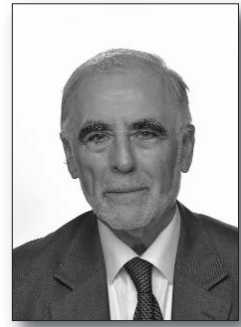


## SOME THOUGHTS ON ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

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The revolutionary development in all areas of human activity is tightly connected with the increasing knowledge and competences of people. Not so long ago, after finishing their education and job training, people become employed and expected to use their obtained knowledge and skills through their lifetime. Their tasks were mainly simple and repetitive; management had more of a technical character, and managers coordinated their subordinates, supposing that they knew more about their work than the workers themselves. That is no longer the case. Knowledge is changing and employees cannot expect that their tasks and requirements will not change. New and different knowledge, creativity and innovation are required. Employees have to obtain new knowledge to be able to follow the requirements of their jobs. An increasing part of their job is now learning, which can be conducted in different ways in and out of the work. These revolutionary changes are present in all areas of human activities within organizations. Managers who coordinate subordinates know very little about their activities or at least less than subordinates. Along with all other changes, management has changed –tremendously so.

The importance of knowledge has increased interest in learning processes at the level of individuals. Learning as part of human resources development has also become important within organizations and becomes an ongoing process. It seems that entire groups and even organizations learn; however, this is a misconception of many practitioners and even authors in the organizational learning process. Therefore, we have to emphasize that only individuals possess the ability to learn, although they learn within groups and organizations.

However, the question arises as to whether and how learning depends on the business of enter-

prises and other organizations. Is there a difference between the learning of employees as autonomous individuals and their learning as members of formal social units? People are connected by many relationships, which also depend on the characteristics of organizations. The present and future work requirements, the organization as set of relationships, and the abilities of employees have to be determined in order to direct their learning. The relationships between employees also have to be considered in the area of learning. What people learn within organizations also depends on the characteristics of organizations and on their relationships to the others.

Learning within formal social units is known as ‘organizational learning’. It is organizational learning not because it happens within the formal social unit frequently termed ‘an organization’ but because the organization is understood as a system of dynamic relationships. The present and future position of employees within the organization determines what they have to know and what they are supposed to learn. The learning thus depends on the employees themselves and on the organization. They learn connected or in connectivity.

This connectivity is already rooted in the organizational design. As duties, responsibilities and authority are designed, so too the job requirements on knowledge, on competences are also determined. As the knowledge and competencies of employees do not always correspond to job requirements, they have to learn. As the job requirements change, employees have to learn.

However, employees’ learning is limited by their capacity and by the learning of the others. They are not supposed to learn only according to their desire as if they were alone. The learning and use of knowledge have to be coordinated.

Just as the coordination of jobs, interests, etc. is conducted by managers, they also have to manage the learning processes and their result: knowledge. Knowledge management has to assure an efficient and rational manner of the learning of all employees. Psychologists and sociologists who have studied learning and organizational learning processes often look at management as a set of techniques. Frequently, management is conducted in this way, and the real understanding of management is quite poor between scientists and managers. Still many scientists have found that there are some processes connected to organizational learning that remind us of management. Due to the misunderstanding of management, knowledge management is often defined in a similar manner to organizational learning.

However, organizational learning and knowledge management are two quite different processes. The former is developing and using the knowledge of the organized individuals. It is similar to business processes that result in products and services. In the learning process, the result is a product called 'knowledge'. As employees are connected, organizational learning is more complex than the learning of unconnected employees.

In contrast, knowledge management is an organizational or managerial process conducted by managers. It is the process of planning the knowledge of the formal social unit, planning the knowledge and learning of organized individuals, actuating the knowledge and learning in the process of HRM and leadership, control of thus conducted learning and obtained knowledge, and the control of learning and achieved knowledge of the social unit. Through these managerial functions managers have to assure that the learning processes of organ-

ized employees are conducted and that knowledge is achieved in an efficient, rational way. The understanding of knowledge management requires the understanding of management and, above all, of a new approach to management that clearly defines the organization as a set of dynamic relationships.

Organizational learning, knowledge management, and their interactions have to be studied. It can be said that the organizational structures and processes to which they always develop make learning organizational. Knowledge management is determined as rationality-assuring process (of planning, actuating and control of learning and its result: knowledge), by its content as a process of coordination, and by process as decision-making. Following these thoughts, the international conference "Knowledge management and organizational learning" organized by the Slovenian Academy of Management was conducted at Brdo pri Kranju this year.

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### Erratum

In Volume 3, Number 1, May 2014 the paper

**The Competing Dynamics and Relationships in Corporate and Local Government Agency Constructions of Place**

by author(s): Adderley Simon, Russell Natalie, Scott Peter, Stokes Peter

pages: 3-16

was inadvertently and unintentionally listed with a sole author, Peter Stokes. **The correct authorship is Adderley Simon, Russell Natalie, Scott Peter, Stokes Peter and this is now signalled on the Journal website.**