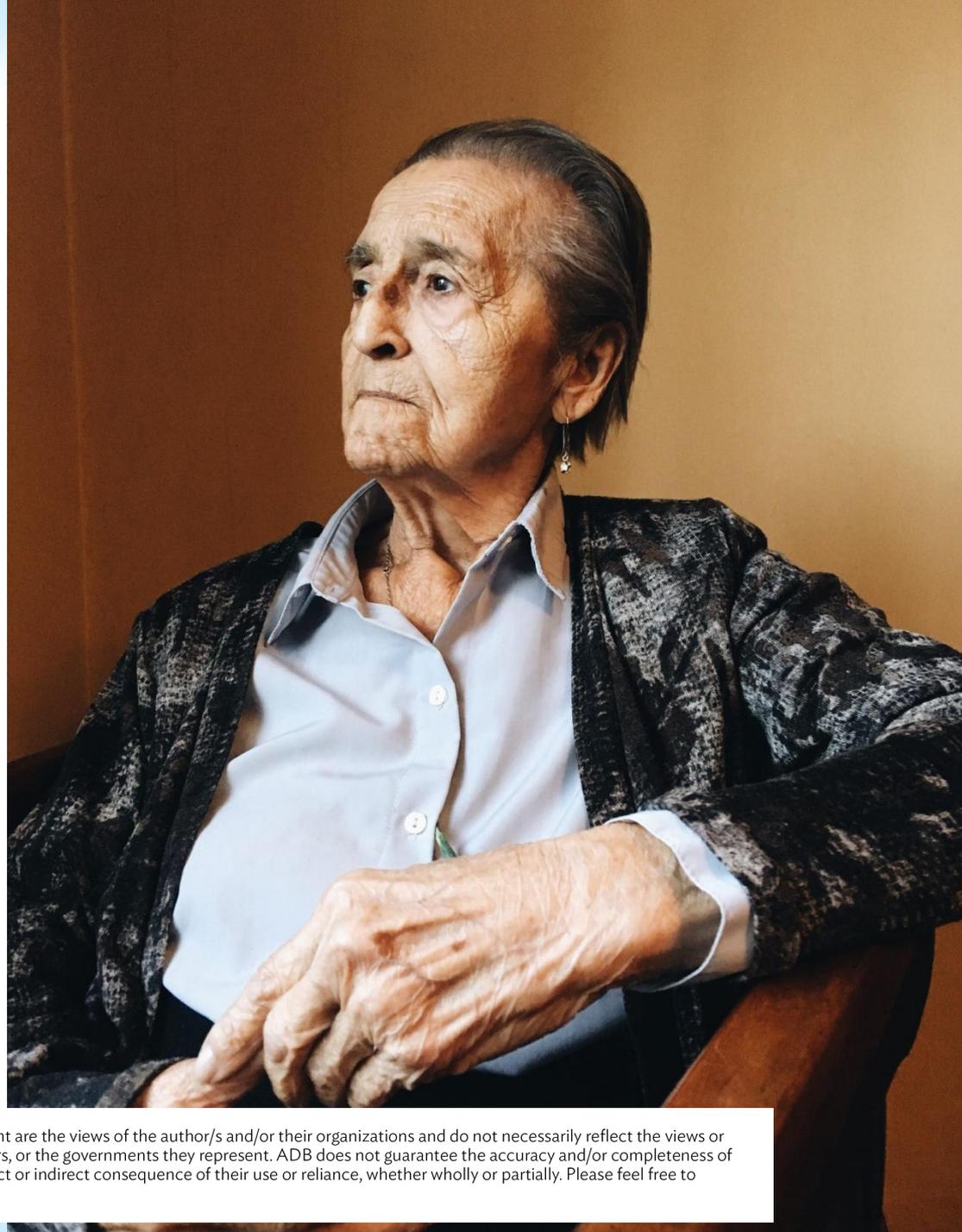


Tacit Knowledge

All Knowledge Managers know about the difference between tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge, and the difference between the undocumented knowledge you hold in your head, and documented knowledge which can be shared. We often assume that the "head knowledge" (whether tacit or explicit) is the Holy Grail of KM; richer, more nuanced, more contextual and more actionable than the documented knowledge

Read more here

Photo by [Diego Duarte Cereceda](#) on [Unsplash](#)



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The value of questioning

- **Perhaps the most important skill for the KM professional is the skill of Questioning.**
- Questions are the hook from which most of your knowledge hangs. Anyone with small children knows that tireless questioning underpins their early learning. The same principle applies in organisations. Making tacit knowledge conscious, making it explicit, and capturing or transferring that knowledge is triggered through the use of questions.

Poor questions result in poor knowledge, or result in knowledge never been identified in the first place. We recognised this recently when working with a company who had been trying to identify knowledge through [Retrospects](#), without giving any training in questioning skills to the Retrospect facilitators. As a result, the knowledge gathered was superficial and of very low value.

Questioning is important in [knowledge interviews](#), when you are trying to help the interviewee to reflect on their experience. Group questioning works the same way in the [after action review](#) and retrospect processes. In communities of practice, the facilitator often needs to "[question the question](#)", and find out what a community member is really asking about and looking for, before they a question can be answered.

Questioning techniques include the use of open questions, the use of probing questions to get down to the next level of detail, the use of closed questions to home in on a learning point, and the use of summarising and feeding back to ensure you have fully understood the answers. We teach the skills of open questioning, and the use of question trees, in our core [Knowledge Management training courses](#).

Listening skills are also very important, and are part of good questioning technique. Listening carefully to the answer, assessing how much knowledge has been provided, and asking additional questions to fill the gaps - this is also part of the Knowledge Manager's skillset.

Read more here: [Knoco stories: question http://www.nickmilton.com/search/label/question#ixzz5X0aVvuN3](http://www.nickmilton.com/search/label/question#ixzz5X0aVvuN3)



Peer Assist

- A Peer Assist is a process for bringing knowledge into a project, or piece of work, at the outset. It is a meeting, where a project team invite a number of people with relevant knowledge and experience, which they bring to bear on the issues of the project. They apply out-of-team knowledge to the team's context. It is one of the easiest and most effective ways of bringing knowledge to the point of need. The exchange of knowledge is tacit to tacit, based on question and answer
- A Peer Assist meeting may take anything from a few hours to a few days, depending on the scale of the project. It should have clear objectives and deliverables (such as producing a ranked listing of risks and options, or cutting 20% off the project cost, or something similar). During the Assist, the project team will lay out their plans, objectives, issues, opportunities and challenges, and the visitors will use their knowledge and experience from similar projects to provide recommendations, options, issues and guidance. The project team are not obliged to act on the recommendations, but use them as valuable input to start the project from a greatly enhanced knowledge base.
- Read more here
- <https://www.knoco.com/peer-assist-page.htm>



Lessons Meeting

- The Retrospect is one of the most effective processes for [capturing lessons learned](#) from a project team, after the end of a piece of work, and should be a core component of your [Knowledge Management Framework](#). With a Retrospect, you can bring out the key knowledge and experience developed by a project team, and turn it into actions and resources for the benefit of future projects. By facilitating a dialogue within the whole team, you can bring out the tacit knowledge that comes from the team interactions - knowledge that any one individual may be unaware of, but which the team as a whole knows.
- Retrospects are face-to-face meetings that take place as soon as possible after a project is completed. The duration varies depending on number of people, duration, and complexity of the project. They can be from 30 minutes to an hour for a short, simple project or four or more hours for a 10 person, six month project. A Retrospect of an alliance between several departments or companies may take two days. A general rule of thumb for working out how long to allow, is to multiply the number of people on the team by 30 minutes.
- Read more here <https://www.knoco.com/retrospect.htm>



Retention Interview

- Knowledge Retention (otherwise known as Knowledge Harvesting) is a response to the risk of the loss of crucial knowledge when senior staff leave your organisation, and is often used as part of a [Knowledge Retention and Transfer strategy](#). In traditional manufacturing and engineering it is driven by an aging workforce and a lack of supply of new engineering graduates. It is such an issue that some industries have given it a name, such as "The Great Crew Change"; the euphemism used in the oil industry. In China, the single child policy means that the rate of replacement doesn't match the rate of retirement, resulting in an ageing worker demographic. In South African, the employment equity legislation means that many old and knowledgeable people are retiring to make room for a workforce that matches the country demographics.
- However this knowledge need not be lost. We are helping many companies put in place a [Knowledge Retention strategy](#), to cover the risk of crucial knowledge loss. This process contains the following elements;
- - Identification of crucial at-risk knowledge
- - Prioritisation of key at-risk knowledge holders
- - In depth knowledge interviewing, to discover the core deep knowledge, and to capture the stories that bring this to life
- - Packaging the knowledge into a reusable asset for others.
- A full knowledge retention program needs to be approached strategically and systematically, putting in places coaching and community processes to allow gradual and planned transfer of critical knowledge. However often an organisation finds that the only possible response to a Retention need is to put in place a **Retention interview**.
- An interview is the most effective way to capture the knowledge from an individual. Interviewing is a form of dialogue; a question and answer process which continues until the interviewer feels they have reached core knowledge, expressed as future recommendations, based on ground-truth.
- Read more here <https://www.knoco.com/retention-interview.htm>

Messages



1. Tacit knowledge is shared and captured through discussion and dialogue
 - **Manage conversation as much as content**
2. Asking is the most powerful trigger for sharing knowledge
 - **People don't know what they know until you ask**
 - **Direct requests for help drive 75% to 90% of sharing**
 - **Develop an asking culture – be demand driven**
3. Team tacit knowledge beats individual tacit knowledge
 - **Ask the team (AAR, Peer Assist, Retrospect)**