Introduction

As discussed throughout the preceding chapters, knowledge is not a simple construct. Rather, knowledge is a complex structure that is neither static nor homogenous in its make up. Further, germane knowledge is highly context dependent; hence, germane knowledge in the context of a hospital setting would be significantly different to germane knowledge in the context of a manufacturing company. Thus, once we have developed an appreciation of all the component parts required for a successful knowledge management initiative, we must then focus on the whole, the complexity of knowledge, and its management. In so doing, it will only then be possible to make the whole truly greater than just the sum of the parts.

The launching place for managing knowledge complexity lies in the construction of an integrative model for organizational knowledge management. Such a model, which we present, serves primarily to identify the key components that have been discussed individually in preceding chapters. In addition, our model highlights the interaction effects these components have on each other when they are combined. This in turn, underscores the importance of developing synergies, strategies, tactics, and techniques to facilitate the success of the knowledge management initiative. In trying to ensure the success of the knowledge management initiative, it also becomes vital to develop an appreciation for several other areas that at first may appear to be unrelated or irrelevant but are in fact critical in the achievement of a successful
outcome. These areas include the need to be prepared and ready, the vital role of training and, in particular, the use of simulation in establishing both the appropriate levels of intellectual preparedness and readiness, and the ability to think critically and to make rapid yet sound decisions. Combined, the construction of an integrative organizational model of knowledge management, as well as the development of the key synergies, strategies, tactics, and techniques, form the key success factors for any knowledge management initiative.

**An Organizational Model for KM**

Figure 1 presents an organizational model of knowledge management. Any holistic knowledge management initiative should begin with an understanding and evaluation of the dynamics of knowledge economy, and how these impact the organization under consideration. The resultant findings from such an evaluation will serve to form inputs into the organizational model of knowledge management that will in turn help to develop the respective business and specific knowledge management strategies that the organization should adopt.

Chapter I highlighted many of the key aspects that drive today’s knowledge economy, while Chapter VII provided frameworks and tools that focused at the industry level to help with the evaluation of the external dynamics, and also the subsequent development of the primary issues on which the organization should focus. We have already stated that the key drivers of today’s knowledge economy include (a) the need to maximize the intellectual capital of an organization, (b) the emerging realization that knowledge has become one of the most important sustainable competitive advantages, and c) the fact that knowledge is now considered as essential to an organization as the traditional economic inputs of land, labor, and capital. These three drivers, coupled with the findings from applying the frameworks discussed in Chapters VIII and IX (such as Porter’s five forces model and the strategic grid), enable an organization to understand the dynamics of knowledge economy as it relates to its own industry. From here, it is then necessary for the organization to identify its relative strengths and weaknesses when compared to its competitors in a given industry.

Based on such an evaluation, the organization must then shape its business strategy, goals, and objectives. Implementation of this approach satisfies the requirements of the first two steps of Figure 1. The business strategy combined with the organization’s goals and objectives then shapes the specific knowledge management strategy required by that organization. For example, integral to Ernst and Young’s knowledge management strategy is the transition of the organization toward a truly knowledge based business (Chard, 1997). In contrast, Du Pont’s knowledge management strategy
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