

# Application of Method for Analysing and Structuring Knowledge (MASK) in PETRONAS

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## 1. About the Case Organisation

Petroleum Nasional Berhad (PETRONAS) is a global energy and solutions company, ranked amongst the largest corporations on the Fortune Global 500, with over 40,000 staff across the globe. Its Gas and New Energy (GNE) business sector was formed in 2019 and is very diverse, including the traditional Gas business such as LNG as well as new alternative energy sectors such as solar. This case study looks at PETRONAS' piloting of a method for identifying critical knowledge and rapidly identifying strategic KM interventions within the GNE business.

## 2. About the Challenge

PETRONAS' knowledge has grown rapidly in tandem with its existence and the company has had an established KM programme since 2007. Significantly, the organisation requires a holistic approach to orchestrate a 'strategic fit-for-purpose' KM foundation specifically for the needs of the business in today's rapidly changing environment. The global pandemic (Covid-19, oil price rout and energy transition) has put strong pressure on GNE to be more agile, adapt to changes quickly and embed sustainable practices to drive forward with PETRONAS' overall transformation strategy and meet its targets.

GNE is looking to further unlock and optimise value leveraging on its diverse portfolios with a very wide range of knowledge and expertise. While having KM is a good business strategy generally, the main objective in this case study was to identify and prioritise what needs to be shared and replicated quickly so that GNE could effectively address its business challenges and amplify value creation in realising business targets in a challenging business environment. To kick start its fit-for-purpose KM Journey (termed as KM3R : Replenish – Replicate – Result), GNE embarked on a Critical Knowledge Identification & Assessment Phase using the MASK Method (Method for Analysing and Structuring Knowledge) which was originally developed by a KM consortium based in France.

## 3. What We Did

- Revisit and examine the business strategy through various documents such as strategies and policies.

- Identify key focus areas and knowledge that are critical for the business to achieve its strategy through interviews with the business leads.
- Conduct further discussions with management and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to identify the pain points and area for improvements pertaining to those critical areas.
- Interviews used the framework from the applied MASK method (Method for Analysing and Structuring Knowledge).
- Designed recommended interventions to meet the identified and prioritised knowledge needs.

Although KM has been around in PETRONAS for several years, this is the first time that a method for critical knowledge identification has been applied to start up a fit-for-purpose KM programme.

#### **4. Challenges and Lessons Learned**

- We had to customise the MASK methodology to fit PETRONAS' (and the GNE business) context.
- We had to get senior management's support to get access to key stakeholders and subject matter experts (SMEs).
- We had to obtain stakeholders' agreement and consensus on what is deemed to be 'critical knowledge'.
- We had to coordinate SME's availability for further assessment through interview sessions.

##### **Lessons Learned**

- Start small with a specific business outfit with clearly defined 'KM issues' and with strong management support.
- Share success stories with the other parts of the business.
- Seek management buy in early on and keep them posted of the progress (do not wait for perfection).
- Utilise other sources of data already being collected in the organisation (e.g. culture survey) to support and validate your findings.
- Share your findings and recommendations to the highest management levels that you can reach.
- If possible, conduct the interviews physically and concurrently with respective SMEs together so as to reach consensus quickly, it will save a lot of time as compared to a series of virtual meetings with individuals.

#### **5. Impact and Benefits**

- We know where to start our KM programmes right away.
- We obtained encouraging buy-in from stakeholders since we engaged them early and continuously throughout the process.
- The assessment with SMEs gives a good insight into the specific organisational challenges, hence, allows us to propose fit-for-purpose interventions.
- Potential benefits from our KM programmes:
  - Cost savings (lessons learnt - mistakes are not repeated)
  - Business goals achieved
  - Customer satisfaction

- Business risk avoided
- Greater innovation capacity
- Increased revenue

## **6. Next Steps**

To implement the interventions, and design and roll-out fit-for-purpose KM 3R in GNE by Q3 2021.