



**March 2015**

## **The 5 stages of a KM program - which stage are you at?**



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Other News

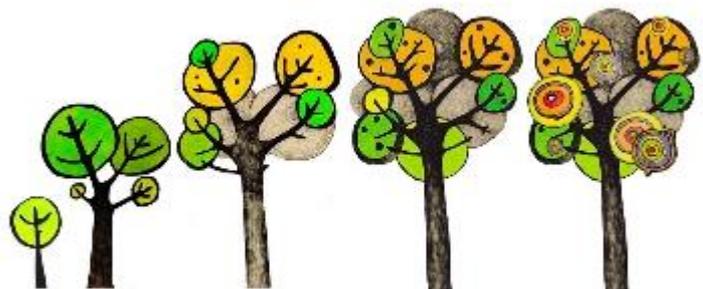


### **[New - KM Starter Offers](#)**

We have introduced a range of low-investment starter offers, for

A knowledge management program usually goes through five stages of development. In this newsletter we look at each of these 5 stages, and discuss the key issues for each stage, and some of the approaches you can take. Sometimes the whole organisation progresses through the stages, while sometimes one department or one division takes the lead.

Which stage are you at?



in KM.

These include quick and easy ways to

[Assess KM in your organisation](#)

[Build a KM Strategy](#)

[Scan knowledge topics, to find those most in need of attention](#)

[Gain engagement through a workshop](#)

[Understand your org. learning culture](#)

[Create a KM "proof of concept"](#)

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## The investigation stage

This is the stage where you have made no formal commitment to Knowledge Management, but you feel that KM may be of some value to you.



In this stage, you need to find out

- What might KM do for us?
- What benefits do organisations such as ours gain from KM?
- What might KM involve?
- What are some of the risks and costs?

You may also try out a few KM tools and processes, to see how they work in your organisation. If these trials are successful, KM can start to develop as a grass-roots movement. However your primary objective in this stage is to gather enough evidence that management will support a more strategic in-depth review of KM and it's possibilities.

Some of the issues you need to address in the investigation stage are as follows;

- KM is still a poorly defined field, and you need to identify the elements of KM that add the most value to your organisation
- You cannot cut-and-paste KM solutions from other organisations. Instead look at the principles that successful KM companies apply, and then use these to decide what KM will look like for you.
- Introducing one KM tool, technology or process will not deliver long term value, but can be a useful test whether the tool is compatible with your organisational culture and working habits.
- Look for evidence that the lack of KM is currently impacting organisational performance or business results. This will help secure management support for moving to the next stage.

[Contact us](#) for help in making the case for a strategic review of KM.

[Nick's blog](#)

[Tom's blog](#)

[Rupert's blog](#)

[Stephanie's blog](#)

[Vedalis blog](#) in French

[Ewa's blog](#) in Polish

[Knoco on YouTube](#)

## The assessment and strategy stage

This is where you really need to get clear about the scope of the problem which you need to tackle. What is your current state of Knowledge Management? What is in place already? What is working? What is not working? What is missing?



A [Knowledge Management Assessment](#) will give you an understanding of current reality, identification of the gaps that exist, and definition of the scope and scale of the required KM implementation. This is a stage which you really must not skip or skimp, and it is a stage where external help, and an objective overview, is really important.

The end point of KM implementation is that Knowledge Management is embedded in the management structures of the company. Knowledge Management will therefore need a Management Framework within which it can be embedded, and your KM Assessment will help define the framework. The [Knowledge Management Framework](#) will include

- A set of KM roles and accountabilities, embedded in the organigram
- A set of KM processes, embedded in the work structure
- A set of KM technologies
- A KM governance system.

Once you have the results from the Assessment and a first pass view of the possible Framework, then you need to understand the constraints, principles and drivers that will shape your implementation. You need to work with your senior management team to develop the business vision, discuss the business value and the critical areas of focus, the scope of your exercise, and the main principles that you will follow. This is all documented in your [Knowledge Management Strategy](#).

The end of the Strategy phase is a decision to move forward into Piloting.

Some of the issues you need to address in the Strategy stage are as follows;

- KM needs to focus on delivering value to the organisation
- You therefore need to be clear about the business drivers for KM
- You also need to be considering the change management elements; the stakeholder mapping and the communications strategy and plan.
- You also need to develop an implementation plan and budget. Often your management will require a business case before the budget is approved.

[Contact us](#) for help in assessing your current state, and developing a KM strategy and framework.

## The piloting stage.

This stage is where you start working towards developing and testing a robust and workable KM Framework. Each element of the framework needs to be defined and tested to make sure it works in your organizational culture and context. You should also start looking for the Quick Wins at this stage - those small success stories which give evidence of progress and which reassure the organisation that KM is adding value.



Once individual processes and technologies have been identified and tested, then you need to pilot the entire Knowledge Management Framework. You find some defined business problems and set up a [Knowledge Management Pilot](#), where you apply Knowledge Management as a complete system. This gives you;

- The opportunity to test and perfect your KM framework
- The opportunity to deliver value to the organisation and therefore prove the benefit of KM
- The chance to create some powerful success stories

Choose your pilots carefully to give you the best chance of delivering demonstrable success.

The evidence of value from this piloting stage, and the proof of the KM Framework in action, helps to support the next decision; the decision to commit to Knowledge Management as a company-wide discipline. If the tests and pilots were successful, the value of KM to the business and to the employees is proven, and the integrated KM system shown to be robust, then you can make the case to senior management to roll out Knowledge Management to the whole organisation, as a part of the company management framework. This is the point of no return, and it needs very strong support from the highest levels of the company to make this decision.

Some of the issues you need to address in the Piloting stage are as follows;

- Your pilots need to be focused on business problems, and problems where you have a good chance of successfully impacting a business metric within a relatively short period of time (e.g. within a few months).
- Your claims to having delivered real value through the pilots needs to be credible, and backed up with evidence. Ideally ask people from the pilot business department to tell the success stories.
- You need to reach the end of the pilot with the evidence to convince management to fully endorse KM. Therefore have the conversation with them beforehand, and ask what evidence they would need to see in order to give their full endorsement.
- You ideally need pilots at many levels in the organisation. KM is not just for the shop floor - senior managers are knowledge workers as well, and can benefit from KM support. We have successfully conducted KM pilots at senior management level on Mergers and Acquisitions, for example.

[Contact us](#) for help in selecting, defining and delivering Knowledge Management pilot projects.

## The roll-out stage

Once the decision to commit to KM has been made, the next stage is to roll out the Knowledge Management Framework across the organization.



This will be a very busy period of training, coaching, and community launches. During this stage you would hope to take almost all of the organization's knowledge workers through a training course or KM workshop. The case studies from the piloting phase will be very useful in explaining how KM works and the value it can bring.

This is also the stage where your change management program needs to ramp up, with a combination of communication and stakeholder influencing.

At the same time, the implementation team will be preparing to "hand over the reins" of KM to those who will operate KM as an ongoing discipline. This includes writing the supporting material for the KM Framework, such as role descriptions, KM capability descriptions, KM process guides, and KM technology guides.

Some of the issues you need to address in the roll-out stage are as follows;

- Ideally the roll-out should be run by addressing a series of business problems. One of our clients rolled-out KM at a rate of two business issues per year, for example. Certainly roll-out priority should be given to the areas which KM can help the most.
- At the same time as rolling out the KM Framework, you need to be removing any disincentives for KM, such as incentive schemes based on internal competition. To do this, you will need very high level support.

[Contact us](#) for help in Knowledge Management roll-out.

## The embedded stage

Once roll-out is over, the decision has to be made to stand down the implementation team and hand over to management within the business. This is the end of the KM implementation program. The implementation is over, and KM is solidly embedded in the management structures of the organisation.



This embedding is often supported by a [Knowledge Management standard, or a Knowledge Management policy](#), which defines the corporate expectations for KM.

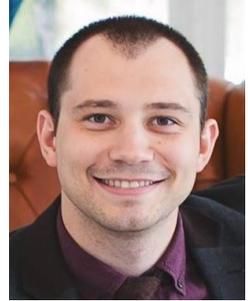
You sometimes hear people suggest that the KM implementation team should look to "do themselves out of a job", and that the final aim of KM implementation should be that KM is fully embedded in the business. An end to implementation, with KM full embedded, are laudable aims - but this should not be taken as implying that there will be no requirement for a long-term KM support resource.

You will still need a KM team in place, but its role has changed. The main tasks of the KM team during the embedded stage will be keeping the KM Framework maintained (updating technology, training people in the processes, coaching individuals with KM roles), running the monitoring and measurement activities, crafting the longer term KM strategy, continuing to offer KM training, and making any interventions needed to sustain KM in the long term.

[Contact us](#) for help in embedding Knowledge Management.

## Other News

We are pleased to welcome [Knoco Russia](#) to the global Knoco brand.



[Anton Sobe-Panek,](#)  
[Knoco Russia](#)

Our new Russian Affiliate company is Willgrade, headed by Anton Sobe-Panek. Willgrade is a team of professionals, managers and consultants implementing consulting services in the area of knowledge management and corporate performance, as well as being a developer and provider of ICT solutions, a software vendor and a member of the Microsoft Partner Program in Russia.

The potential of modern economics defines the culture, competence and willingness of it's members to interact with each other. The process of continuously developing these values is based on intellectual capital and made possible by Information and Communication Technology. Their mission is to make this process more efficient for all participants, to develop business customers and to add the value of innovation, by maximizing the effective use of modern information and internet technologies.

Contact Knoco Russia at [anton@knoco.com](mailto:anton@knoco.com) to learn about the knowledge management consulting services available to you in the Russian-speaking countries.

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Javier Martinez of [Knoco Chile](#) is shortly to run the first Spanish-Language version of our ever-popular and always impactful Bird Island KM simulation

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Sapta and Iqbal of [Knoco Indonesia](#) recently ran a KM Masterclass for Knowledge Managers from a wide range of Indonesian organisations. This 3-day training provided comprehensive answers regarding KM structure, requirements, and application steps in the organization, as well as KPIs to measure effectiveness. Feedback from delegates was as follows;

- "The KM MasterClass provided a broader understand of the "Learning Process" within organizations and a means to contribute to share knowledge to others" - Eko Prihadi from Angkasa Pura II
- "This training also provided clear instructions of "how-to" for initial

KM implementation based on our company current conditions" - Yuli Prihartono from PT. Kaltim Prima Coal



[Happy delegates at the Knoco Indonesia Masterclass](#)

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