

Risk based knowledge assessments: towards a toolbox for managing key knowledge assets.

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Abstract

It is now well acknowledged that considerable Knowledge Management (KM) issues are faced by national and international nuclear communities. Much of these problems relate to issues of an ageing workforce and the significantly reduced influx of new generation of nuclear engineers and scientists. The management discipline of KM contains a broad spectrum of methods and techniques. However, the effective implementation of a KM strategy requires the selection and deployment of appropriate and targeted approaches that are pertinent to the particular issues of the technical or business area within an organisation. A clear strategy is contingent upon an assessment of what are the knowledge areas and what are the key (knowledge) risk areas. In particular the following issues have to be addressed: “what knowledge exists?”, “what is the nature and format of that knowledge?” and “what knowledge is key to our continued, safe, and effective operation?” Answers to such questions will enable an organisation to prioritise KM effort and employ subsequent KM approaches that are appropriate. Subsequent approaches ranging from the utilisation of information technologies, such as databases; knowledge retention methods; and the setting up of Community of Practices to share knowledge and experience.

This paper considers a risk assessment based approach to KM. In so doing the paper extends work previously reported [1] on an approach to conducting knowledge audits by considering the integration of that approach with approaches to (knowledge) risk assessment (e.g. [2]). The paper also provides a brief review of the various KM approaches that can act to reduce the level of risk faced by an organisation. The paper concludes by reflecting upon the role, value of deploying such a risk based approach.

References

- [1] **A Pragmatic Approach To Conducting Knowledge Audits**, Bright C.K. presented at IAEA International Conference on Knowledge Management in Nuclear Facilities June 2007, Vienna.
- [2] **Risk Management of Knowledge Loss in Nuclear Industry Organisations**, Boyles, E. School of Nuclear Knowledge Management, 2007.

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