

KM Exchange 2021

Nick Milton Keynote: Planning for KM in a Post-Covid World

Edited Notes of Chat Channel

Participant Expectations:

Ana: Looking to get some new arguments to convince organisations that KM can help in recovery from this crisis but also as a way of being better prepared for next one

Michelle: Key takeaway is to see how KM has changed over the years and how it can be positioned in the “new normal”

Bill: We will use technology more post-Covid.

Beto: Get insights on new KM practices being adopted in the post-pandemic work context.

Azlinayati: If there's any difference between KM before and post covid

Lyn: wanting to learn more about how others have coped and challenges of moving knowledge sharing activities from face to face to online

Hank: How can KM survive in post COVID in the current form

Waty: Has KM affected (or Not) during this pandemic

Susann: We discussed how to understand better future KM needs and how to use foresight in KM

Roznita: Love to learn abt KM implementation in the other parts of the world, before covid, during covid and after covid, later

Yu Ming: What are the key trends KMers need to keep an eye on

Andre: How KM programs will change post covid. What will be the new priorities?

Swati: desired key takeaway is to see how km can help the larger communities and cities and how can organizations help knowledge sharing and transfer during covid times in development of the society and community at large.

Lucky: The sources of knowledge and information just become more open

Noni: We are not any way nearing post covid so we are of the view that it is pretty hard to see how it gonna be like post covid but definitely more understanding of how tech can assist us in moving forward and be more efficient in managing the knowledge

Bill: Covid has shrunk the world.

Ghazali: What now? Can KM be in the main stream post Covid?

Kavi: how KM can help organisations cope with Covid-19 disruption

Rezwan: I am a victim of pandemic as FCDO cut funding for KM in my NGO. I will be leaving by 15 August and setting up my own private company named Knowledge City Dhaka. KM is about Welfare, we are failing in it.

Bill: Logistical, political, economic, and social issues are preventing vaccinations

Patrick B: Understanding how KM is being seen by various orgs and whether COVID has made it more 'this is how we need to work' or is KM still a 'nice to have'?

Discussion Highlights:

Nick: Counter-intuitively, KM has expanded during the pandemic but budget for it has not. Being asked to do more with less

Patrick L: Lack of Face to face and lack of ad hoc sharing makes KM harder

Roznita: People now see the value of KM.

Patrick L: Good that KM is seen to meet an urgent demand.

Bill: KM has been seen too often as 'nice to have but' ... Covid has made it clear KM is not fluff.

Annette: Lack of ftf allows us to invent new methods and they are welcomed (Consultation hours; "coffee trial" - randomised, serendipitous pairing of people to spark discussion, joint remote breakfast).

Edgar: Access to generic knowledge is the main support KM has given their organisation, followed by support for remote working and access to (covid) knowledge.

Patrick L: This is now an opportunity to demonstrate our value and worth. How do we seize that opportunity and develop it post-COVID? Covid gives KM an opportunity to become mainstream but we have to act on that. We don't want orgs to think KM only helps in a pandemic

Bill: The question I have is will KM programs receive recognition in post Covid world or will it become simply part of what we had to do and thankfully we never need to do it again.

Edgar: Innovation, collaboration and creativity are the main drivers for people heading back to physical offices

Edgar Tan: Show how KM can support the 3 reasons why people are heading back to physical offices ie innovation, collaboration/connectivity and creativity

Bill: A group in a room is not necessarily more creative. It is easier for those with the louder voices, the more prominent positions to control the creative process.

Patrick L: Challenges in managing a remote workforce may also be an incentive

Edgar: Capture lessons on the organisation's present covid response, for reuse when future pandemics strike or for emergency response more generally

Rezwan: We captured stories from the field and developed a learning paper:

Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) COVID-19 learning: An analysis, my article: <https://realkm.com/2020/11/13/manusher-jonno-foundation-mjf-covid-19-learning-an-analysis/>

Hybrid Working:

Patrick L: Danger in being pigeon holed as just supporting remote work - need to pitch for hybrid working

Edgar: New normal may be "hybrid working" although it means different things for different organisations

Yu Ming: Would responsibility for hybrid working not sit with HR/OD?

Nick: Need to work with HR/OD on the learning and knowledge components of hybrid working - how do we develop these new capabilities?

Meena: Without agreed principles, we may end up working longer hours, and may have to be accessible from 7am to 11pm, esp. if the org does not value WFH as a legitimate work activity

Annette: Hybrid is even more challenging than „pandemic only“. Hybrid means even more effort to make sure that no one is left out.

Patrick L:

Hank: If we can work from home, then why not off shore those jobs? Big threat to jobs - potentially.

Nick: That will also require work on the knowledge aspects of outsourcing.

Nick: Task 1 for KM (strategic) - develop the knowledge on hybrid working; what do we not know?; plan pilots; seek knowledge externally; capture lessons on remote working; capture new lessons as people return to work; build “hybrid knowledge” knowledge asset collaboratively

Nick: Task 2 for KM - define a hybrid KM framework. MUST address the tacit dimension. Hybrid KM framework must contain: hybrid CoPs; online knowledge repositories on all core knowledge domains; hybrid KM events (e.g. AARs, retrospects, peer assists); attention to knowledge retention.

Patrick L: Beverly Wenger-Trayner - principles for hybrid KM events <https://wenger-trayner.com/reflections/in-person-online-hybrid-the-future/> - key point hybrid events need to be stronger at including the remote people “in the room” - e.g. right technology to support their presence, buddies in the room, etc.

Rezwan: McKinsey Global Institute recently published findings of a study on 56 foundational skills needed for the future of work. KM is missing as core skill in this list, however, a slight mention was made regarding ‘translating knowledge to different contexts’ under the cognitive stream. You may read this here: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/06/defining-the-skills-citizens-will-need-in-the-future-world-of-work/>

Challenging Questions:

Arief : KM teams need to get a seat at the big management table more than before if we are going to sit down and work on hybrid working. Right now much of KM work is on operational work such as knowledge retention and knowledge curation. The challenge is getting more influence!

Beto: The challenge is to make KM (more) proactive on helping the business to deliver value, and not limited to reactive help on hybrid working.

Patrick B: How do we reconcile studies suggesting WFH makes individuals even more time-poor with KM which, in general, tends to be challenged by people being time-poor...?

Patrick L: plus we are already being asked to do more with less.

Edgar: How can KM help PLRTW (Post-Lockdown return-to-work) safely, efficiently, without break in business continuity and with no loss of morale?

Beto: Question: It seems to me that organizations that already adopted KM were more adaptable to the new ways of working. Could this be true also for PLRTW?

Edgar: We need to tailor KM support for different parts of the organisation because they have different desired outcomes

Rezwan: We need to develop concrete and tangible indicators of KM benefits. It is not about simply ROI, the 'feeling' that KM is adding value.

Susann: Very interesting points on how to mobilize leadership. We are working in this way at ADB.

Edgar: KM has shown huge value during the pandemic and now is the time to bank that in by asking senior management to be more committed to/directly involved in KM

Breakout Group Discussion Notes and Closing Discussion

Beto: Sharing my notes from the 'New world' group:

- Facilitate conversations across the organisation (all levels) on 'what's next'
- Go beyond technology support
- Show that KM is more than HR or OD management
- Rethink the KM role
- Test and experiment on new ways of working
- Use a 'theory of change' - what change do we expect and want to see?
- Benchmark other organizations
- Focus on conscious learning, not only on delivering

Arief: Post-Covid: how do we get into the loop with strategic team/ HR etc.? Demonstrate evidence of what we have done? We need to show the value we have delivered and get in with top management. Letter to management - can be a strong signal to top management - first time that KM takes the initiative in that way.

Ghazali: One definite thing I see needs to happen in Malaysia is to start a conversation on what happened and how to move forward because I honestly see people just happy to go back to the old ways.

Nick: How do we get above the day to day struggles of coping with the digital environment. We need to do marketing to prepare the ground - the letter follows through with the agreement to be made with top leadership.

Bill: KM has been doing marketing for years in many organisations. This is a time when KM can say we have done the following. Recognition and how to move forward is the purpose of the letter .. not only but at least in part.

Beto: We need to provoke conversations on what's next - with leadership, but would be healthy to involve many levels in the organisation.

Rezwan: Some issues to think about:

1. New type of work will depend on types of organizations and funding availability
2. KMers need to develop skills on translation and transcription services, in addition to AI-specific apps.
3. Capturing lessons will be a major task for KM.
4. CoPs may lose steam, because some people feel excluded and alienated. These groups of people become KM-opponents in the organization.
5. Need to be careful of organisational culture and politics. One sure shot of winning support is to tell them that all in the organization are knowledge workers and give them a sense of ownership, instead of taking credit for all KM initiatives.
6. KM should be blended with research and communication. We used this approach and positioned the reorganization as a knowledge hub.

Patrick L: Agree... Promoting KM might cause hesitations among other parts of the organisation - politics! Territorial issues... Need to build partnerships - culture side very important

Edgar : Signaling KM's enhanced value to senior management requires possibly a new skillset - of operating at a higher level in the organisation - no more "shrinking violets". Getting KM into the boardroom may concomittantly expose KM to more politics.

Arief: Need to be aware of KM Maturity and culture in the organisation

Patrick L: We are now more prepared to adapt to a new context now - what was the change and what did we learn, and how can we move forward?

Annette: How were we valuable, how did KM facilitate learning and show that we can do it again in the future.

Nick: Linda Davies Mars case study - "how can KM help you?" (operational leaders) - story of Androcles and the Lion - creating allies.

Edgar: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Androcles>