



Promoting a sustainable organizational culture in a company: The National Railway Transport Company



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ABSTRACT

Currently, all organizations realize that knowledge and skills are a valuable capital that should be made to sustain. Actually, the railway in Algeria SNTF (National Rail Transport Company) also faces, as all companies, the need to manage and optimize the capital knowledge. This work aims at promoting the whole patrimony that reflects a whole history and culture. This heritage is dispersed over time, it is heterogeneous and it includes a number of areas, the railway operations, rolling stock, infrastructure, marketing and the personnel management.

The objective of this work is to provide software (tool) that helps in the management of tacit and explicit knowledge in particular by perpetuating and sharing the capital knowledge of the company. This booming tool aims to provide the means for a reflection on the experience gained from adverse events in normal or disorganized situation, to draw the consequences, to be memorized and reused. It offers a collective management of knowledge, based on history, the collection of knowledge over time of the exercise of railway profession or/and meeting a disaster: by centralizing of information, registration of feedbacks, achieving a synthesis of each incident or accident in the safety of railway operations.

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1. Introduction

Currently, knowledge has become a source of wealth in organizations. This article aims to explain how knowledge can improve the

quality of the organization. It also explores ways to improve the process of decision making through tacit knowledge, it concludes with the view that significant changes need to be applied at the individual and organizational development for the promotion of tacit knowledge (Kim, 2005). The knowledge management is a process that is responsible for managing all knowledge of an organization.

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The effectiveness of the organization is a major economic issue in the perspective of rail transport to a country like Algeria, a quick and effective decision-making is therefore required. Thus, different needs may cause the company to be part of this process (Stock, 2000):

- The need to remain competitive, requires us to retain mastery of the profession and improve the field of the company safety;
- The sustainability of critical competence is often kept in the memory of some experts who are close to retirement;
- Optimization of company processes. It is each person's use of the best approaches and solutions of the company, which were capitalized and will bring significant gains;
- The need in the context of extended enterprise (partners, sub-contractors, relocation), is to think strategically in order to maintain control of its knowledge.

The current rail system integrates more functionality in a complex environment with more stringent comprehensive safety requirements. However, as the industry has machines and complex systems where high safety requirements, reducing operating costs and the availability control of these facilities are needed, and must also provide the knowledge features a majestic role. Some decisions can cause heavy dramatic consequences and/or economical especially when it plays a vital role in the national economy (safety, production, citizen mobility, etc.). Therefore, the development of design methods of knowledge management system is required, setting the safety constraints while developing monitoring methods. In addition, with technological advances, our knowledge in the field has undergone an obsolete phenomenon. Taking the railway safety as example, it is a process to preserve the safety of the railway operations, and avoid scenarios leading to incidents and accidents that may cause loss of life, damage to railway facilities and environmental damage. The manager of traffic safety is required to ensure rail safety, and remain vigilant in observing safety standards based on the relevant knowledge, for the perpetuation of daily and lasting security. Henceforth, creating a system of knowledge management has become essential to support the overall profession of the railway and in particular knowledge about the field of the daily activity of railway safety and at the same time ensures a higher level of collective safety. Thus, the amount and complexity of safety information and those involved in this area are a major problem for the manager decision: It is important to create a management tool for efficient and reliable knowledge to meet the needs of the job. This tool will at the same time processes in their social, organizational and individual dimensions.

According to Isenberg (1984), tacit knowledge is critical to successful strategic decision-making. Members of an organization, with their unique experiences, create and share new knowledge that is not only useful today, but serves as a database for the future acquisition of knowledge (Kevin et al. 2007). It is therefore essential to preserve this heritage and to manage this level of skill.

2. Knowledge management

The information system « IS » acquired in most companies paramount. Many management tools of « IS » have been developed to make the most relevant information. Beyond the management of information, we now talk about knowledge management (Bhatt, 2001), because the decision is not just a question of access to data, but also access to relevant knowledge.

The knowledge management is a process that is responsible for managing all the knowledge/skills of an organization. Its goal is to have an overview of the skills and knowledge of the company to

improve its performance. This type of approach brings together corporate strategic, managerial skills, but also techniques.

Generally speaking, there are explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge:

- Explicit knowledge is that for which there is a visible trace in the form of information (in documents for example). Their capitalization is used to clarify and then model the semantics and context that can be associated with this information.
- Tacit knowledge is that in which the associated information is not explicit. To reveal this knowledge and capitalize (when possible), it is necessary to go through interviews with experts (Bhatt, 2001).
- Knowledge management has many advantages, mainly, *Entrepreneurship and Innovation* (2009):
- Save time and money in:
 - Avoiding deadlocks already explored.
 - Avoiding reinventing what has already been.
 - Closing unnecessarily remained open files.
 - Regaining quickly classified information.
- Bouncing on known ideas to develop new solutions.
- Taking good company practices.
- Facilitate the learning of new employees.
- Highlight the skills that could be patented and/or sold under license.
- Develop new activities by transferring the accumulated knowledge to new situations.
- Facilitating technology transfer in case the company would conclude a partnership, alliance or to license. It is, indeed; clearly delineate the content knowledge to be transferred.

3. Knowledge management and environment

Organizations must quickly be adapted to a more competitive environment and increasingly evolving. They must have a lot more flexibility than in the past and also need more sophisticated ways to control knowledge (Dore, 2001). The purpose of knowledge management is to facilitate the resolution of a problem or making a decision. Now, the innovative company constantly generates new knowledge. Their origins are diverse. They have, in fact, the:

- Solutions created by the company to solve the actual problems.
- Tips and solutions developed by others that are useful for the enterprise.
- Regular improvements in company operations.

These new skills are important because regaining or reinventing always costs expensive! Unfortunately, they are not always kept or updated by the company. Therefore, it is important to remain vigilant to these questions.

- How to avoid “losing” these new skills?
- How to reuse them for another problem?
- How to make them accessible to those who need them?

The SNTF invests colossal sums for staff training throughout their careers. Once the staff provides expertise and knowledge he finds himself nearing retirement without the company's taking benefit of corporate memory or feedback. Subsequently, the manager is sometimes found in infrequent or unexpected situations that may cause him to lose a lot of time to make the good decision, and this can have many causes:

- Time spent searching for information, reading multiple sources varied to solve the problem and the time spent in synthesizing to make decision.

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