

# **KM in Changing Worlds: Exploring Knowledge Sharing for Improved Organisational Competitiveness**



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# Introduction

- The aim of the session is to identify key roles of KM in potential future worlds, examine implications for business and consider the practical barriers to knowledge sharing in European SMEs.
  
- The presentation is arranged in six stages:
  1. Defining: Defining knowledge management
  2. Setting the context: Discussion of impact of societal changes
  3. New ideas: Role of KM in future worlds
  4. Application of new ideas: Improving organisational competitiveness
  5. Empirical Research: Presentation of research on KM and SME's in an emerging economy
  6. Conclusions



# 1. Defining: Knowledge Management

- KM can be defined as
  - “the generation, representation, storage, transfer, transformation, application, embedding and protecting of organisational knowledge.”  
(Schultze & Leidner,2002)
- The overall success of the organisation is dependent upon one aspect - that of sharing information.



## 2. Setting the Context: Impact of societal changes

Natural  
Knowledge Sharing

Need trust – ownership of goals

Effects of social relationships on teams

Effects of types of societies  
(e.g. Collectivism and individualism)  
on organisations

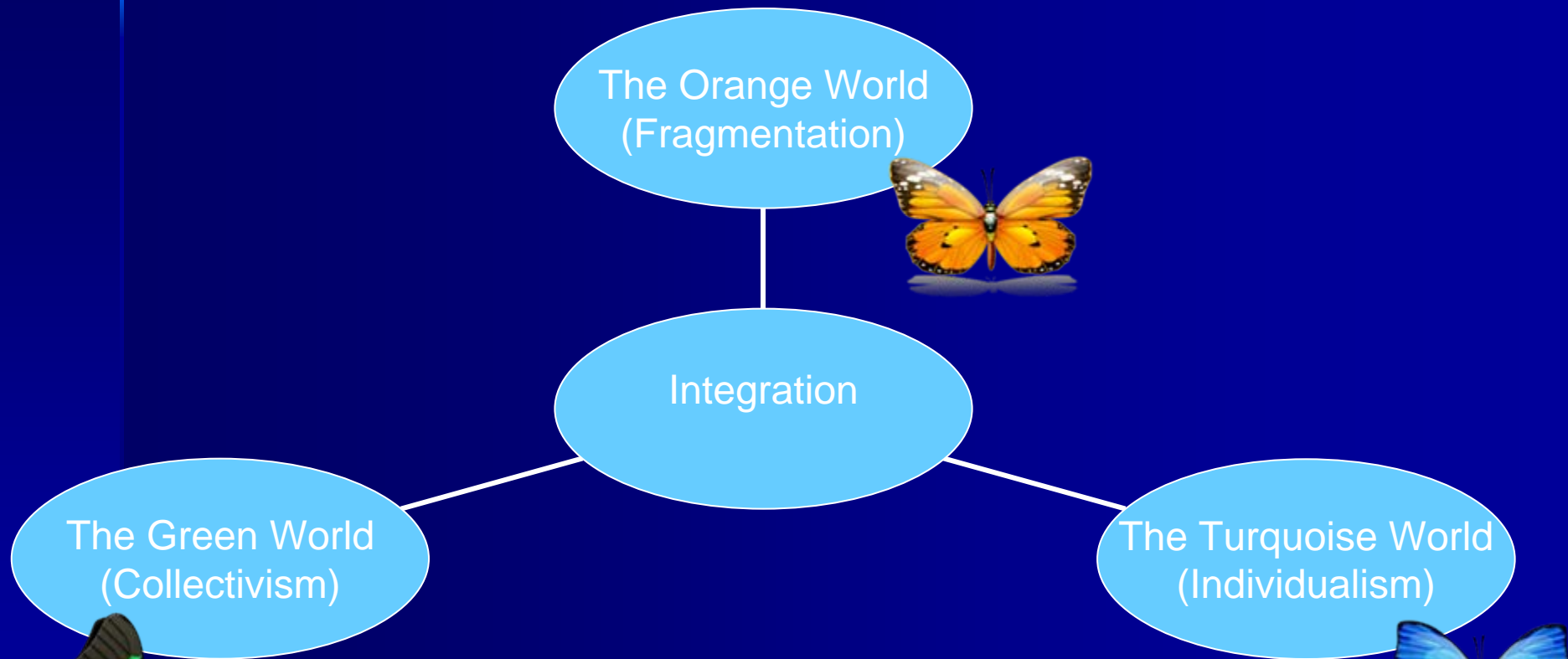
Effects of external world changes on society

Future potential world changes .....

### 3. New Ideas:

## Potential world changes: Role of KM

- Pricewaterhouse Coopers" *Managing tomorrow's people: the future of work to 2020*"



# 3. New Ideas

## Role of KM in Future Worlds

### ■ The Orange World- Fragmentation

#### – Anticipated Changes

- Companies begin to break down into collaborative networks of smaller organisations; specialisation dominates the world economy

#### – Key KM Roles & Activities

- Managing the knowledge matrix -
- Exploiting niche expertise
- Managing Intellectual Capital
- Empowering Individuals





## 3. New Ideas

# Role of KM in Future Worlds

## ■ The Green World - Collectivism

### – Anticipated Changes

- Social responsibility dominates the corporate agenda with concerns about demographic changes, climate and sustainability becoming key drivers of business

### – Key KM Roles & Activities

- Monitoring green knowledge
- Benchmarking ethical status
- Managing infrastructures for virtual networks and worlds
- Managing data in paperless offices





### 3. New Ideas: Role of KM in Future Worlds

- The Turquoise World – Corporate world

- Anticipated Changes

- Large company capitalism grows as organisations continue to grow larger. Individual preferences become more important and accepted in the area of re social responsibility.

- Key KM Roles & Activities

- Harvesting and Capturing Ideas
- Measuring and Monitoring best use of skills and expertise
- Running virtual networks and communities
- Monitoring external political and technical threats





# 4. Application of New Ideas: Improving Organisational Competitiveness

## ■ Business Benefits:

- Orange World (Fragmentation)
  - Change management and flexibility
  - Efficient human capital
  - Maintaining competitive advantage
  - Responsiveness to a distributed market
  
- Green World (Collectivism)
  - Managing reputational risk
  - Attracting the best talent
  - Maximising efficiency savings and green ratings, minimising business travel
  - Minimising risk of loss of business critical data
  
- Turquoise World (Corporate)
  - Managing change and driving innovation
  - Attracting new and exploiting existing talent
  - Reducing silo working and increasing productivity
  - Strategic risk assessment

# 5. Empirical Research: Exploring Knowledge Sharing in SMEs

- Aim of study – To explore knowledge management in small and medium sized enterprises in Krakow
- Joint venture – University of Salford Information Systems and the Jagiellonian University Institute of Information Science
- Excellent support at all levels.
- Pilot study of larger project ( bid submitted to ESRC)

# 5. Empirical Research

## Exploring Knowledge Sharing

### ■ Data Collection

- Company owners and staff were asked questions regarding views on use of KM in their organisations.
- Interviews collected over a short period of time.
- All sectors covered.

# 5. Empirical Results

## Knowledge Sharing in SMEs

### ■ Results

– The major variables which affect their use of KM were identified as:

- *Strong intuition of managers needed (5)*
- *Web is good (6)*
- *Local sources poor and not always available (11)*
- *Competition strong (12)*
- *Profit orientated (15)*
- *Harnessing intellectual capital (7)*
- *Keep abreast of current affairs (8)*
- *Too much information hinders (4)*
- *Age / Experiences of staff affect barriers to sharing (3)*
- *Some business very niche – difficult to get information (2)*
- *Confidentiality issues (17)*
- *Some markets unstable and undeveloped therefore even more*
- *Difficult to get information (18)*
- *Range of knowledge is important (19)*
- *Commercial software in use. ( 20)*

*(The number in the bracket is the total number of times similar comments were made)*

## 5. Empirical Research Discussion of Results

- Most organisations enthusiastic re the research
- Most companies keen on KM
- Did attempt to use some kind of system
- Need for reliable technology
- Need for improved technological infrastructure

## 6. Conclusion

- Session aimed to explore new perspectives of KM.
  - New future worlds and key KM roles
  - Impact of the Polish study – to provide sustainable way of evaluating the effectiveness of KM at regular intervals
  - Create new frameworks which incorporate changed societal and organisational cultures.

## 6. Conclusion

- The future will depend on
  - Co-operation
  - Resources
  - Positive response to the needs of those who manage knowledge in the global economy!

## 6. Conclusion

- Quality Knowledge Management will help drive industries towards success!



Thank you for listening!  
Any Questions?

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