

Foreword

This is a blockbuster of a book that Professor Petter Gottschalk has produced. A blockbuster in the sense of breaking new ground. Textbooks abound in the area of knowledge management as they do in e-business and, to a lesser extent, on outsourcing. But what is missing in the literature is a book that connects the dots.

What this current book by Gottschalk does is not only conceptually link up these three, till now, relatively separate areas of study — KM, e-business, and outsourcing — into a holistic picture, but also theoretically point the way through a series of research propositions to how these disparate areas can actually be aligned in a meaningful way to achieve the creation, transfer and application of knowledge.

This, of course, is what knowledge management is all about — how to support the creation, transfer and application of knowledge. And this book delivers “big” on that “know-how” in the twin domains of electronic business and IT outsourcing relationships. The book not only informs the reader wanting to see the links and get the know-how, but also entertains with practical case studies and intriguing insights.

The journey that Gottschalk takes the reader on begins with a macro-lens view of e-business in Chapter I. The same lens is then applied to outsourcing in Chapter II. The focus of Chapter III switches the interest to IT Insourcing to provide a contrasting perspective on outsourcing, which helps to illuminate the differences. The focus really begins to zoom in with Chapter IV, devoted to a run-through of a forest of theories about IT outsourcing that provides a wealth of information on the critical factors necessarily involved in successful IT outsourcing relationships. The next two Chapters, V and VI, complete the outsourcing picture with a clear exposition of the role of leadership in managing outsourcing projects (Chapter V) while Chapter VI wraps it all up with a strong emphasis on the need for a governance model for IT.

The last three chapters of the book present a thought provoking look at the application of knowledge management, firstly in relation to two relatively new areas of endeavour, at least in relation to being written about with scholarly authority. These

emerging areas are the fields of policing (Chapter VII) and law (Chapter VIII). The last Chapter, IX, provides a view of the current knowledge management systems with an eye also to the future and how KM systems are likely to evolve over the ensuing decade.

I will take the opportunity to offer a view from my own area of expertise in the fields of policing and law. I have for many years taught police investigators and lawyers and often wondered how the knowledge they use and acquire in and on the job could be better managed. The “law firm,” as you will discover in Chapter VIII, has readily embraced the knowledge management wave. Lawyers, unlike police, are quick to see and seize any competitive advantage that can make them an extra dollar!

Police organisations, on the other hand, have by and large come to knowledge management late in the day. This situation is not improving, for even in 2004 one finds comments in the scholarly literature like “the concept of knowledge management is an emerging field of study in both the business and educational realms. In the rank of policing, knowledge management is still relatively unexplored.”¹ However, at last someone with well-honed experience in the field of knowledge management is doing some exploring. Petter Gottschalk writes lucidly about KM and Policing and, in particular, that of police investigations. Chapter VII provides a good start in remedying this oversight in the scholarly literature for those readers interested in this specific area of knowledge management application.

I wholeheartedly recommend this book to student and practitioner alike, for each will find a wealth of knowledge within its pages to suit their needs and interests.

Dr. Geoff Dean

Senior Lecturer, School of Justice Studies, Queensland University of Technology

Reference

Colaprete, F. (2004). Knowledge management. *Law and Order*, 52(10), 82.

Geoff Dean is a senior lecturer on the Justice Studies staff in the Faculty of Law at Queensland University of Technology. His doctoral research was on the experience of investigation for detectives. Major publications include refereed journal articles on family therapy, child abuse, police education and training; domestic violence; policing by consent and reforming operational policing practices, investigative thinking, criminal profiling and terrorism, in particular suicide bombers. Dean is registered as an international expert with EUROPOL in the Knowledge Management Centre, The Hague.