

**Knowledge Management**  
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**Lecture 19**  
**The Knowledge Team**

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**3.Design The KM Team**

**Topics Covered**

**Design the KM team.**

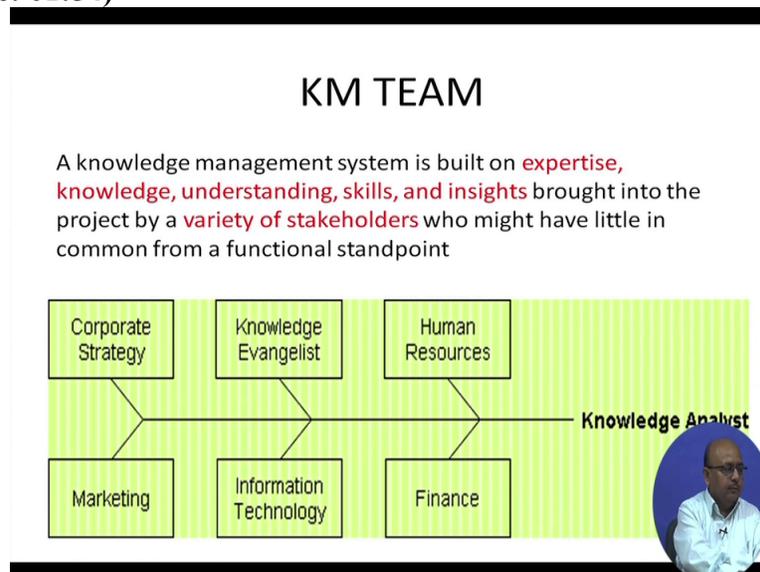
- **Identify sources of requisite expertise.**
- **Identify critical points of failure: requirements, control, management buy-in, and end user buy-in.**
- **Structure the knowledge management team: organizationally, strategically, and technologically.**
- **Balance technical and managerial expertise, manage stakeholder expectations.**
- **Resolve team-sizing issues.**

So we are moving to the third module of the this part that is with fourth week lecture and we are already not talked about knowledge capture, knowledge audit part and the third part is related to designing the knowledge management team. And when I am talking about knowledge designing the knowledge management team basically we have to see that what will be the composition, who will going to form the team ok.

Whether you are going to have people from inside or from outside ok, what would be the structure in terms of the organisation strategy and technology ok, there could be number of issues we are going to look into. So, if you look at the topics that we are going to likely to cover is what are the sources of expertise which is required for the knowledge management team and then also we need to see that what are the requirements, controls, management buying and users buying.

And also look into the structure of the KM team in terms of how t is to be organised, where it will be positioned a strategically and what kind of technology they would be using. And then we have to wake up balance right balance between the technical and the managerial expertise both and so that we are able to manage the stakeholder's expectations.

And then we also look into some other issues like lifespan, size and another kind of things. So, with this introduction I am going to talk about the knowledge management team.  
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Now what do you mean by KM team it is nothing else but set of people who is going to be the part of the management project right. And since KM team is built on expertise, knowledge and understanding skills and insights from various stakeholders ok. So, what we need to look at that ok all these people come to a common place platform so that they can work together and once they form a team they would be able carry out the project effectively.

Now if you look at this you can see that we have people from strategy, people from the knowledge management area, HR people and even finance, IT and marketing and all these are going to get integrated with what you call knowledge analyst. Because the knowledge analyst is going to see that how they are going to bring the expectations of different stakeholders to be together. How they are going to bring the knowledge set of different expertise together.

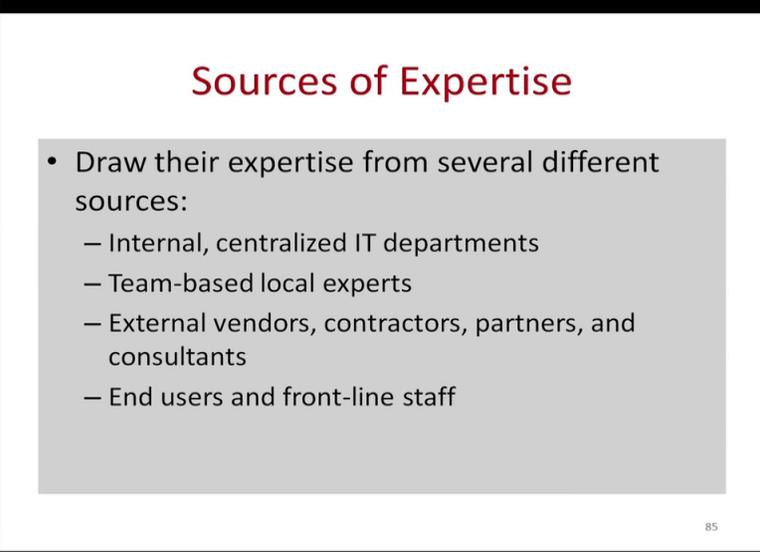
And then how they are going to integrate this knowledge into the KM system right. The role of knowledge management in that will be very, very important. Now if you look at the sources of expertise from where the knowledge is coming right, from where we draw the knowledge right the knowledge come from different sources right, and when it comes to forming the team of experts to be part of the knowledge management team.

So, you have to see that whether people are going to be from one department or from various departments ok. So, the idea is that to bring out people from different sources people with

expertise right. And we can also include those who do not have expertise because they would be having different perspective all together. So, we need to bring both experts and non experts right. So, they could they could be people from within the organisation.

And from different departments ok, there could be people from IT department because IT provides the infrastructure the backbone for storage and retrieval.

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The slide is titled "Sources of Expertise" in red text. It contains a bulleted list of sources of expertise. The list is as follows:

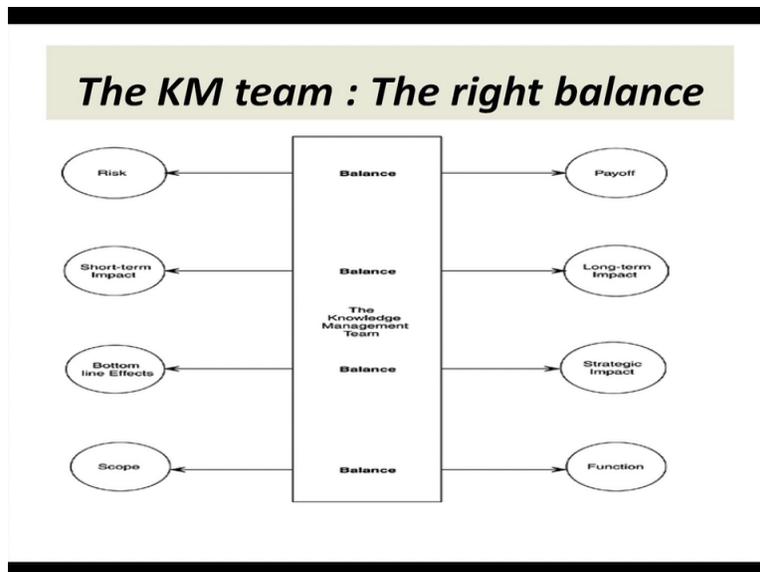
- Draw their expertise from several different sources:
  - Internal, centralized IT departments
  - Team-based local experts
  - External vendors, contractors, partners, and consultants
  - End users and front-line staff

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And then you have to see that who are experts locally or also from the other stakeholders who could be and they could be like vendors, suppliers right, contractors your knowledge partners and also consultants ok. And you also need to look into end users and different client which basically which is responsible for running; managing and maintaining the show with which basically end users are going to interact ok.

So if you look at sources of expertise you need to identify various sources and then you have to see that how these various sources which of expertise is coming from different sources ok are going to be integrated and how you are going to make use of them right. So, this is about the sources of the expertise.

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Now moving to knowledge management team, now if you look at this you can very clearly say that the role of; what is the role of knowledge management team in the process. They need to strike the right balance, what do you mean by striking the right balance. They need to see that there are various issues related to that KM system and how they are going to manage or strike the balance for example what are the risk associated with this program.

Similarly what are the benefits and the payoffs? So, they need to make a balance between cost and benefit and they have to see that, yes the benefit exceeds or the payoff exceeds compared to the cost right. And then the kind of impact this KM program is going to have in the long run. What I mean to say is that the likely impact in short term as well as long term because if you do not have a short term impact immediately then people may not be convinced.

May not go for it, So, you have to look for short term means as well as you also need to ensure that they are long term impacts of the projects and people know that this is how it is going to be successful. Then you also need to look into, it from the organisational perspective ok. Like what is the strategic impact, it means that what kind of a strategy you are going to adopt for knowledge management and whether this is going to help you to achieve business strategy are the corporate strategy on the one hand.

And then how the knowledge management system is going to be improve your bottom line. What do you mean by bottom line? Bottom line is how is going to improve productivity, profit, efficiency, quality. So, if it is able to bring about this kind of things on one hand and it is going to

help you achieve certain strategic objective then probably KM team is justified in doing the right kind of thing.

And finally you have to look it especially when it comes to the system, knowledge management system. And there where you are going to make the right balance between the function and the scope. Function means what is the role of knowledge management system, what does it going to do for you and similarly the extent to which it could be applied that is the scope.

Where you are going to apply this knowledge content in the knowledge elements stored in the KM system ok, so, that KM team is responsible for lot of things right. Looking into the balance to the cost benefits, looking into the impact of short term and long term, also looking into the how it is going to help organisation to improve its profit.

Also need to convince people are the users about benefits ok, how it can be applied ok what are the different kind of activities that taken up right. So, the knowledge management team it is very, very important that is why we need to discuss it and it is very, very important.

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**Local Experts and Intradepartmental Experts**

- Experts within the company, people who come in early or stay late to play with new tools that become available. **More adoptable to technology**
- Many of these experts maybe non-technologists, but they can gauge the possible usefulness of each feature of the current system.
- Local experts very often are the first ones to notice the limitations of current and existing systems and think of how to upgrades and make changes to meet the evolving needs of the group.

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Now, looking into the various stakeholders who are going to be the part of KM team ok, so, we can have local experts and inter departmental experts. Inter departmental and local experts are the people who are already working in the organisation, who are with the company ok. Who are really committed and dedicated to this and they know about the technology and they know how to use this.

It means you know that there are some people in the organisation who are very really motivated and do something that is creative and innovative. So, in the process what happens that whenever you announce you are going to have a KM system? These are the early adopters, early adopters means they would be experimenting it and use it for doing something that is important ok.

So, you can say that they are more adaptable to the technology and that is where it is very important to look into these people who are the early adopters to the technology right. And in the process since they know about the system and the processes they would be able to better adapt to the system. Now apart from these experts who are early adopter to the technology you also have people from non technology domain right.

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You need to see that how this non technology domain people is going to use the system because it is very, very important and it is not only meant for the experts but it is meant for everybody. So, anybody can make use of the knowledge management system, so you have to see that what is the possible use of various features of knowledge management system, that is happened through it.

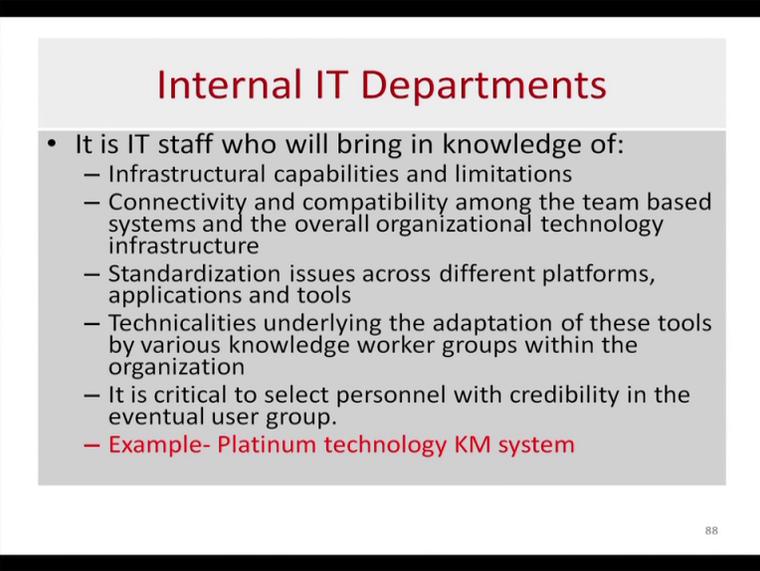
So, since it is meant for domain experts but it is at the same time it is also meant for those who are not domain exports who are working in different fields. May be from the marketing, may be from the HR, and may be from the finance and other areas. Who are not technically as experts as people in the production or in R and D department right, so the people who are working in the non technological area they should be also; it should be also useful to them.

So, that it helps them to grow and develop. Then you have to see that local experts basically they would be able to identify and pinpoint what are the drawbacks and disadvantages of particular system ok. So, the role of local experts, since it is also important at once they start using they can give you a feedback that how will the system is working. And accordingly you can make modification search engines and you can go for up-gradation of the system.

How you can make changes in the systems ok, so that it is going to be more useful. So, that it is very important to keep in mind the local experts who are from the organisation they could from one department or they will be working in different department ok. They could be experts in the technology and may not be experts in the technology. So, you have to consider both local experts who are in the domain technology and those who are not in the technology.

So that you get both the perspective to get the feedback from the system and see that how it can be used.

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**Internal IT Departments**

- It is IT staff who will bring in knowledge of:
  - Infrastructural capabilities and limitations
  - Connectivity and compatibility among the team based systems and the overall organizational technology infrastructure
  - Standardization issues across different platforms, applications and tools
  - Technicalities underlying the adaptation of these tools by various knowledge worker groups within the organization
  - It is critical to select personnel with credibility in the eventual user group.
  - **Example- Platinum technology KM system**

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Now another important role that is played by people is related to IT infrastructure. Since most of the KM systems today are IT enabled ok, you have to see that how IT department is going to play very crucial role ok. Because IT department understands lot of things which non IT people may not able to understand like they can understand technology in terms of integration of the software and the hardware.

What is the capability of the systems, what are the limitations of the system right? Then they can also look into the issues related to the compatibility of different systems. How it is going to be

connected with the users ok. And then also look at the overall technology infrastructure right. The role of IT is to; since it is used to maintain manage the system and they also know about the various advantages and the disadvantages the kind of systems that they have.

That it is very important to keep them in the loop that is why IT department people are required as a part of the knowledge management team. Since they are going to work with the technology, they are going to resolve issues related to compatibility, connectivity and other things and also look into the various platforms like whether they are going for Unix, Lynix or Windows based platform ok. And how you are going to work across these platforms.

People are going to work across this platform they might look into standardisation issues for example the one program or the one system working on one platform Windows platform. But it may not work on other platforms right like nodes or others. So, you have to see that how you are going to standardize these issues and solve them right. Then you have to see that how people are going to adapt to the technology ok.

so you need to make it as user friendly as possible ok because adopting to work with new technology by the people is very, very important if you are going to have a it system ensure that people are trained and willing to learn that and they are able to use it unless they are going to use it, it is not going to be useful ok.

So you need to make it as user friendly as possible because adopting to new technology by the people is very, very important. So, if you are going to have it system ensure that people are trained and willing to learn that and able to use it because unless they are going to use it, it is not going to be useful.

So, it is very, very important that you make them understand that the technicalities that is involved tools and how they can adapt to it. Then you also need to identify a certain people especially select those people who are act as a bridge between the end users and technology right and these people should have the credibility because ultimately they would be interacting with the end users right.

So they could be the technical expert within the IT system who would be interacting or acting as a bridge between system and the end users. When you are going to have integrated systems having different kind of platforms and technologies then you come to see that how it can be

integrated. Here I am giving one example of Platinum Technology KM system which was basically designed for the sales people ok.

The system was working very well and people the sales people knew that how they are going to work with the system ok. So, there was here also provision for giving feedback though the system was integrated that sales people could interact and relate with each other. At the same time they know the kind of technology that being used and they were also familiar with the different kind of platform that was being used and how they are going to work with this platform.

And this really help them to boost the sales revenue right, so, the role of IT Department is very, very important in the process ok.

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### **Nonlocal Experts and Extradepartmental Gurus**

- Act as a bridge and as interpreters between people from different backgrounds, skill areas, and specializations.
- Learn faster than the average person.
- Bring value to the overall team synergy.
- Learn the basic lingo and understand the frameworks.
- Have the ability to deal creatively and rationally with the problems



Now coming to what do you call non local expert and extra departmental gurus. It means those who are not experts but under technology but in the KM system but experts in their domain and their areas right. So, basically those who are non local experts they act as a bridge ok or interpreter between the people from different backgrounds, skill areas and specializations, like I am a person in HR if I am going to use system KM system.

Which is basically technology enabled, so I would be in a position to tell them that these are the things that is required by the us, and these are the thing need to be integrated with the systems right. So, that KM people or the IT people or the knowledge developers can understand this requirement related to the specialisation of the non experts and integrate them with the system ok.

And these people are with; since they are experts in their domain they know what is to be included. So, they are much better and they also learn faster compared to others because they have an open mind and open perspective compared to those people who are part of the system. So, we have seen that in such cases people from other domain who are not experts they learn much better compared to others.

Because they have the curiosity the right kind of mindset see that yes, this is something new to learn compare to learn part of the system those who are experts can easily adapt and they need to; do not need to push much effort in the process. But non local experts have to put in a lot of efforts but they are really interested, they would be much faster to learn right.

And that is how you can create synergy because your pooling resources from different sources ok and then it brings synergy to them because in that way you will be able to interact and relate creative, lot of knowledge pool which could be used by all the team members ok provided you have a team which is cross functional in nature right.

And these people also need to learn what language that is lingo to understand in terms of storage, retrieval and use of knowledge content and they should be also understand the entire framework of knowledge management system that is how it works. So, it is very, very important for the domain experts to make them understand those who are non domain experts are not expert in the process see this is an entire framework that is how it works.

And then they need to understand the language which is understood by them right not in the technical language right. And these local experts once they understand the better position to use it and they cannot provide their own perspective because the technical perspective may be limited in the sense but the non technical perspective may be much more broader.

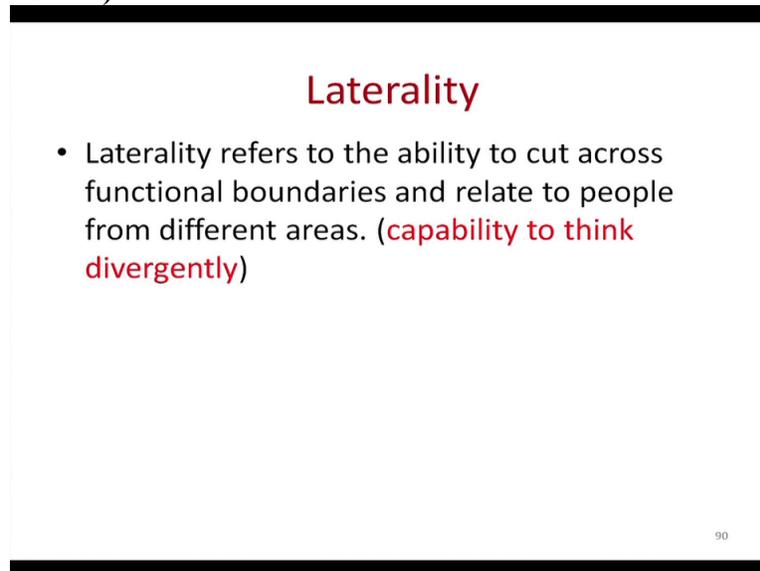
Because they can visualize, see how the system is going to be effect them or help them to do or perform well and in the process they would be able to extract more and more to and to make use of it to be creative and try to solve the problem in a very rational manner ok. Because once they have the input the information and then they can apply that information to solve the problem.

You know that when you are talking about the rationality and decision making. Rationality comes from what, from where, when you have a good amount of information and not only good amount of information but also quality of information. So, suppose you have sufficient

information and quality information then you can make use of it to make good decisions which could be much more rational than intuitive.

Lack of information help you make intuitive decisions but when it comes to good quality information and you have used amount of information then you can make use of it to make good quality decisions right, that is non local experts also have a role to play.

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Now coming to non local experts you are going to use your concept that it is very, very important and process is known as laterality. Now laterality is what, laterality it actually is a process that where you are not using straight jacketed thinking approach ok. Where you are not the part of the convergent thinking but basically laterality refers to the capability to think divergently.

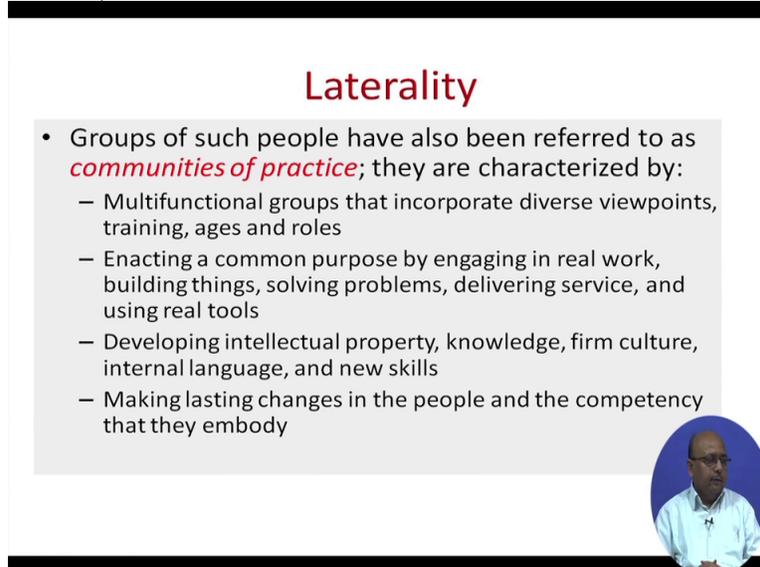
It means that you can adapt to diverse approach to various approaches to solve a problem right.

So, how this laterality comes into team, laterality that comes into the team where you are having people from diverse background ok, where you are having people from the experts who are in from different functional areas.

So, in the sense that if you have cross-functional domain exports right. And if they are able to relate with each other in the team probably you will have the best synergy right. And that is why when you are going to form an knowledge management team one of the important thing that you not need to think that they go for a cross-sectional team which really experts in there domain and not necessarily in the technology.

So, that they can think creatively they can pool their knowledge resources from different a functional area, which can be used by each other and that is why laterality as such it is very, very important right.

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## Laterality

- Groups of such people have also been referred to as *communities of practice*; they are characterized by:
  - Multifunctional groups that incorporate diverse viewpoints, training, ages and roles
  - Enacting a common purpose by engaging in real work, building things, solving problems, delivering service, and using real tools
  - Developing intellectual property, knowledge, firm culture, internal language, and new skills
  - Making lasting changes in the people and the competency that they embody



We are taking this concept of laterality further and that is how we evolve and come out with community of practices. If you look at the community of practices it is a set of people who are domain expert in the different functional areas and they evolve certain practices which could be termed as best community practices or which could be a benchmarked and this is remitted on the basis of knowledge sharing from all the members of the team right.

So, now if you look at the various characteristics of these communities of practices here what happens that community that means the people who are form, who form the community, who is part of the group they actually have divergent view point right, the training, the background the role which they performing in the organisation.

Maybe different because somebody in marketing, somebody in finance, and somebody is in production, somebody in sales, somebody in R and D, so, each one of us has different roles similarly there may be senior managers, there may be junior managers, their training, their prospective are different right.

So, when they interact and relate with each other ok as a group they come out with something that good for the organisation. Then that is what we known as community of practices. And all of

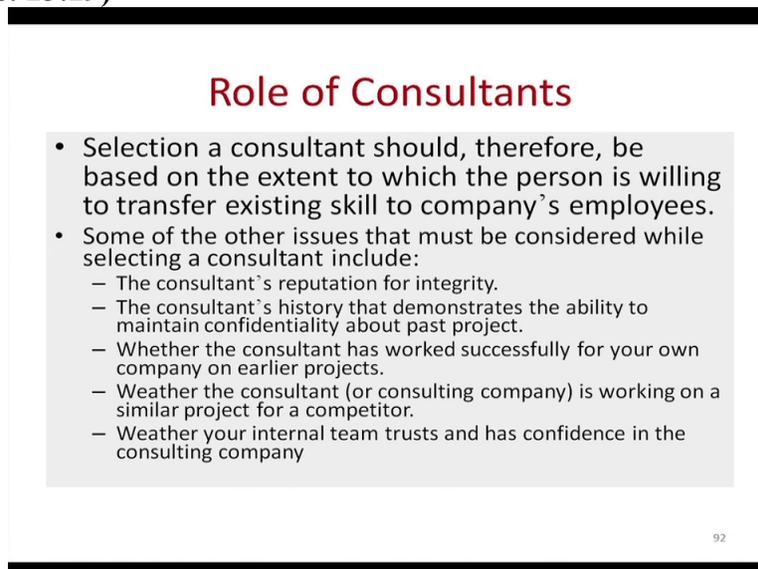
them work for a common cause right and when they are engaged in project they build it and solve the problem.

They deliver the services ok, by using real tools, so actually these kind of teams could be called self managed right. Why we are calling it as self manage teams means because these teams which are; you can say that it is part of the knowledge management right team. They have cross functional domain expertise with different characteristics. They have all certain practices they make use of it to make ensure that delivers right and it is put to use.

These kind of things are known as practices which is adopted by particular community of knowledge workers ok. Who are part of the team and these people basically are very, very creative. So, they come out with patents, trademarks ok they develop languages ok is part of the culture which is shared within the organisation.

And they also develop new skills because when you interact and relate people what happened that you are going to develop new skills with each other then right. And then you are going to bring and make sure that these changes or more sustainable in the nature. So, when you are adopting new practices new systems you come out with benchmarks systems and practices. And when you share knowledge and generate it and you make sure that it is lasting impact on the people.

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**Role of Consultants**

- Selection a consultant should, therefore, be based on the extent to which the person is willing to transfer existing skill to company's employees.
- Some of the other issues that must be considered while selecting a consultant include:
  - The consultant's reputation for integrity.
  - The consultant's history that demonstrates the ability to maintain confidentiality about past project.
  - Whether the consultant has worked successfully for your own company on earlier projects.
  - Whether the consultant (or consulting company) is working on a similar project for a competitor.
  - Whether your internal team trusts and has confidence in the consulting company

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Now if you look at these concepts of laterality one thing is very, very important because at each stage you find that yes consultants. Whether they are going to be from within the organisation or

from outside they should also form or they should be a part of the KM team, now if you look at the role of the consultant one that you need to decide that whether they are going to be from within the organisation or from outside the organisation.

Now the criteria to select a consultant is to see that the extent to which they would be able to contribute ok right. And they would be able to transfer knowledge which they have to the people right. So, that should be the sole criteria for deciding about the extent, consent, consultant that they should be in a position to transfer or to their knowledge to the employees with which they are going to work ok.

Now apart from this transferring knowledge to the employees we also need to consider some other issues. These issues may include like what is the reputation and integrity of the consultant ok. And how this reputation comes out how the Internet works out based on experience and knowledge of that people.

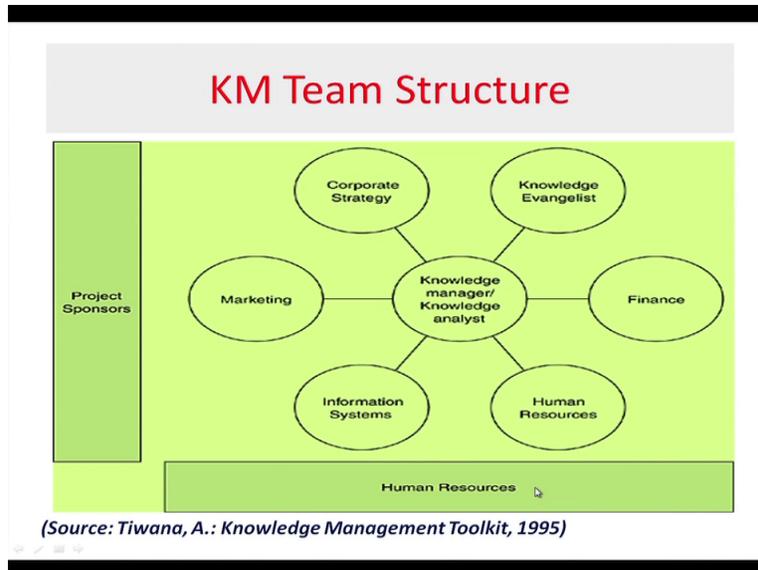
The kind of project that he has delivered in terms of the kind of outcomes, so, you can look into the achievements records of these consultants, how well they are worked in the past projects and that could give an idea ok that whether they can really help you in the process or not ok. So, if you look at the history in the past records of the projects that they have delivered, outcome that has been achieved by them.

So, all this build really help to see that they will be able to contribute ok, now because sometimes what happens these kinds of things are not available. So, it may not be able to decide about it ok. Similarly you have to see that they are not going to work on similar projects with the competitors because in that case what happened you will not be able to have an edge over your competitors make sure that the consultants that you were going to hire;

If he is going to work on similar projects with the competitor, so then you make use of that instead of getting your knowledge to be transferred to your competitor's right. And then you have to ensure that people those who are not the part of knowledge management team have trust on the consultants.

Otherwise they would not be able to share and share the knowledge and other things with the consultant in the sense if the consultant is from the outside and if the consultant is within the then issue of trust is not there because he is known to the persons

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Now look at the KM team structure, how the KM team can be formed. Now if you look at the structure you can see that on this side project sponsors are there right. This project sponsors tell you about what that the role of senior manager is very, very important ok. It is the senior managers, top managers who are going to sponsor the project the KM project because the project involves cost, money and resources ok.

So, from the commitment top management to the senior manager their dedication to this cost is very, very important. They should be actually convinced by the knowledge team that how it is going to help you and when I am talking about the balance yes of course you need to convince and communicate them about the payoff's what way it is going to benefit what kind of impact that it is going to have ok.

So, if these issues are brought into top management probably they would be ready to sponsor this kind of project. Now another issue is that where are going to be the HR manager, are they going to be the part of KM team or they would be kept in the loop. So, the idea is to top managers since they would not be able to integrate on a regular basis with the KM team they should be kept only in the loop because they cannot be part of the KM team.

Similarly HR cannot be part of the KM team but they should also be kept in the loop because they should understand ok that what is happening with the KM system because ultimately it is going to be used by the employees ok. And the employees are managed by the HR ok, so, HR managers and projects sponsors that is top managers must be kept into the loop ok.

Now if you look at the structure you have people from finance, HR, IT, marketing, corporate strategy people ok. So, all these people are going to integrate their activities with the knowledge manager's ok. Who is going to have team and many organisation have created positions like chief knowledge managers, chief learning officer these kind of position have been created.

And there and they are going to form a team of people from cross-functional domain who are expert, you can contribute to the KM system right.

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<b>Structuring the KM team</b>			
<b>Focus</b>	<b>Shareholder Group</b>	<b>Role in the Knowledge Management Project</b>	<b>Characteristics Strongly Desired</b>
Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>User teams</li> <li>Finance</li> <li>Marketing</li> <li>Other functional areas with which the knowledge management initiative is concerned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide functional expertise.</li> <li>Provide business expertise in their specific area.</li> <li>Participate in the process design stage.</li> <li>Help in the implementation stages of the system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must understand work processes in their area.</li> <li>Must have good interpersonal and team skills.</li> <li>Must have a certain degree of credibility within other participating groups.</li> <li>Must be willing to see from other functional viewpoints.</li> </ul>

*(Source: Tiwana, A.: Knowledge Management Toolkit, 2002)*

Now if you look at the structuring of the knowledge management team right. You can see that first we have to look at the team and then will go on and look into the technology and the most important is organisation right. These are the three backbones of the knowledge management team. So, first of all we talked about the team, ok. So, if you look at the team there could be different kind of teams.

Teams related to same users, it could be related to finance, marketing and other functional areas right. So, you can include people from different areas, functional areas including the end users those who are good and adapt too early. Then what is the role in the KM project ok because these people can provide expertise functional expertise related to their areas for example the KM system is not going to be only about the product and innovation.

But it could be also relate to recruitment it would also related to how to go for plan for a strategy or it could be how to relate to how to divide the pricing strategy right. So, idea is that you need to

bring functional expertise at a particular platform ok where they are going to work together. So, make sure that these people are having expertise in their specific domain right.

And also participate in process design stage ok because when the knowledge management system has been designed ok. They should be part to it and they should also be part in the implementation process because ultimately they are going to ask as a functional heads in the respective departments ok that this is a system and how it is beneficial for us and how you are going to use it right. And what are the characteristic that is required by different set of people.

They must understand the process ok and how they must have a good interviewing skills and interpersonal skills sorry, so, that they can interact and relate with each other ok and they should have credibility. So, that should have the credibility within the participating groups otherwise they would be a lack of trust and confidence they would not be able to interact and relate and then they have to say it from others perspective ok.

Like an HR manager I must understand what is the perspective of the marketing people or as a production manager I must be able understand marketing perspective, the HR perspective unless you are not going for these kind of things probably you are not going to have a very, very comprehensive team which is going to work together right, thank you.