

Course Name: Organizational Behaviour: Individual Dynamics in Organization

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Week – 11

Lecture – 05

Lecture 54: Strategies for individuals to foster knowledge sharing

Hello, students. Welcome back to the course on Organizational Behavior, Individual Dynamics in Organization. Today we move to the last lecture of module 11 which has been interesting ride for us till now I suppose which was in knowledge sharing and most importantly knowledge hiding. So today we will conclude this particular module with the lecture on strategies for individuals to foster knowledge sharing. So, we tried to mitigate knowledge hiding and we tried to foster knowledge sharing and we will look into the strategies for the same.

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Let us start with today's theme. "Focus should be on enhancing the positive mood state of employees regarding social exchange that is enjoyment in helping others which precedes knowledge sharing activities." Now there is one fundamental lesson to all of us in this.

If we are not in a position to enjoy what we are doing, we cannot be in a scheme where we can share knowledge or in a world or in a unit where we can actually share knowledge. So, sharing knowledge is one thing but what comes before that is if we are enjoying what we are doing. Let us say if you are put in an organization in a particular job role which you do not like performing, if you are having some KRA, some key responsibilities which you are not you know ready to take up then hardly knowledge sharing will be the conclusion or the consequence of that. Please understand when you are looking into situations which are not in favor of you. Let us say situations or job roles which you do not like, you cannot force your subordinate who does not like or who does not want to do things or who does not want to enjoy doing things, you cannot force him to actually share knowledge with the co-workers and others.

So let us look into this particular topic, let us understand knowledge sharing as an exchange of job-oriented knowledge, practical knowledge or feedback with the intention

of assisting colleagues that could be one important aspect, assisting colleagues solving problems through collaboration or creating new ideas. So, if you are asking me there are a couple of things which are very critical here, one is you have an element of knowledge creation which is coming through new ideas, you have an element of knowledge sharing in place which is assisting colleagues and you also have you know a problem-solving ability that you are showing in with this KM activity which is knowledge management activity. So specifically, when you are talking about knowledge sharing in a systematic fashion what you have to understand it is not just you know sharing the information or sharing the knowledge at your disposal, it is much more than that. There are times when your colleague might need a career advice, there are times when your colleague might or some of your co-workers might ask an advice for their relatives and they feel that you are the most equipped person to do that or they have a certain level of trust and confidence in you and if you are not sharing your knowledge it is not only tantamount to knowledge hiding but it is also a result of what is known as a superiority complex and it is also it underscores the fact that you are not prone to or you are not a person who will share knowledge in long term. So basically, there is a trust deficit, remember the distress loop which will get created.

So all these factors which we have discussed is coming into play with this particular understanding of knowledge sharing. So prior studies have categorically shown that knowledge sharing is a pro-social behavior extending beyond formal job formalities. So when your co-worker is coming to you for a personal suggestion, personal advice, maybe a financial advice, maybe a career advice, maybe a career advice for his or her son, all these come under the umbrella of knowledge sharing. Please understand don't restrict knowledge sharing to only the professional aspect or only the organization oriented or job oriented aspects. It is essentially a consequence of pro-social behavior.

So how social you are, how interactive you are, how good your interpersonal relationships are that determines to a certain extent how effective you are going effectively you are going to share knowledge with your colleagues, with your subordinates or with your seniors. When you are looking into knowledge sharing, with the growing complexities of work life, knowledge-sharing behavior has become multifaceted. If you look into specifically post COVID arena or post COVID time, you are actually dealing with different job contracts, different workplace arrangements. So, in all those cases it is not mere knowledge sharing in terms of workplace that is happening. You are working let's say remote, you are working online, you are in online meeting, sometimes there are possibilities of online sharing.

Sometimes there are you know we do research in terms of some of the companies which provide or which actually induce active trackers in the system or in the computers or

peripherals they are providing so that how much time they have been logging into the company page or how much work they are doing or how much they are actually sharing with the competitors or any such incidents that has to be alerted. All these things you know can be a snapshot of that can be taken and it can be easily communicated to the desired authorities. So basically, when we are looking into our present day environment of work and work pattern, work contracts, things are immersed, things have evolved, we are looking or we are working in a totally different world altogether. In such situations, in such scenarios it is very critical for you to actually understand that knowledge sharing behavior has become a multifaceted activity. It is not merely your co-worker is coming to you, you know the knowledge you are sharing it, it is no more that.

It is more than that, it is you know it might be based on different channels of communication, it might be based on different ways of doing work, it might be based on the technical know-how you are possessing. All these factors come into play when it is knowledge sharing today. A critical knowledge management process actually enables organizational members to adapt to their work environments, create innovative ideas and eventually contribute to a firm's innovation capabilities. Have you ever thought of why I am trying to stress on knowledge sharing again and because knowledge sharing happens to be a vital aspect when it comes to R&D organization, when it comes to innovative organization, creative organizations because you cannot just think that one man can run the entire show. You need a team to work together, to work in a synchronous manner, a certain cohesion is required, a certain level of knowledge sharing is required to actually develop that cohesion.

So all these factors become critical, all these factors are essential to actually create something which is creative, create or bring something to the world which is innovative, improvise on your existing design, all these aspects might need input from different cross-functional departments. You might not be able to synthesize something on your own, you need the synthesis of all the cross-functional departments coming together, you need the synergy of all of them coming together and this is what makes knowledge sharing all the more critical.

When you look into what specifically influences knowledge sharing, among the many factors, promoting knowledge sharing, the social context of the workplace plays a crucial role. I have already described about one of the factors that could be used to mitigate knowledge hiding and that involve prosocial motivation. So, when you are looking into the behavioral pattern, the prosocial motivation or the social element is vital, it cannot be ignored, that is the kingpin factor when you look into knowledge sharing.

If you are not a prosocial, that is why aspects like personality traits and within the

personality traits, the traits like openness become critical. When you are more prosocial, when you are more social, you tend to be interactive, your interpersonal relationships are better, you tend to be more focused on your discussions, then knowledge sharing is a natural outcome. If you are more conservative, you are more hidden, you are more inward-looking person, you do not care what happens in the outside world, you are not at all worried about what is happening outside, you cannot be a knowledge-sharing person who is driven or having a propensity to share knowledge. So, ladies and gentlemen, please note that when you are looking into scenarios like individualistic and collectivistic dispositions, that also brings in individuals play a significant role in knowledge sharing. It is about employees, intentions to share knowledge and it differs based on the personal disposition.

Sometimes you might see that individualistic culture, something like West or US or something will have those individuals in those cultural situations or context might have a different predisposition towards knowledge sharing and specifically knowledge hiding. We have done a case or we have done a study specifically with respect to cultural context, where your personality traits and emotional intelligence were significant predictors for knowledge hiding in individualistic culture, we had trust emerging as one of the significant factor and workplace ostracism emerging as one of the significant factor in engendering knowledge hiding in the collectivistic cultural scenario. So that clarifies the difference or that clarifies or underlines the striking contradictory nature of culture that promotes sometimes knowledge hiding or that promotes sometimes knowledge sharing. When you are looking into specifically co-workers, co-workers who form a vital component of an organization's social climate, you have to be very clear about social climate because we have already discussed about couple of climates, one being your mastery climate, another being your performance climate, all these aspects are critical partners in knowledge sharing process. Building on an organization's social capital helps promote employees knowledge sharing behaviors of employees specifically.

So this is what influences knowledge sharing. Now when you are looking into the co-workers support or knowledge sharing, people feel alive and energetic in work environments that support specifically their personal growth and development and subsequently stimulate the knowledge-sharing behavior because if you are in an organization which is seldom promoting your personal growth, you are not interested to work in that organization anymore. Let us understand this, this is a fact but the moment you see that there are revenues for your personal growth, there are situations which the higher management is trying to encourage you to learn more, to study more. If you recollect the previous discussions on mastery climate, if you are part of such a mastery climate then definitely people will feel alive and energetic. Similarly, people will be more interested in working in a knowledge sharing environment.

Knowledge sharing environment is specifically an environment where things are open, things are interesting because you know that you don't have any limitations. The moment there is a restriction on the available knowledge, the moment there is restriction on the available information that is available to you, you are put under certain restriction and that restriction becomes critical. That restriction actually contains you or actually restricts you to not move further within the career ladder or maybe within the organization itself. So that is something which will not make you feel a significant employee or a significant factor within the organization. Therefore, to promote specifically knowledge sharing among the workforce, managers need to create a socially supportive work environment with informal interaction opportunities with employees who possesses relatively greater referent power.

Please refer to our discussions on referent power. Referent power is nothing but the likability of an individual. So, referent power reinforced by performance loop and are difficult to ignore within the organizational setting. So, when you look into individuals who are actually having more referent power and would like to, they are the go-to people in the organization, they might also be the people who are top ranked in terms of the knowledge sharing activity that they do within the organization. So, when we look into people management practices for knowledge sharing, we can quickly look into factors like staffing.

When you are looking into recruitment and selection practices particularly, it should be geared towards identifying individuals who will have high probability of agreeing on the same norms and identifying with one another. There might be a problem with some individuals. You might have come across some individuals who, moment you put any agenda for discussion, they are there to oppose. You might have seen such individuals in the workplace and sometimes it looks good that there is a devil's advocate in your workplace but sometimes it is irritating because it happens that you want a collectivistic opinion, you want a collective wisdom but there is one individual who is playing alone and if you are playing alone, specifically note you will be playing against the team. So please understand, if you want a collectivistic approach, if you want to dwell on the collective wisdom, you cannot do that by simply opposing any and every move of the higher management.

There should be the psychological safety to raise your opinion but that does not mean that for anything and everything there should be a dissent that is raised and eventually it will create more of an obstacle than a clear path. So please understand this factor when you move to the organization.

Schneider's (1987) attraction selection attrition model actually supports the idea that the organizational members tend to hire people who are similar to themselves. So moment you feel that there is a connect, if you are part of any recruitment committee or any selection committee or any interview panel, if you closely observe your performance there, you will see that you tend to select a person who is similar to you, similar in the sense that he might or she might be similar to you in terms of the attitude, in terms of the disposition within the, let's say the few minutes you are having an interaction with him or her. So, all those aspects pertain to this attraction selection attrition model whereby you tend to select somebody who is similar to you.

So this practice may be especially critical for knowledge sharing cultures especially, not only because it creates a community of shared values as it should be but also because the values emphasize can specifically include the importance of learning and developing more knowledge. So recruiting based on employee reference is another important practice for organizations that rely on organization based hiring. So many a time there are a lot of organizations these days which actually encourage a referral-based mechanisms. There are a lot of possibilities that recruitment and selection is opening up today for you and one of that specifically is a referral-based mechanism. So, what specifically happens here in case of referral based mechanism is that, you tend to get more like-minded people that's a hypothesis again but that is found out to be literally true.

You tend to get more like-minded people there are chances that you are adding on to the homogeneity of the group. At times I have argued that it is not good for the system but when you are actually want to build a new organization, when you actually want to make the system robust you need the collective wisdom and the collective wisdom can come only through actual involvement of individuals every now and then. So when you look into people management practices for knowledge sharing, training and development let's look into another important function. Training can be used to enhance self-efficacy levels among employees. So consequently, what happens is that employees will feel more assured of their abilities and will be more likely to exchange their knowledge.

So if sometimes we have already made a point by understanding that absence of knowledge sharing need not be knowledge hiring because you are not so convinced about the training you got because you are not convinced about the understanding you got from the particular training program you attended. You might not be able to actually share the required knowledge. But if you are well trained, if you think that there is some autonomous motivation within you, there is some intrinsic motivation that will come to you and say that I have to share this particular knowledge, I have to train the entire group. If that is happening then it will actually create an environment of knowledge sharing that

will actually enhance the knowledge management practices that is otherwise not very effective in an organization.

So, when you look into cross-training will facilitate knowledge sharing among employees from different areas by increasing their interaction.

So many a time knowledge sharing is absent because the interaction in itself is absent. The moment cross trainings are coming into picture it creates a common language, building social ties and increasing employees awareness of the demands of different jobs. Now let us look into another important factor which is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy we have detailed in one of the previous modules, the building block of individual knowledge sharing behavior. Based on the main line of self-efficacy theory, self-efficacy consists of two parts.

One is again I am revising it, outcome expectancy and efficacy expectancy. Now when you look into individuals perceive that participating in knowledge sharing activities will bring to them expected earnings and judge their own abilities to achieve this expected revenues, they will make a knowledge sharing decision. So many a time you might have come across individuals or several times you would have come across individuals in your organization. Let us say if there is anything important that is coming to them on a personal front, they will be very active, they will be very hard working, they will be very meticulous. But if that is not there, they will not work.

So it actually hampers the organization growth, the particular unit's growth. So what happens is that they are so keen and so selfish that if they have to work, they create the situation in such a way that some personal interest has to be satisfied, some personal demands have to be met. So, all these situations are extraneous and are counterproductive to the organization. Please remember all those individuals even if it includes you and me, please remember that you and me and all those individuals are in the system through a recruitment and selection that has happened. That has never warranted or guaranteed certain level of extra benefits on a personal front.

It has stated explicitly what you were going to get as a remuneration and you are getting that, you are getting the reward, you are getting the recognition. But more than that once you are into the system, there are some individuals who develop certain personal needs, personal demands and if the organization or if the management is not satisfying that, they tend to stay away, they tend to not perform. Now this is unfortunate. There are individuals, introspect within your organization will spot such individuals because those situations will actually create bit of negativity within the organization or within the team or within the group whatever is the discussing point. So, when you are looking into situations of self-efficacy, please understand self-efficacy might be a particular quality

but it need not be actually a precursor towards knowledge sharing.

Only when individuals perceive that participating in knowledge sharing activities will bring to them expected earnings and judge their own ability to achieve these expected revenues, they will make a knowledge sharing decision which is totally unfortunate. Now the primary way to raise self-efficacy for such individuals to share knowledge is a person's direct past experience. Sometimes it happens that high self-efficacy in one's ability to share knowledge then may result in challenging personal goals. So that would be a way to actually bring them towards the working pattern or towards enhance or for enhancing their work or work efficiency. So higher effort, persistence, satisfaction and performance would be the natural outcome.

So these positive outcomes fuel the self-beliefs that one can perform even better when self-efficacy is estimated again. Now increasing efficacy for enhancing knowledge sharing behavior can be understood from a social dilemma aspect as well. There is a significant empirical evidence showing a positive relationship perceived efficacy and levels of cooperation. So, the moment there is perceived efficacy, perceived efficacy it need not be the actual efficacy, there might be increase in levels of cooperation. So the expectancy value theory predicts that people's willingness to act is directly affected by their expectations about the potential effects of their actions.

So when people believe that their actions will not have a clear and discernible effect on the value of the shared good. So expectancy can be thought of as a function of two distinct types of efficacy. One is information self-efficacy and connective efficacy which we have detailed in the previous modules. So information self-efficacy for just as a recap refers to an employee's belief that the information he or she has would be helpful to co-workers where they to receive it. Now connective efficacy is on the other hand the belief that others will actually receive the information if it is contributed.

So this brings in a bit of differential understanding in terms of efficacy and knowledge sharing. Now let us wind up this module and this lecture particularly by underscoring the different strategies to foster knowledge sharing. Since enjoyment is what the theme was, enjoyment in doing something, in helping others significantly, influenced employee knowledge sharing behaviors, the level of enjoyment that employees experience must be increased as they help one another through knowledge sharing. Now when there should be a focus on enhancing the positive mood state of employees regarding the social exchange as the theme of today's lecture is enjoyment in helping others, it precedes knowledge sharing activities. So, strategy of providing useful feedback to improve employee knowledge self-efficacy should be adopted.

So when you are looking into strategies to foster knowledge sharing, when you are looking into aspects to improve knowledge sharing, there are two things I would like to ascertain. One from the learning over the different lectures in this particular module, I would categorically state that please understand knowledge sharing, knowledge hiding, the difference between two. The moment you are understanding the actual difference between both of this, then you are able to measure and understand what is the level of knowledge hiding that is happening within the system. Once you have a clear understanding of that, then you can work on factors, strategies to actually ensure that there is enhancement of knowledge sharing or you can work on factors those can mitigate knowledge hiding.

We have learned both these factors. So please note that if you want to have an efficient and effective knowledge management system, you need to work on these strategic factors, factors which actually enhance knowledge sharing and strategic factors which actually help you to mitigate knowledge hiding. Thank you for listening to me patiently. We will see in the next module another important topic which is employee silence. Till then take care. Bye bye. Namaskar.