The Evolution of Knowledge Management: Current and Future Applications in China

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KM in China –
www.chinakm.com
www.ckmchina.com
www.i-power.com.cn
www.cko.com.cn
www.pa18.com.cn
www.daochina.com

Research Objective:
To propose an integrated framework of knowledge management in an evolutionary view

The Framework of Evolution of Knowledge Management:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Key Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Knowledge-itself-oriented</td>
<td>Hayek, Polanyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Knowledge-worker-oriented</td>
<td>Drucker, Churchman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Knowledge-system-oriented</td>
<td>Nonaka &amp; Takeuchi, Davenport</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Driving Theory / Perspective:
- Resource-based view of the firm
- Knowledge-based view of the firm
- Organizational learning
- Organizational memory
- Complexity theory

Current Applications of KM in China:

<KM2002 China Survey Report>
A survey conducted by DaoChina.com KnowledgeWeb Corporation
Period: March to April, 2002
Questionnaires distribution channel: paper-based mail/online
Target population: 10,000 large-/middle-scale businesses and professional institutions
Returned rate: 13.4%

Q1 - The awareness of KM in China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never heard of KM</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfamiliar with KM</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar with KM</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very familiar with KM</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2 - Existence of knowledge strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No KM strategy, and no intention to introduce</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has made up KM strategy</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q3 - More than 70% are in five industries
- software, information & consulting (about 30%)
- financing service (about 11%)
- communication, media & entertainment (about 11%)
- light industry (about 11%)
- medical & sanitation, culture & education (about 10%)

Q4 - Existence of knowledge management system (KMS)

Has implemented KMS
In the process of implementing KMS-related projects
Project research stage
No need for implementation after project research
No plan for KMS at all

Future Research Issues:
- In general:
  - Knowledge strategy
  - Knowledge infrastructure
  - Knowledge worker
  - Knowledge linkage (partnership)
- In particular:
  - The short-term target of KM in China would be knowledge worker
  - The long-term focus lies on the integrated reorganization of knowledge

Conclusions:
- KM has attracted highly attention in Chinese enterprises;
- Minority has KM strategy; even fewer has introduced KMS;
- Organizations with KM strategy are centralized in industries who are knowledge/technology intensive with short product life circle;
- These five industries act as the pioneer of KM practitioners in China
- KM in China is still in preliminary stage