



# Doctoral Workshop – So what is Next on the KM Horizon?

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# Goals

- To discuss emerging/key/unresolved KM issues
- To analyze how and why these can be the object of an Education project



# **KM RESEARCH AND PRACTICE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Where have we arrived  
after a quarter of a century?

Where are we going?

# 1. HAS KM A SCIENTIFIC FUTURE?

- “The Nonsense of KM” (Wilson, 2002)

*KM is “an umbrella term for a variety of organizational activities, none of which are concerned with the management of knowledge”*

- “Where did KM come from?” (Prusak, 2001)

*“knowledge management is not just a consultants’ invention but a practitioner-based, substantive response to real social and economic trends”*

→ How to improve recognition of KM as a scientific discipline?

definitions

measurement

methodology



## 2. HAS KM A BUSINESS FUTURE?

- “Knowledge management as an ephemeral management fashion?” (Hislop, 2010)

*“The data presented challenge the idea that knowledge management can be regarded as a transient fashion, showing that academic interest in the topic has been sustained ... However ... there has been a significant decline of interest in knowledge management among global consultancies and professional service firms”.*

→ HOW TO IMPROVE RECOGNITION BY COMPANIES?

performance

innovation

organization



# 3. DOES KM HAVE A PLACE IN A “THEORY OF THE FIRM”?

- “KM: Origins, History, and Development” (Spender, 2015)
- *“If the model or ‘theory’ of the firm in mind is purely mechanical then KM is about collecting and sharing data - an IT project. KM’s deeper promise was always to reach beyond IT towards helping manage those other forms of knowing managers rate essential to economic value creation”*

→ WHAT IS THE (REAL) ROLE OF KM IN A COMPANY?

→ WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT DOES IT PROVIDE TO MANAGERS/EXECUTIVES?

→ CAN IT BE “SEPARATED” FROM OTHER ECONOMIC/MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES?



# 4. WHAT ABOUT TECHNOLOGIES?

- “The role of IT in successful knowledge management initiatives”  
(Kankanhalli et al., 2003)

TECH-ORIENTED	APPROACH	HUMAN-BASED
cognitivist	perspective	constructivist
Explicit	Kind of knowledge	Tacit
products	focus	processes
People-to-content	goals	People-to-people
Re-use	mechanisms	Dialog, learning
repositories	systems	networks

- “Stairways to heaven: implementing social media in organizations”  
(Levy, 2013)

*“... traditional KM is obsolete, while social media concepts and tools are the new means through which organizations should share knowledge among their employees”*

→ HOW TO DESIGN/ADOPT/SPREAD APPROPRIATE KM TECHNOLOGIES?



# 5. PERSONALIZATION OR SHARING?

- “Personal Knowledge Management” (Winck, 2016)

*“Personal Knowledge Management (PKM) is the set of actions applied to our personal knowledge. This includes learning, sharing, writing, teaching, imagining, and forgetting. The focus is on Personal Knowledge: what we know and can apply. It may well be that you have always been practicing PKM without knowing it”*

→ WHOM IS KM REALLY FOR? INDIVIDUALS, OR ORGANIZATIONS?





# A (NON) CONCLUSION: WHAT ARE THE “HOT TOPICS”?

- “Future Research about Knowledge and Knowledge Management – Results from the Global Knowledge Research Network study” (Heisig, 2015)

*“Future research in KM needs to demonstrate the value contribution of KM, should focus more on human and social factors and explore KM as an organisational capability. The core concepts of knowledge should be re-visited to improve the understanding. More critical research approaches should be employed and KM research should experiment with design science, ecological and biological models.”*



# A SELECTION OF REFERENCES

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