theme “It is a little bit difficult, like if you did not know where to go, you would not know where to find it. It’s pretty much a, it’s a little bit of a chaos, like you really have to spend some time.” As interviewees felt the organisation’s online portal had significant limitations, they did not use it. The organisation had placed resources into creating the online portal and policy documentation to use it. However, the organisation does not seem to have considered how employees were actually going to use it effectively. It is easy to purchase technical resources, however, time spent using such resources is a scarce resource (Davenport, 1997, p. 52). If the time spent by employees using system was not considered, then the return on investment may be reduced. One interviewee

alluded to this situation “There is plenty of opportunity to use [the online portals] but I don’t see them being used.”

As interviewees avoided using the online portal, they fell back on other storage options. However, these also have drawbacks. One comment made was “Obviously I don’t use the shared drive very often, because it is full and my local drive has no access for anybody else so it’s completely isolated.” This interviewee understood that keeping their documentation to themselves was not helpful to others. But they felt, that due to the limitations of the storage, the only way to keep the documentation safe was to store it on their own device. For example, “That is not on the [online portal] and is on our local laptops, that probably should not be there, but they are because we don’t trust the [online portal].” The preferred option by many interviewees was to use the method that the online portal was meant to replace, because it was easier to use. These were shared folders, from a near capacity file server that was still available. One interviewee said “I mean, it’s not simple like a windows file share folders, it’s a lot easier to navigate than our [online portal] and to find things.”

Discussion using the Stages of Fostering Values in Organisations

The first stage looked at the values of the organisation and the interviewees. The core values of the organisation matched the definition of terminal values (Rokeach, 1973, p. 7). They were of big picture matters, such as how the organisation could improve the world through diligent support of its customers and employees, and how use of advanced technology could improve people’s lives.

The values of interviewees were instrumental values, which are how people prefer to behave to accomplish their purposes and dreams. For example, many of the interviewees said they were “cooperative,” “helpful” and “broadminded.”

The second stage of comparing the organisation’s values and those of the interviewees showed that the most aligned value was of commitment to supporting the customer. It was not uncommon to hear from the interviewees comments such as, “First thing is at this organisation, the way we work is the customer comes first, we are here to provide our customer with the best.”

The value of sustainability between the organisation and the interviewees was also aligned. However, those interviewed said they did not recycle because the organisation had it as a value, they recycled because it was a value they had themselves. One comment was, “No

that is something I do personally, it is something I do at home.” While the alignment of the value is beneficial to both parties, the organisation’s employees are supporting the value through their own attitude towards recycling. This demonstrates that the appropriation of values not only happens in the work place, but also in other social groups as well (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004).

Interviewees who had contact with employees from other parts of the organisation due to the nature of their work felt more in touch with the values of the organisation and could see their importance to their roles. One interviewee supported an application that was used by many different teams to support their customers and their comment was, “... whatever we do affects everybody, you know it’s not just one customer that we are looking at, it’s every customer using it.”

The interviewees that did not feel in touch with the organisation’s values reported that they felt unsure of how the values of the organisation applied at their level. They could not form a connection between the stated values of the organisation and the work they routinely did. A couple of comments were, “And the reason I say yes and no is because, I come to work and I focus on my bit. Everyone comes to work and focuses on their bit right” and “It’s mostly I think for the sales guys as well and the senior managers and things like that. For me we don’t interact with the clients that much so it does not apply to me.”

The cause of the disconnection in applying the organisation’s values was displayed in stage three, with the institutionalisation of employees. While the interviewees knew of the values from socialisation with each other and training by the organisation, many of the interviewees felt the organisation did not support the adoption of its values by employees. For example, “So while they’re words, they’re just words, you know, like, what are they in the business sense, like quality, like no one I know gets proper training to do stuff so how can you reassure [those values], we don’t get training ...”

Some of the interviewees had observed differences between the stated values of the organisation and its actions (Lencioni, 2002). Rather than employees becoming institutionalised on how to apply the organisation’s values, they had developed their own standards to live by. A comment made was, “I think people are more aligned to their own personal values and how they deal with somebody or how they deal with some situation.”

However, the couple of interviewees who had regular contact with other teams in the organisation, felt the organisation displayed its values through the actions of employees. For example, “So I think at this organisation we really follow our organisational values” and “This organisation supports individuals who are keen and interested and good performing.” However, the actions of other employees may not necessarily be the embodiment of the organisation’s values but the personal values of those employees.

One interviewee who thought they could see the organisation’s values in action, said of the organisation, “Not as much as they probably could, no, no I think a lot of people are left to their own devices and it’s only because of the people they are that they do the things the way they do, not because how [the organisation] is helping them follow those values.” This implies that while they could see that the organisation’s values were being employed by other employees, it was the personal values of the employees overcoming any limitations or shortcomings of the organisation to implement the values.

Another theme to emerge was that some of the interviewees sensed that the values of the organisation were more of a marketing ploy and were more for the outward appeal of the organisation rather than for employees. For example, “It’s written so it looks good. We know what it means, but we write it so it looks good to someone else” and “But other than that I don’t see [the organisation] doing anything than paying lip service to [values].” An organisation’s values are an important part of the sales process and they make up part of its marketplace brand (Collins & Porras, 1996). However, from an employee perspective, the organisation needs to do as it says and treat its core values as more than just a marketing ploy (Nelson & Gardent, 2011).

Discussion through the Lens of the Knowledge Creation Theory

The interviewees had a selection of knowledge spaces (Ba) to utilise, which form the basis of all knowledge creating activities (Nonaka & Toyama, 2005). The interviewees chose the most appropriate Ba to use for different knowledge activities for example, “It’s in the emails” and “The other connection of course is [instant messaging] ...” However, the interviewees also mentioned limitations of the spaces they had available, “I don’t understand why they don’t have a wiki ...” and “... so everywhere you stand and talk, like people could be disturbed potentially.”

Applying the SECI process to the knowledge creation activities of the interviewees, the activities were predominantly among people in their local work area. As illustrated by this comment, “I have never actually dealt or spoke with anyone [outside of where my team works] ...”. This meant that much of the knowledge creation and transfer was locally contained and was not occurring with other parts of the organisation. The knowledge creation spiral existed, but it is a very short one, as a case in point, “... That’s when that person knows you ... so after that point in time you can go to each other’s desk and that’s how the conversation really flows, but yeah there’s no other communication [with other parts of the building].”

The interviewees mentioned difficulty with finding written knowledge assets due to limitations of the tools they had available. For instance, “It is a little bit difficult, like if you did not know where to go, you would not know where to find it.” This meant they relied on verbal knowledge from their local work areas, which further reinforced the behaviour of seeking out people they knew that would have the knowledge that they needed. For example, “... they follow that document to fix it but for some reason they are not able to fix it, then they always come back cos [*sic*] they know who is the guy to see ...”

This situation meant that the knowledge assets of the organisation were underutilised. The interviewees could not find written sources even if they did exist, which could have been combined with other sources to form new knowledge assets. Instead they were seeking out people with tacit knowledge to speak to, in some cases this resulted in explicit knowledge, which once stored no one else could find.

Combination of the Three Different Lenses

The work environment is formed by the organisation and its employees. The environment also provides the context in which knowledge is created and transferred. Values are part of this context. The organisation’s values can guide or motivate a particular knowledge environment, just as that knowledge environment can enable or constrain the organisation (Davenport, 1997, p. 175).

The triangulation method and hermeneutic approach taken accentuated the constraining aspects of the current knowledge environment. The interviewees were having difficulty with the knowledge repositories available and were relying on themselves and their values to find the most appropriate places to create and store documentation. They also encountered

impediments to employing the organisation's values, due to limitations they faced with the technology available and because they were unsure how to engage with the values. This meant the interviewees relied on their own values to provide direction to their actions. The transfer of knowledge was limited within the organisation, which hindered knowledge creation and the awareness of other employees' use of the organisation's values. From these constraints, it can be observed that the values of the employees are having a greater impact on the transfer of knowledge than the core values of the organisation, and this is shaping the organisation's knowledge environment.

This situation is the result of a number of factors; however, the principle ones are discussed below.

The institutionalisation of employees was only derived from the team and department (which was on a single floor) of the employee. The comments of the interviewees portrayed a situation where new and existing employees through local socialisation were learning to perceive that the organisation was not fully committed to its core values. For instance, "So the value I get from [my organisation] is to look for help but, [I cannot connect to the people I need help from], so in the end the value didn't really help me." Another example was from an interviewee who witnessed a capable contractor leave because the organisation would not hire them. This resulted in the interviewee questioning the values of the organisation, because they let such a person go, "... but we let her go and that makes absolutely no sense and now we are stuck with a person that knows absolutely nothing." If an organisation finds people who are predisposed to an organisation's core values and those of its employees, it should go out of its way to retain them as they are rare (Collins & Porras, 1996).

Instead of aligning to the organisation's values, employees were aligning to each other's during enculturation, as this is where they found support. Two examples of this mind-set are, "... to be cooperative, to be trusted, to work as a team, team player, to get the job done." and "... its only because of the people they are that they do the things the way they do, not because how [the organisation] is helping them follow those values." The interviewees who had regular and far reaching contact with other teams in the organisation fared better; they could see the organisational commitment to its core values through other employees. These interviewees felt more alignment to the organisation's core values. The value which did align between the organisation and the interviewees was around the dedication to support the organisation's customers (See appendix 2.2).

While those in management of the organisation may understand the stated values of the organisation, those further down the structure may not. Their focus is not on the organisation itself, but the operational work to support the organisation's customers (Argandoña, 2003). Many of the interviewees had a narrow perspective of the organisation's core values in action due to their limited contact points within the organisation. Whether their beliefs were right or wrong, their view of the organisation was constrained. In this case, the situation of what values the organisation expects its employees to have once institutionalised and what they actually have, has resulted in a gap (Crossan, et al., 1999). This gap becomes most apparent at the lower levels of the organisation's structure (Argandoña, 2003) and in this instance, the gap is partly due to the lack of socialisation opportunities with other departments and organisational levels. A possible solution to this situation would be to encourage employees to have more contact with different parts of the organisation to create a common ground between employees, for example by including them in joint projects (Coughlan, et al., 2002; Crossan, et al., 1999; Nonaka, 1994; Yakhlef, 2007).

The organisation has invested in knowledge management technology for an online portal, however, the employees do not trust the technology. It was the view of the interviewees that the online portal was unreliable, hard to navigate and difficult to adapt to the way they work with knowledge. An example of the lack of adaptability was "The online portal, I am not particularly fond of that particular medium I don't think it's a great way to share information because it's so rigid in its document structure." A lack of trust of the technology available has added to the perception of the organisation not being committed to its values and has resulted in disengagement with the organisation's stated core values. This is how one interviewee felt about technology use within the organisation, "We don't enable any look at technology, and if they do it's not at our level and we are not involved at all." This alludes to two issues. Firstly, this suggests that employees were not included (at least not the employees interviewed) in the design of the online portal. The design of such tools should focus on the people who need to add value to knowledge (Davenport, 1997, p. 108). Then secondly, if an organisation is committed to its core values and the values are actually representative of the organisation, all employees have the opportunity to engage with them. If the employees cannot engage with the values or the values do not inspire employees, then they cannot really be considered core values (Collins & Porras, 1996).

The online portal was being pushed as the primary workspace for all knowledge created and used by employees. However, knowledge comes in two forms, tacit and explicit. While the

online portal provided storage for explicit knowledge, it could not store tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is complex and requires strong connections between individuals for knowledge to transfer successfully. This point is a crucial part of the SECI process (Shown in Figure 3). Knowledge begins with the individual as tacit knowledge, which then interacts with the tacit knowledge of other individuals through socialisation. The socialisation between individuals requires common ground, such as joint activity which allows a sharing of experiences (Nonaka, et al., 2001; Yakhlef, 2007). One interviewee described this situation when working on a project, "... I have spoken more to this senior manager during this [project] than I have when I was working on another client. I mean today, he actually stood there and listened to what I had to say about our [site] visit to which is quite different from when I was working on the other client account. He would walk over and ask his question and just walk away, you would probably get three words out. So it's actually quite a different experience at the moment."

By focusing the knowledge processes around explicit knowledge assets residing in the online portal, the organisation is running the risk of operating merely an information-processing machine (Nonaka & Toyama, 2005). This is when the use of knowledge assets become mechanistic and the creative flair possible with multiple knowledge sources (both explicit and tacit) is constrained. This can result in previous lessons that have been learnt, not being identified through the combination of knowledge and, as a result, they will need to be discovered again (Oppenheim & Stenson, 2003). It is not enough to store explicit knowledge in a document repository; the knowledge needs to live and breathe through social interaction of people. Knowledge transfer through socialisation will allow for a more effective flow of knowledge more than any form of technology and will determine the overall effectiveness of the integration of different organisational departments (Davenport, 1997, p. 71). A possible solution to this might be as simple as employees being encouraged to talk to each other and take an interest in the work of others they meet.

The knowledge assets of the organisation must be provided in engaging ways (Davenport, 1997, p. 133). In the age of the knowledge economy, a large portion of what an organisation does involves different knowledge assets (OECD, 1996). The organisation researched certainly had a large repository of knowledge. Comments from interviewee's were, "Things are not necessarily easy to find because there is so much information on them" and "... I think there is too much information, it's difficult to find." To be able to engage with knowledge assets, employees need an understanding of how knowledge is structured within

the organisation. For many, this may not be something that they have any experience in. For the interviewees, most of their backgrounds related to engineering roles. A couple of comments alluding to the situation were "... I am not very well practiced at documenting knowledge." and "... there's no knowledge base or anything, that this is what the [online portal] is all about, how to use it and things like that ...". It is hard for employees to engage with knowledge structures when they do not know what they need to know (Szulanski, 1996). Employees need to be trained with the appropriate knowledge management skills for their roles (Davenport, 1997, p. 114). Through training, employees can be provided with the tools they need to work towards the aspirations defined by the organisation's values (Jolton, 2014). While the organisation was making attempts to provide training and content in engaging ways through mediums such as email and newsletters, these are passive messages (Davenport, 1997, p. 125). Going by the results presented, these were not having the desired effect of passing on the relevant knowledge in an engaging way.

This leads onto another aspect of providing knowledge in engaging ways. Knowledge needs to be packaged in an effective way that is useful to its audience. This may mean that those responsible for the knowledge assets of the organisation would have to become more than just knowledge custodians, and become knowledge activists (Voelpel, et al., 2006). Rather than solely focusing on the storage of explicit knowledge, they would facilitate the flow of tacit and explicit knowledge through coordinating its creation and transfer (Voelpel, et al., 2006). For example, rather than solely curating a storage place for different customers in the online portal they might be able to gather information and knowledge together and present it in a way that catches the interest of employees. This may motivate employees to seek out further knowledge on their own which could result in the formation of new social contacts.

The triangulation method selected for the research analysis has provided a rich picture of the relationship between organisational and personal values, and how they contribute to the behaviours of employees to share and create knowledge. The method would also be useful for further research into knowledge behaviours of employees sharing and creating knowledge. This research has focused on a department on a single floor within the organisation. For further studies reviewing the actual relationships between this department and other departments, the framework by Szulanski (2003) would be better suited. That framework focuses more on the characteristics surrounding the transfer of knowledge from an individual viewpoint.

Conclusion

With the advent of the knowledge economy, the world's economy is no longer just about mass producing products and services as efficiently as possible anymore. Relying on competitive advantages gained from strategy, technology, finance and marketing are no longer guaranteed due to their now ubiquitous adoption by organisations. The differentiator now lies in the knowledge assets of an organisation. The critical component of this is an organisation's employees and the way in which they employ their own values and those of the organisation to approach knowledge activities.

This research has shown that employees' values were having a greater impact on knowledge transfer than those of the organisation. While this may meet the aspirations of the employees, the aspirational goals of the organisation may go unmet as everyone is not working in a common direction.

For the organisation to create an effective competitive advantage through the use of knowledge assets, it needs to take ownership of the performance of its knowledge environment, which is the production room for creating knowledge assets. The knowledge environment is dependent on the effectiveness of the knowledge creation process, which is a combination of the organisation's core values, its knowledge management capabilities, social interaction, mutual collaboration, leadership and its employees' routine values.

To support the knowledge environment, the organisation needs to create opportunities for all employees at all levels within the organisation to engage with its values. The organisation must proactively create spaces (Ba) for knowledge to be shared, transferred and created. The organisational systems created must cater for both tacit and explicit forms of knowledge. Knowledge needs to be packaged in engaging ways for different employee roles. Employees should be exposed to different departments and projects to build common ground between them.

These aspects require an approach that is both technical and human-centric. The foundation would be the organisational support and inspiration of employees to adopt organisational values. This in turn would foster the right culture for purposeful knowledge behaviours. Only then can both the organisation's core values, and the values of employees, invigorate the transfer of knowledge to create a true competitive advantage utilising organisational knowledge assets.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

All of the employees interviewed for this research were members of a single department, who were all situated on the same floor. While this allowed for useful analysis of the department's members and their interactions with employees from other departments, this may have introduced group bias into the results. However, during the research it was necessary to explore the cultural situation the interviewees found themselves in when transferring knowledge.

Only eight employees were interviewed in this research. However, when this number is taken in the context of the number of people on the floor, which was well under a hundred people, the interviewing of eight people is a reasonable representation of the employees. Further research could look at the barriers to knowledge transfer between departments in the organisation. This may highlight departments that are adopting the organisation's core values effectively.

As stated earlier, the sample of employees interviewed did not include any managers. Managers were intentionally not interviewed due to their role in disseminating organisational values to employees. However, an interesting avenue of research could be the investigation of the actions of managers explaining the organisation's core values. This may lead to the discovery of barriers for managers in interpreting and explaining the organisation's values to their staff.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Evidence for the Information Audit Framework

Appendix 1.1 - Policy Documents

- “I think there’s nothing written somewhere but I think the organisation expects us to like document whatever information or I know things about and put it maybe to a shared folder somewhere.”
- “... I read it, I understood it.”
- “I have seen that in emails, I’ve seen the higher management telling employees to try to document as much as they can, and that’s what they expect from us.”
- “... I don’t remember if I’ve read, gone through the little training stuff we have done, it usually refers to this policy and that policy but in a lot of cases personally I would not go off and look at them unless I felt inclined that there was some additional benefit ...”

Appendix 1.2 - Control Measures

- “... like if you are new to that client you need to know how to access that client so I would document that sort of information.”
- “The document actually has a living copy that lives in the shared space of my team.”
- “... do we have the necessary knowledge available to us or are we noting down the necessary knowledge, to ensure that when I am not here in, I don’t know 10 years, 5 years, a years’ time the next person understands what is going on.”
- “I guess you a referring to documentation and maintaining that documentation and keeping that documentation up to date including meeting ISO standards when it pertains to knowledge management documentation.”
- “Yep, operational support manual is the starting point ...”
- “... so I’ve set my knowledge out in a way that I would expect to see it ...”
- “I don’t have a particular template I just use the knowledge that I had in a previous role and how I would expect that knowledge to be set out.”

Appendix 1.3 - Retrieval

- “When it comes to the online portal I find that the presentation is not very good. I think the portals were designed to be attractive rather than functional.”

- “I think they are overly complicated, I think to some degrees they are poorly managed. For example, online portal, they changed the structure on it and they left the old data and the new data in the structure and that’s pretty bad, especially when people say oh I’m looking at this but you’re looking at a completely different version of that document.”
- “Also I have used [online] portals for like project collaboration stuff, for storing documents. I find them very cumbersome mostly because of the way they are setup and designed.”
- “People don’t have any sort of strict rules about how they setup their online portals, so you find a document which is eight or nine levels down before you actually discover it and my understanding is that the online portals are not that good anyway.”
- “It is a little bit difficult, like if you did not know where to go, you would not know where to find it. It’s pretty much a, it’s a little bit of a chaos, like you really have to spend some time.”
- “Things are not necessarily easy to find because there is so much information on them. And that’s just through personal experience of obviously trying to search for a piece of paper which came up with a hundred different results which was not relevant.”
- “It’s not like you go on the website and some websites are real easy to find stuff. Because you can pretty much go search and they give you the right document that you are looking for, but it gets a little bit complicated because the terminologies I guess as they are quite specific.”
- “A couple of times I have done the odd search for, I looking for this but there is just pages and pages of stuff which possibly relates, maybe it’s just me reading it briefly, but it just seems like there is a lot of information there and it’s difficult to ascertain what applies and what does not.”

Appendix 1.4 - Common Location

- “Yeah Intranet especially for the [online portal], when I mentioned the operations document, it’s all in the [online portal] which again is Intranet.”
- “I do use these, I have seen a couple of places on our intranet in the organisation where I can store documents and I have stored documents. There is plenty of opportunity to use them but I don’t see them being used.”
- “But if it’s something that probably that needs to be shared by the whole team then

<p>probably it should go on the online portal or is it a bit of information that probably should be on the [online] portal.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “As you know there’s a shared drive. So mostly it’s in that [shared] drive. So that’s our only shared location which we, which I know basically.” • “Typically in a network share or online portal area which is particular to my workgroup or team, which is windows and then that is specifically split out to the customer.”
<p>Appendix 1.5 - Restrictions</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I can access other hub site but, yeah, but the knowledge remains with that particular customer account, so to speak.” • “The document actually has a living copy that lives in the shared space of my team.” • “I would not run off and look at someone else’s documentation unless someone said hey this would be really beneficial if you went and read this, then I would go have a look but I wouldn’t just off the cuff go and look at someone else’s documentation, I just don’t have the time.”
<p>Appendix 1.6 - Document Management System Purpose</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I would have to say New Zealand, my work colleague is in [in another part of the country]. So a lot of the work we do day to day sometimes we will reference documents that is available to us on the [online] portal.” • “I would not run off and look at someone else’s documentation unless someone said hey this would be really beneficial if you went and read this, then I would go have a look but I wouldn’t just off the cuff go and look at someone else’s documentation, I just don’t have the time.” • “So, suppose we had an issue and this is a document how to fix it, so they follow that document to fix it ...” • “So the information which I normally need I know where to go but others like configuration and all that stuff, I know it’s there but I don’t utilise it.” • “... yeah I never been told that there’s you know, if you’re looking for something like this you should look here ... or a couple of other people who have got there living documents about what they do in the client.” • “I think it has made life easier, I think life would be harder without it.” • “... I think we would be in big strife if we did not have them.”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The current experience with this new customer is obviously a really good example, cos we are learning all this new stuff and we have to bring all this stuff together. All this new information regards to the customer, we obviously have to bring that together and be at the same level, to obviously be able to deal with the customer.” • “So it’s a very useful way of managing the documents and any documents which are related to the team.” • “... I have written a document and put it online for people to read then one would hope they would, if someone says that hey we need this, I can say yeah I’ve written a document, this is what it is, it’s here go read it.” • “... even though people maybe saving information somewhere, there’s no real link that you can find to it.”
Appendix 1.7 - Document Categories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It seems although documentation is just put into corporate drives and the structure there again seems to be pretty much just ad hoc and now we have moved to the online portal but still there is no one really over seeing it at all really.”
Appendix 1.8 - Knowledge Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “... if it’s something that I know is going to be repeatable and I get asked it more than once I will try to document it.” • “... sharing knowledge is quite essential.” • “... we don’t want to hamper is specific knowledge management and we should be concentrating more on a team based knowledge management ...” • “Well I believe we need to record via documents all technical procedures.”
Appendix 1.9 - Historical Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Things are not necessarily easy to find because there is so much information on them.” • “There is quite a lot of information on the Intranet but it takes time to look for them and things like that.” • “It is a little bit difficult, like if you did not know where to go, you would not know where to find it.”
Appendix 1.10 - Knowledge Asset Access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “So in a sense it becomes siloed [<i>sic</i>] to that customer.” • “Well once it’s published, anyone has access to it.”

- “I am more than willing to provide information.”
- “I would send them a link to it and say look at it ...”
- “Apart from that, like I said email is my most common medium to teach everyone or share the knowledge.”
- “So it becomes easier for everyone, I’m not really one for hiding things and it’s better that anyone that needs to access it can access it.”
- “I do like to share the information as much as I can ...”

Appendix 1.11 - Central Storage

- “That is not on the [online portal] and is on our local laptops that probably should not be there, but they are because we don’t trust the [portal].”
- “... I try where possible to send a link, but people always copy the document to their home drives or their group drives. So I always try and stipulate when I’m sending it out that this needs to go into a central repository and there should only be one copy of it.”
- “But of course there is no way of enforcing it.”
- “Quite often I have my own notes in my home drive about a particular customer.”
- “I mean, it’s not simple like a windows file share folders, it’s a lot easier to navigate than our [online portal] and to find things”.
- “Obviously I don’t use the shared drive very often, because it is full and my local drive has no access for anybody else so it’s completely isolated”.
- “The online portal, I am not particularly fond of that particular medium I don’t think it’s a great way to share information because it’s so rigid in its document structure.”

Appendix 1.12 - Knowledge Asset Updates

- “... we should be concentrating more on a team based knowledge management so that anyone can come up with minimum skill and keep the baby rocking.”
- “Or you know they could act on it, being they write it down, they put it somewhere, they process it, in a way that they process it, so they either write it down and make their own notes or they take note that this information is stored somewhere where they can.”
- “Yeah. So you could be the author of a document but there’s a table of change inside the document where people are welcome to add to it. So from my point of view anyone can add to a document that I author though I am not considered responsible

for those updates. Whether people do improve on that document or revise it. Again it's pretty open."

Appendix 2

Evidence for the Stages of Fostering Values in an Organisation

Appendix 2.1 - Stage 1. Identify the Currently Existing Values

- "Helpful, yeah I definitely believe in that, we should be helping each other out."
- "Equality, its quite importance personally to me ..."
- "... broadminded ..."
- "Happiness and feeling content, definitely agree ..."
- "I believe in an exciting life, active life ..."
- "... cooperative ..."
- "... analytical ..."
- "... candid ..."
- "Equality, I think, I strongly believe that everyone should be treated equally."
- "I know that my mentoring has helped another person to basically grow and make a better career. So that makes me feel better."
- "... what I consider exciting is not coming to work from 9 to 5 ..."
- "... genuine ..."
- "Yeah I would like to think that there is a sense of accomplishment."
- "Well I guess it comes down to treating others as you wish to be treated."
- "... honest ..."
- "... customer first ..."
- "... best quality ..."
- "Helpful, because we want our colleagues to have the same level of information."
- "... a comfortable life ..."
- "... I do try to be as responsive as possible ..."

Appendix 2.2 - Stage 2. Identify the Values that are Needed

- "We are always within our SLA's which ensures that our quality to our customers are measureable and within the acceptable limits."
- "Customers are important, at the end of the day, in my role we are very customer

<p>focused.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The customers are first, so I’ll treat them the way they should be.” • “We most certainly do, we have our main focus on the customer. Customers are our bread and butter. So no matter what’s happening in house, we always try not to affect the customer.” • “We put stuff in place, I guess from what I can see, people try really hard to do stuff. You know, to react to whatever the customer is saying.” • “Because that is us delivering services to our customers.” • “First thing is at this organisation, the way we work is the customer comes first, we are here to provide our customer with the best ...”
<p>Appendix 2.3 - Stage 2. Identify the Values that are Needed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I think in order to get short term goals such as a win, [the organisation] has pretty much sold itself or its underestimated its ability to deliver, resulting in customer dissatisfaction.” • “It’s mostly I think for the sales guys as well and the senior managers and things like that. For me we don’t interact with the clients that much so it does not apply to me.” • “It’s written so it looks good. We know what it means, but we write it so it looks good to someone else.” • “But other than that I don’t see [the organisation] doing anything than paying lip service to it.”
<p>Appendix 2.4 - Stage 2. Identify the Values that are Needed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “So now when I am stuck somewhere I ask them for help and they are good in answering it.” • “So we have to look at it as ... whatever we do affects everybody, you know it’s not just one customer that we are looking at, it’s every customer using it”.
<p>Appendix 2.5 - Stage 2. Identify the Values that are Needed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “... I try to incorporate those values when we go out of the office and also when I am at home ...” • “No I do that personally, it is something that I do at home.” • “I do my best to recycle each day.”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “... yes I go out of my way to recycle and things like that.”
Appendix 2.6 - Stage 2. Identify the Values that are Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “... this is just gobbledygook.” • “... yeah I think it is more of a rubber stamping exercise.” • “And the reason I say yes and no is because, I come to work and I focus on my bit. Everyone comes to work and focuses on their bit right.” • “Some yes, some don’t. Some it fits within my job description and things like that. So that works out, but others to be honest no.” • “It’s mostly I think for the sales guys as well and the senior managers and things like that for me we don’t interact with the clients that much so it does not apply to me.” • “But yeah it’s a good thing to learn [about the organisation’s values].” • “Hell no, not for any of those things. Because it has all these organisation values but they are just words to me.” • “We don’t enable any look at technology, and if they do it’s not at our level and we are not involved at all.” • “Pass, because I think this happens on a way higher level than mine. Because I wouldn’t know anything about what innovation the organisation is doing.” • “... to me I think it’s more for management, not for technical guys ...”
Appendix 2.7 - Stage 3. Communication, Institutionalisation and Commitment to the Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Oh right, they are the ones I was thinking of.” • “This is the morals and the values we base ourselves on and why we do business.” • “We always get reminded at the quarterly corporate meetings about this organisation’s culture.” • “I think in general we do have these brand values, I think a lot of this comes back down to the issue of common sense that we expect our colleagues to have.” • “But at the same time as these organisational values are actually happening but proxied [<i>sic</i>] through my manager.”
Appendix 2.8 - Stage 3. Communication, Institutionalisation and Commitment to the Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “But I don’t think we are supported as well as we could be, but I think that just when

you're such a large [organisation] I guess there are compromises."

- "But the same managers at a higher level will talk about these values and then there's online learning, that talks about them or point you to a PDF, but sometimes it's like a scratch and sniff card that you get for a competition with there's a shiny silver paint on the surface but when you scratch the paint away there is not a prize underneath."
- "So while there words, they're just words, you know, like, what are they in the business sense, like quality, like no one I know gets proper training to do stuff so how can you reassure [those values], we don't get training ..."
- "Not as much as they probably could, no, no I think a lot of people are left to their own devices and it's only because of the people they are that they do the things the way they do, not because how [the organisation] is helping them follow those values."

Appendix 2.9 - Stage 3. Communication, Institutionalisation and Commitment to the Values

- "From past experience it is difficult [to apply values] when you are strangled by the processes implied by your customer."
- "Yeah well I definitely do, cos [*sic*], I've got [] values up on the wall in my pod ..."
- "Not sure about [those values] though."
- "This organisation supports individuals who are keen and interested and good performing."
- "So I think at this organisation we really follow our organisational values."
- "I don't see [the organisation] doing anything than paying lip service to [values]."
- "They don't provide the employees a path to follow ..."
- "I think people are more aligned to their own personal values and how they deal with somebody or how they deal with some situation."
- "... I don't have the direction towards it you know."
- "They could never breed loyalty like that, that's why so many people leave."
- "From my perspective I would say so. I would definitely say that we focus a lot on [this value]."

Appendix 3

Evidence for the Knowledge Creation Theory

Appendix 3.1 - Ba

- “It’s in the emails.”
- “The other connection of course is [instant messaging] ...”
- “... we have our Friday drinks, we have a social chat about what people are doing in their fields ...”
- “Usually at their desks, I mean the whole idea of a collaboration area like a kitchen or like that I mean I don’t think it’s particularly relevant in our jobs ...”
- “... having a common lunch together, which is quite easy to arrange.”
- “I don’t understand why they don’t have a wiki ...”
- “... I don’t really fancy hanging around too much after hours ...”
- “I don’t think there’s much interaction or hang out within this floor.”
- “On my floor there’s a little kitchen where we can sometimes have a little chat about stuff, there’s not much openings for having those conversations [about knowledge] ...”
- “... have a conversation there because there’s desks everywhere so everywhere you stand and talk, like people could be disturbed potentially.”
- “...we have team meetings every week to discuss what is going on.”
- “I think people are trying, in this instance, it does not matter who they are, they are sharing their experiences on this transition. I guess it’s trying to bring everyone up to speed, ... but I think that’s what is sort of happening. I learned this about the customer or I learned this about the customer and that’s sort of like a common ground.”

Appendix 3.2 - Socialisation (From Tacit Knowledge to Tacit Knowledge)

- “Yeah we have team meetings every week to discuss what is going on.”
- “... we have people that come in from all the other departments, that’s the advantage of all sitting together that people can just pop in and ask us ...”
- “The other connection of course is [instant messaging], which goes on all day.”
- “Ah, with my team mate first.”
- “... at the moment it is very localised to our team itself.”
- “So I feel coming out of your area and at least making an attempt to understand other

technical areas is very important to bring up a good solution.”

- “Usually peer to peer in my role ...”
- “Well mostly I socially interact with people from my own team or in our ... competency but also talk to other [teams] as well ...”
- “... I prefer to show and pass on that knowledge by showing them ...”
- “... humans are social people and we need opportunity in order to find out information ...”
- “I am not a learn by reading person, I never have been. ...I am a person who learns by doing.”
- “I have never actually dealt or spoke with anyone [outside of where my team works] ...”
- “... I don’t think I’ve ever had a problem working with someone regardless of how well or little I knew them.”
- “... like sometimes people would like to add their comments in, but mostly I don’t think they do.”
- “... That’s when that person knows you ... so after that point in time you can go to each other’s desk and that’s how the conversation really flows, but yeah there’s no other communication [with other parts of the building].”
- “He would walk over and ask his question and just walk away, you would probably get three words out.”
- “You tend to learn more about people, the more you are involved with them.”
- “So it’s a matter of judging or hoping you understand the person that you’re talking to, their level of knowledge and being able to recognise whether they have understood what you have said.”
- “It’s harder to talk to a stranger, than it is to talk to someone you know something about.”

Appendix 3.3 - Externalisation (From Tacit Knowledge to Explicit Knowledge)

- “... I will send them the document. I have already tested it myself first from my perspective. I will send it to them to try it and if they find anything that they don’t understand they will come back, then I can update the document ...”
- “... I have seen a couple of places on our [online portal] ... where I can store documents and I have stored documents. There is plenty of opportunity to use them

but I don't see them being used."

- "No I free form my knowledge."
- "We would not know where to find that information, so their knowledge ..."
- "Typically in a network share or [online portal] area which is particular to my workgroup or team ..."
- "It is a little bit difficult, like if you did not know where to go, you would not know where to find it."
- "Probably teams mates ... but anyone who asks."
- "I don't tend to write notes individually down I'm more of a do it a couple of times, it's just in [my head]."
- "... if you are new to that client, you need to know how to access that client, so I would document that sort of information."
- "... small snippets of emails saying this is how to do this ..."
- "Generally I am a notes person."

Appendix 3.4 - Combination (From Explicit Knowledge to Explicit Knowledge)

- "My colleague has her own folder on her laptop which she keeps putting all the scripts and whatever she find interesting, like any articles she might have read online which I might have sent."
- "It is not to say I could not go into another [online portal] and go through their documentation."
- "So from my point of view anyone can add to a document ..."
- "There is quite a lot of information on the Intranet but it takes time to look for them ..."
- "The scenario which never really happens is that they pass around the knowledge."
- "The document actually has a living copy that lives in the shared space of my team ... but it seems like that not many people are interested."

Appendix 3.5 - Internalisation (From Explicit Knowledge to Tacit Knowledge)

- "... but I could not replicate what they did or increase my knowledge about the product by looking at what they did."
- "Well I always invite people to improve on it or use it."
- "... but where is the formal management training."
- "I write some huge emails sometimes, and some screen shots ... just to explain how

things are done.”

- “... they follow that document to fix it but for some reason they are not able to fix it, then they always come back cos [*sic*] they know who is the guy to see ...”
- “Yeah, but it seems like that not many people are interested [in reading it].”
- “... I’ve written a document and they might understand, they might go away and read the document.”
- “But I’ve had issues with that with a couple of [times] where I have updated a document, sent it out ... and said please update your central repository with this document, it is a new version and then two days later I’ll get a call logged with the whole document attached to it and then I’ll have to go, you have attached the wrong document, please update your central repository and delete any old versions.”

Appendix 3.6 - Knowledge Assets

Past

- “... when I get an old version back, I’ll talk to the team leader and say you have been sent a new one, but your team is still putting the old one in the documents ...”
- “So I draw down a quick summary of it ... if you do this way, it will be easier to mitigate the issue ...”
- “Quite often documentation is either created at the time of the completion of a project ... and to be honest is seldom updated from that point onwards.”

Present

- “I use our [online portal] knowledge base for storing most of my ... documentation.”
- “... it’s not a word document, it’s a real time view.”
- “... it’s all in ... which again is [the] Intranet.”
- “There is plenty of opportunity to use [the online portal] but I don’t see them being used.”

Future

- “... I try to instil in them because we go through staff quite quickly at that level.”
- “... the key for me is to get all the operational documents ready so that when a new team member joins, it should be seamless for him to understand what the environment is ...”

- “So now when I am stuck somewhere I ask them for help and they are good in answering it.”
- “... the more knowledge you share the more you learn.”

Capability

- “I find them very cumbersome mostly because of the way they are setup and designed.”
- “It’s just sometimes it gets really difficult to use those [online portal] systems.”
- “So a lot of the work we do day to day, sometimes we will reference documents that is [*sic*] available to us on [the online portal].”
- “Apparently they have more tools ... than we do, and they are not replicated here ...”
- “The amount of knowledge and information out there requires things like intranet and electronic file systems ... I think we would be in big strife if we did not have them.”

Appendix 4

Milton Rokeach’s Value Words

The value word list below was used as an example of value words during the semi-structured interviews.

Rokeach (1973, p. 28) created a list of 18 terminal and instrumental values as the result of research into lists of values compiled by earlier authors such as Anderson (1968). The list is known as the Rokeach Value Survey. The values listed below were considered the most relevant to the most number of people. These formed the basis for Milton Rokeach’s own research questions.

Terminal Values	Instrumental Values
A comfortable life (a prosperous life)	Ambitious (hard-working aspiring)
An exciting life (a stimulating, active life)	Broadminded (open minded)
A sense of accomplishment (lasting contribution)	Capable (competent, effective)
A world at peace (free of war and conflict)	Cheerful (lighthearted, joyful)

A world of beauty (beauty of nature and the arts)	Clean (neat, tidy)
Equality (brotherhood, equal opportunity for all)	Courageous (standing up for your beliefs)
Family security (taking care of loved ones)	Forgiving (willing to pardon others)
Freedom (independence, free choice)	Helpful (working for the welfare of others)
Happiness (contentedness)	Honest (sincere, truthful)
Inner harmony (freedom from inner conflict)	Imaginative (daring, creative)
Mature love (sexual and spiritual intimacy)	Independent (self-reliant, self-sufficient)
National security (protection from attack)	Intellectual (intelligent, reflective)
Pleasure (an enjoyable, leisurely life)	Logical (consistent, rational)
Salvation (saved, eternal life)	Loving (affectionate, tender)
Self-respect (self-esteem)	Obedient (dutiful, respectful)
Social recognition (respect, admiration)	Polite (courteous, well-mannered)
True friendship (close companionship)	Responsible (dependable, reliable)
Wisdom (a mature understanding of life)	Self-controlled (restrained, self-disciplined)

Appendix 5

Generic Value Words

The value word list below was used as an example of value words during the semi-structured interviews (George & George, n.d). The list contains many words from the 555 trait words list by Anderson (1968).

Accepting	Decisive
Accommodating	Diplomatic

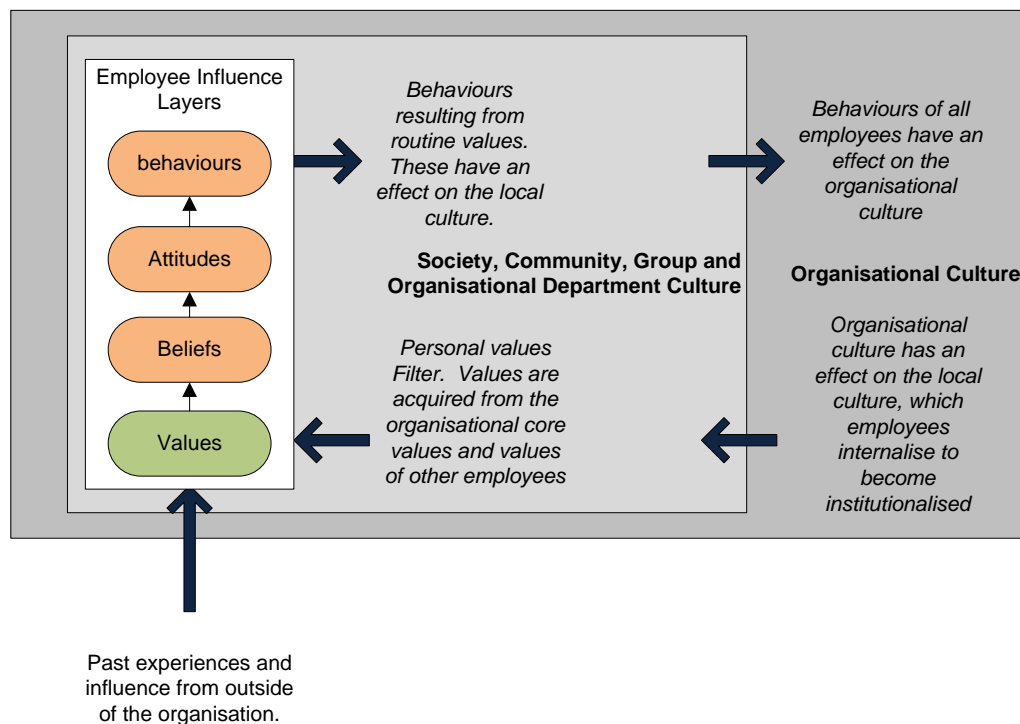
Affectionate	Discreet
Affirming	Easy going
Agreeable	Educated
Alluring	Effective
Altruistic	Efficient
Ambitious	Encouraging
Amiable	Enthusiastic
Analytical	Extroverted
Appreciative	Flexible
Articulate	Forgiving
Assertive	Forthright
Attentive	Friendly
Authentic	Frugal
Balanced	Genuine
Candid	Godly
Careful	Graceful
Caring	Growing
Cheerful	Hard working
Comforting	Helpful
Communicative	Honest
Compassionate	Humble
Competent	Humorous
Congenial	Imaginative
Conscientious	Industrious
Cooperative	Insightful

Courageous	Intelligent
Creative	Intuitive

Appendix 6

Employee Institutionalisation in Action

This a diagram resulting from the understanding gained of the institutionalisation process of employees. This has been based on work by Antonacopoulou and Guttel (2010), Bourne and Jenkins (2013), Connor and Becker (1975), Hultman (2005). Malbašić and Brčić (2012), Meglino and Ravlin (1998) and Ndlela and du Toit (2001). This diagram formed a basis for the thought processes behind this case study.



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