Chapter VII

Epistemetrics:
How We Measure

This chapter is focused on the ways and processes by which we measure human knowledge at both the individual and organizational levels. “How” we measure knowledge is strongly related to the notion of “what” we measure, described in the previous chapter. The nature of knowledge that can be measured is the externalized or explicit knowledge shared and diffused among individuals and their organizations. We recognize the existence of KANEs as the clustering of sensorial input, but we are unable at this point to adequately measure them. We have the capability to measure sensorial activities and the locations in the brain of excitations and activities that signify cognition and emotions, but we are still unable to measure knowledge at the fundamental level of clustering of sensorial inputs.1

What we can measure is knowledge in the form of notions and intellectual constructs that can be shared and externalized. There is a relationship between our inability, at present, to measure the fundamental elements of knowledge
and our current inability to transfer, share, and exchange such knowledge. At the initial level of clustering of sensorial inputs, there are as yet insurmountable difficulties in transcribing such elements to a medium such as language which allows for communication and exchange.

Paradoxically, the more complex the higher-order constructs of knowledge, the more they allow for transcription and sharing among individuals and their organizations. These transcribed items of (“explicit”) knowledge contain only a small portion of the entire stock of knowledge in the human mind. So the limited volume of transferable knowledge and the constraints of communicating and exchanging combine to make it very difficult for individuals to share and diffuse what they know. If we could exchange knowledge at the initial clustering stage—as neurons do at the chemical level—the sharing of knowledge would have been in the form of KANEs and would have resulted in outstanding exchange and almost error-free communication processes.

So, the pertinent issue is not how to improve the transformation of “tacit” to “explicit” knowledge, but how to improve the exchange of knowledge we can transfer and communicate. This means we should focus on mechanisms of exchange and transfer: how to measure knowledge and share it.

**Key Dimensions**

Since the early days of hunters-gatherers, humans have relentlessly practiced their skills of communication. They continually improved the exchange of knowledge for the purpose of survival and the training and mentoring of their children. From these primitive hunters-gatherers to Wittgenstein and Chomsky, the role of communication and knowledge exchange among humans became a key activity and a crucial skill in human experience as a social being. With the focus on the knowledge which can be shared and exchanged, the measurement of how this exchange occurs starts with the transcribed form of intellectual nuggets. The “flow” refers to the conduits or vehicles in which knowledge resides and which serve as means for sharing and diffusion.

We measure knowledge by the modes in which intellectual nuggets are transformed, once they are transcribed and shared. The same modes or conduits for sharing apply to the hunter-gatherer who relates the day’s adventures and the prey captured as to the corporate executive debriefing her fellow manag-
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