

Chapter 7

Knowledge Management And Quality Management - Interactive Approach

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ABSTRACT

The services, by their inherent characteristics, cannot present quality only if management knowledge is not attached to them. It is shown, based on Nonaka and Takeuchi's work "Creation and Knowledge in the company", that this happens in organizations aiming at efficiency and

entrepreneurism. One can say that the creation of organizational knowledge consists in the capacity a company has to create a piece of new knowledge and spread it in the organization as a whole, besides incorporating it into its products, services, and systems. While this happens, one can notice that the perspective of learning and growth needs to be focused on people and on the infrastructure of human resources, which are extremely needful for the success of the organization. The investments to be performed in this área can be considered another critical factor for the survival and development of the organizations in a long term. However, this development needs to be sustained by an analysis and a constant intervention in the performance of the internal processes, being that these are considered the key processes of the business. The improvement of these internal processes in the present constitutes the key indicator of financial success in the future.

Keywords: Knowledge, Management., Intellectual Capital, Services.

1 INTRODUCTION

The turn to the third millennium was characterized by a series of agile and remarkable transformations. It is considered to be a period of constant technological innovations, presenting, in addition to unprecedented economic opportunities, major political and economic reforms, and also an intense rebirth of new administrative cultures. The lifestyles, shopping habits, needs, desires, and aspirations of consumers are in constant transformation.

Likewise, the growing diversity of products, services, models, and brands, the growth of global competition, market segmentation, the emergence of economic blocks, and the diversity of technologies, have led organizations to look inside and outside themselves, and rethink their way of acting in the market.

Mankind has always lived in a constant search for the continuous improvement of his skills and the improvement of his knowledge to satisfy his needs, desires, and aspirations. The speed with which

things develop due to the number of resources available does not mean that we have come close to a cure for all ills. In this way, organizations seek methodologies that make it possible to solve everyday problems and achieve success in their mission.

Despite all the advances that took place in the twilight of the second millennium, when the "Era of Knowledge" and connections began, obtaining quality and productivity remains a great challenge for managers. Thus, what for some is seen as a problem, for others is seen as a motivating source of change, which generates opportunities for organizations to improve their performance and position themselves better in the market, with their products, raw materials, and services.

Furthermore, companies are confronted with a human performance crisis. In both private and public companies, human performance is a growing concern for managers, economists, and politicians. Its recognition as one of the most primordial variables of the current economy is increasingly considered.

It is also important to point out that the first specific studies on service economic activities, sporadic and theoretically inconsistent, emerged in the 1950s, aimed at analyzing the regional location of economic activities, among which services played a relevant role as a locational factor.

Kon (2004) reports that, from the 1980s onwards, interest in researching these activities began to intensify internationally among economists, with the perception of a considerable increase in the representation of services in total employment and the generation of income and added value. of the more developed countries, in which, already in that period, they represented around 70% of the total. On the other hand, some analysts became aware that services were starting to play a much more important role in the global and regional economic development of countries than before.

This article intends to demonstrate the importance of knowledge management and how it has become essential for the quality of services since in recent years this sector has shown considerable growth.

2 DEVELOPMENT

For the organization's performance, it is necessary to recognize that its future is directly linked to business management, and what is done about it, collectively, in its decisions and daily actions and its developments.

As explained by Teixeira Filho (2000), the future will only be fully defined when it becomes present. This fact is not about a choice between the nostalgia of a dated real and a threatening virtual, but between different conceptions of the virtual.

In this category are virtual communities, living and acting. The question, then, is how to build and support them, collectively, for the common interest of people and companies.

Knowledge management, being essential for the quality of services, is no longer enough to treat the service sector seriously. The concern focused solely on increasing productivity no longer meets the new requirements of the competitive landscape. Such concepts are no longer enough to defend the concept that service managers have to be more concerned with the customer.

According to Giancesi and Corrêa (1994), for some decades now, as a result of the need for greater professionalism in the management of service operations in companies, attempts have been made to adapt industrial management techniques, originally developed for the manufacturing sector, to the conditions of the service production environment.

These authors also add that this movement increased the demand for professionals with training in Industrial Administration, on the part of service companies such as financial institutions, credit card administrators, retail and wholesale companies, and restaurants, among others.

Meanwhile, in which the manufacturing sector recognizes the inadequacy of some traditional methodologies of production administration, they search for new concepts, aiming at adapting to the new global economic environment, the service sector needs to expand concepts and methodologies adequate, both to the new times, regarding the specifics of its operations.

In this context, forces of a similar nature to those that generated the revaluation of the manufacturing function within industrial companies are also acting in service companies, in the sense of valuing the operations function.

However, human resources are considered to be a key asset in service activities. To obtain customer satisfaction and retention, a service company needs to ensure that it also has employee retention and satisfaction. It is through the management of the employee-customer value chain that service companies obtain competitive advantages and, therefore, increase their business performance.

According to Carvalho and Rotondaro (2005), as a result of consumers not participating in the goods production process, judgments about the quality of the operation will be inferred based on the quality of the goods themselves. However, in services, the consumer, who probably participates in the operation, does not only judge its result, but also the aspects of its production.

In short, in Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1997) suggestion, any manager who stays informed will be able to observe that we are living in a "knowledge society", in which knowledge is not just another resource, alongside the factors of traditional production, whether they are: land, capital, and labor, but the most important resource.

Managers will likewise realize that the future belongs to "knowledge workers," those who use their heads rather than their hands and that the key to future prosperity lies in their education and training. The authors add that, according to popular reasoning, if companies train their employees, they will be better able to learn.

This simplistic model will work if the company is only concerned with absorbing knowledge from somewhere and passing it on to individuals within the organization. However, it will not work when the intention is to create knowledge, not only at the individual level but also at the group level and organizational level.

In the simplistic model, knowledge moves laterally and in a single direction, while knowledge moves in a spiral when creating organizational knowledge.

Still, according to the teaching of Nonaka and Takeuchi (1997), a manager can adopt seven guidelines to implement an organizational knowledge creation program within a company. However, the process is not always as simple as portrayed by the non-specialized press, but it is certainly more effective, consistent with the following guidelines:

1 Create a knowledge vision: this should be created by top management, who should also define the field or domain that provides its members with a mental map of the world they live in and a general direction related to the type of knowledge they seek to create. The essence of the strategy lies in the development of the organizational capacity to acquire, create, accumulate and exploit the domain of knowledge

In the not-too-distant future, top management will be evaluated not only on measures of economic performance but also on the quality of the knowledge view it presents to elements both inside and outside the company;

2 Develop a knowledge team: The creation of new knowledge starts with the individual, however, it is not a simple matter of processing objective information. It is a subjective and extremely personal activity.

To stimulate valuable insights and intuitions, a company that creates knowledge needs diversity in the talent pool available within the company. Such diversity increases the variety of requirements, which is one of the enabling conditions for the organization. To ensure that this pool of talent available within the company retains its freedom and autonomy, the company must be able to offer diversity in career paths as well.

It should also use different criteria for evaluating the performance of project leaders, and should also allow them to make “important mistakes”;

3 Build a high-density field of interaction on the frontline: To nurture a subjective and personal mindset among its employees, a knowledge-creating company needs to provide a place where a rich source of original experience can be drawn – what might be called a high-density field. This field refers to an environment in which intense interactions between team members occur. It can be represented by activities of cross-functional new product development teams, for example.

The knowledge creation theory is anchored on the important assumption that human knowledge is created and expanded through the social interaction between tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge;

4 Piggyback on the new product development process: The new product development process is just the essence of creating new organizational knowledge. The creation of this knowledge is like a derivative of the development of new products. Thus, the company's performance in the new product development process becomes a critical factor for the creation of organizational knowledge.

Companies need to keep in mind that to be successful in the new product development process, it is necessary to maintain an adaptive and flexible approach to their development. It is also necessary to make

sure that there is a highly organized team to supervise the development process and also to encourage the participation of non-specialists in the development of new products, which adds variety to the process;

5 Adopt the middle-up-down management model: most of the time, the process of creating organizational knowledge is initiated by a sense of urgency or a crisis within the organization. Creative chaos can be generated internally by setting challenging organizational goals that are far beyond the company's current capabilities, or by promoting reflection-in-action, where the company encourages its members to question and deny existing cognitive/behavioral assumptions.

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1997) point out that one of the most effective ways to manage creative chaos is through middle-up-down management. In this model, top management articulates the vision or dream for the company, while frontline employees examine reality. The gap between dream and reality is bridged by middle managers, who act as mediators between the two, creating the business concepts and intermediate products;

6 Adopt the hypertext organization: to qualify as a knowledge-creating company, the company must have the organizational capacity to continuously and dynamically acquire, accumulate, explore and create new knowledge. And strategically categorize and recontextualize them so they can be used by other members of the organization or by future generations.

Despite the complexity, the adoption of the hypertext structure is necessary, mainly because it facilitates the life of the team members since they only need to be on one level at a time, also, because the quality of knowledge controlled by the organization increases because specialization of types of knowledge takes place.

The business system level in a hierarchy specializes in acquiring, accumulating, and exploiting explicit knowledge, while the task force deals primarily with tacit knowledge and creates new knowledge through the conversion process. The knowledge base level, in a sense, focuses on the storage and reinterpretation of tacit and explicit knowledge.

Adoption of this type of organization may take some time, however, the decision to adopt it will require senior management vision and commitment;

7 Build a knowledge network with the outside world: Knowledge creation is not just a matter of processing objective information about customers, suppliers, competitors, channel stewards, the local community, or the government. Team members also need to mobilize the tacit knowledge of external participants through social interactions.

For direct communication to be effective, it is useful to always use real products or prototypes, these project a much stronger image of the message the company is trying to convey than the mere use of words.

In addition to these guidelines, it is important to emphasize that organizational knowledge is also created through an interactive process. Interactions in epistemological and ontological dimensions come together in these two spirals.

The measurement of business performance based on intellectual capital can be considered, since the last decades have been marked by a great revolution in several areas, in the most varied branches of business worldwide.

Such changes, however radical and strange they may seem, force the search to somehow improve people's daily lives. To adapt to changes, some companies implement systems, develop strategies, develop a culture of entrepreneurial initiative, study career plans, manage information systems, develop a culture of social responsibility, manage conflicts, develop and train teams, promoting quality, in an attempt to revolutionize and improve its operation.

In current times, where the pursuit of competitive advantage is a goal to be pursued by all organizations that wish to participate in the "game of the market", companies seek to present themselves to their customers in a more differentiated way, seeking to obtain the so important distinction that will make them preferred by the consumer.

In the struggle to differentiate themselves from one another, companies present themselves to the market through products that seek to add "additional value" to the increasingly demanding consumer of this beginning of the century.

Taking into account quality production environments, it is possible to observe that there are three basic types of indicators, in the understanding of Paladini (2002): performance indicators, support indicators, and quality indicators themselves.

As for the first group, which is the quality indicators, they refer directly to the production process. As they act in the actions of basic operations of manufacturing and production of goods and services, seeking to optimize both individual operations and their integrated management, these indicators invest in the efficiency of the operations themselves, that is, in productivity, are the typical indicators of the in-line quality environment, since they act directly in the production process.

These indicators have well-defined basic characteristics, which are:

- a) emphasize the productive process;
- b) involve more tactical and operational than strategic management procedures. However, they may involve strategic actions, such as those that determine production differentials (production capabilities that may be fundamental to competitors);
- c) refer to the company's potential characteristics, that is, what the company has best about its competitors and which can become a competitive advantage;
- d) highlight the company's weaknesses, that is, weaknesses that it needs to consider as priorities in its process optimization actions;
- e) evaluate the performance of the process, including all its elements, mainly the human element;
- f) have, as a basic goal, measuring the efficiency of the organization.

In this way, performance indicators assess quality based on the organization's production process.

The support indicators, on the other hand, refer to the offline environment, being able to act both in the productive support itself and in the support of the online actions, or even in the relationship between both. The supporting indicators, in this way, act throughout the organization.

The following are considered basic characteristics of support indicators, according to Paladini (2002):

- a) emphasize support for the production process, actions that relate the company to the market, and activities that link the production process and meeting consumer expectations;
- b) preferential involvement in tactical and operational management procedures;
- c) the company's agility in offering support to the new actions required and in integrating elements from different areas and different functions;
- d) evidence of deficiencies of the company in the joint action of operations of production agents or, still, in the support of the functioning of these same operations and these same agents;
- e) evaluation of the performance of support actions for the production process and other fundamental actions of the company;
- f) have, as a basic goal, the ability to measure support and support for models of efficiency and effectiveness of the organization's general actions.

These support indicators assess the quality based on the support offered to the organization's production process.

As for the quality indicators themselves, they are more comprehensive. They refer to how the organization reacts to changes.

These are the quality indicators themselves – since, as can be seen, the other indicators are similarly focused on quality, although they operate in specific environments – in the first case, in the production process, and the second, in the general actions of Support. These indicators operate in the online environment. They are essentially strategic indicators. Therefore, they are known as indicators of the survival of the organization.

As basic characteristics, it is observed that the quality indicators themselves:

- a) emphasize the company's reactions to market changes, as well as the way the company influences the market, generating appropriate changes to its tangible goods or services. They also highlight the analysis of market trends, which can direct the company's activities to create proactive reactions;
- b) involve strategic management procedures. They may include tactical management and operational management;
- c) refer to the opportunities that the company identifies in the market;
- d) show external threats to the company, mainly in terms of competitors and the strategic vision of tangible goods and services;

- e) evaluate, in this way, the impact of the process and its support on the company's strategic performance;
- f) have, as a basic goal, measuring the effectiveness of the organization.

Quality indicators (properly speaking) are the most relevant, both for their strategic characteristics and also for being the most comprehensive. These indicators include the others and, due to their basic attributes, place the other indicators at the service of the organization's strategic action.

In service operations, the customer always plays an especially important role, which is often not the case in manufacturing. This means that its performance can influence its perception of quality by other customers.

Gianesi and Corrêa (1994) add that, on the other hand, the same reasons that make the customer a source of possible problems for the service delivery process also represent opportunities for improvement, both in terms of their perception of quality and own use of resources. As the client takes part in the process, assignments that normally should be the responsibility of paid labor can be transferred to him.

In this context, a learning organization is a company that constantly builds structures and strategies that increase and maximize organizational knowledge. Senge (1998 apud SOLTERO, 2003), defines them as those companies in which people continually expand their capacity to create the results they want, in which new patterns of thinking are fostered, and in which people continually learn how to learn together.

In turn, organizational learning is the ability of the organization to obtain the understanding and understanding generated by its own experience through experimentation, observation, analysis, and the willingness to examine cases of success and failure.

Soltero (2003) also considers four fully interconnected elements for organizational learning: knowledge acquisition, information distribution, information interpretation, and organizational memory.

Furthermore, he observes that an entity learns if, through its information process, the range of its potential behavior is modified.

One of the most important qualities of these organizations is that they can create, acquire and transfer knowledge and therefore modify their behavior to generate and reflect new knowledge.

Finally, it is important to emphasize the thinking of Bukowitz and Williams (2002), where the tactical side of the knowledge management process encompasses four basic steps. As people gather the information they need for their daily work, use the knowledge to create value, learn from what they create, and finally feed that knowledge back into the system for others to use as they embrace their problems.

Each step requires everyone in the organization to participate to some degree. The activities that define the steps of this process are not well delimited, so they are described continuously. However, each step in the process has a core set of activities that are sufficiently coherent with each other to distinguish each subsequent step.

3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In general, organizations currently live with problems or undesirable internal results that generate great variability in their processes, many of which are not under control or are not predictable. Therefore, they coexist with high costs and loss rates, and with complaints and dissatisfaction from external and internal customers.

This operates because, currently, we are experiencing a moment of accelerated technological transformations, resulting from the accumulation of knowledge, whose limits are impossible to visualize. In turn, this process is leading to rapid, continuous, and profound economic, political and social changes.

In this context, Nonaka and Takeuchi (1997) point out that knowledge, contrary to information, concerns beliefs and commitments, which is a function of attitude, perspective, or specific intention, and is also related to action. In turn, knowledge is also related to meaning, which is context-specific and relational.

These authors present in their theory of organizational knowledge creation, the traditional definition of knowledge as being justified true belief. While traditional Western epistemology has focused on truth as an essential attribute of knowledge, they have highlighted the nature of knowledge as justified belief. This difference in focus introduces another radical distinction between the view of knowledge in the Western epistemological tradition and that of knowledge creation theory.

While traditional epistemology emphasizes the absolute, static, and non-human nature of knowledge, usually expressed in formal logical propositions, knowledge is considered a dynamic human process of justifying personal belief regarding truth.

It was also verified that in recent years, there has been a significant change in the focus of the industrial society, transforming it into a knowledge society. Among the various factors that contributed to this change, there are changes in the economy and the value of the most significant assets, to the required profile of the employee.

Knowledge organizations are those that have a structure focused on knowledge and not on capital; those whose intangible assets are far more valuable than their tangible assets; whose workers are qualified professionals with a high level of education.

Most economic theories have treated knowledge, implicitly or explicitly, as an important factor in economic phenomena. However, the treatment given to knowledge differs according to the emphasis given to knowledge, the type of knowledge that attention is paid to, and the ways of acquiring and using it.

There is no shortage of ideas when it comes to improving human behavior. Perhaps one factor concerns managers who are overwhelmed by such ideas, suggestions, and theories. Yes, needing a science, a technology, or a system to improve human behavior.

All this reflects how the successive shocks in the management of organizations are affected, especially in companies that deal in a competitive environment, causing them to increase competitiveness and also the search for professionals with more competence and knowledge to deal with such situations.

The recognition of this scenario and the immediate adaptation to its reality are essential for the survival of organizations. New structures, administrative procedures, ways to motivate and train your employees, and forms of leadership are already becoming necessary and will be more and more. Collaborators focused on customer satisfaction and are motivated to bring countless benefits to themselves and the owners.

Managers, as they sympathize with the adoption of new paradigms that arise to improve the situation, end up bumping into inadequate systems that are incompatible with existing needs.

These facts require innovative solutions for the sector, it is believed that the solution for these organizations is to evolve towards a policy of implementing a modern model, structured on scientific foundations that aims at efficiency, efficacy, and effectiveness, using when possible, of computational resources.

Thus, using strategic planning and control as an intercomplementary function within companies, it will be possible to avoid unwanted failure and organizations will guarantee its effectiveness in the economic productive system and will be able to overcome their random crises.

Managing a company is a task that requires concentration, competence, perseverance, exclusive dedication, and even a little intuition. The "mix" of inherent difficulty is large in all areas of the organization.

The activities carried out by decision-makers are quite varied, and related to administrative issues, the need to organize a decision-making process arises, to prioritize latent strategies.

The organization that plans strategically achieves a greater integration of its activities, as it promotes a more conscious allocation and adjustment of existing resources to needs, in addition to a broader view of its environment.

In light of Nonaka and Takeuchi's teachings about what happens in Japanese companies, sometimes it is better to create intellectual capital within companies, molding their employees to be able to meet their needs and provide better service to their customers, thus improving the expected quality.

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