

Does your company have a **serious knowledge management** problem?



What You "Don't Know" CAN Hurt You!

How much does it cost your organization when "people don't know what to do?" The operations problems, productivity losses and inefficiency that result from ineffective knowledge transfer are serious issues that can make or break an organization: *costly mistakes, failed projects, unnecessary downtime, lost productivity, expensive knowledge walking out the door when someone leaves.*

When "how to" knowledge is not managed properly big problems can easily ripple through the entire organization and can prevent you from achieving strategic goals. But how do you know if you have a problem that needs serious attention?

10-Minute Self-Test: Business Pain Inventory

Take this 10-minute Self Test to see. Just rank each of the business problems below according to how significant a problem you view it to be. If desired, list additional items specific to your situation.

| Business / Operational Changes (1=Not a problem 5=Severe Problem) | |
|---|--|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Expansion pain: adding new offices, new staff, new business line |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | High staff turnover: mergers, layoffs, branch consolidation |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Company or department re-organization or relocation |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | New system rollout requiring re-design of processes or staff re-training |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | New product launch |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |

Employee Productivity / Performance (1=Not a problem 5=Severe Problem)

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Missed deadlines |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Lack of standard processes creates inconsistent performance |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Frequent cost overruns and project delays |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Frustrating bottlenecks in specific tasks or departments |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Difficulty completing routine tasks, too complex and time-consuming |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Disorganized workflow. Inefficient, complicated processes. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Difficulty accessing information or resources needed to complete work |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Excessive errors and re-work reduce productivity/ increase costs |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Backlogged work |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |

Quality / Customer Service (1=Not a problem 5=Severe Problem) "Customers" may be external or internal.

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Poor or slow service (backlogged requests, slow response time, etc.) |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Too many errors / mistakes / defects in serving customers |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Customer dissatisfaction and complaints |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Non-compliance with contractual requirements |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Customers switching to competitors |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Cost of providing quality service too high / breaking the budget |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |

Communication / Training: (1=Not a problem 5=Severe Problem)

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Expectations and responsibilities are unclear leading to errors and conflicts |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Long "ramp up" time before new employees are productive |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Lack of coordination. Right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Duplication of effort and re-inventing the wheel are common |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Best practices are not shared across work groups |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Employees don't know or understand "official" policies and procedures |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Management doesn't understand day-to-day tasks /obstacles |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Existing info inaccessible or hard to understand and not used |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |

Knowledge Retention: (1=Not a problem 5=Severe Problem)

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Key employees carry everything in their heads. Nothing written down. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Everyone has to ask/interrupt the "expert" to complete tasks |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Major disruptions happen when employees leave, retire or take vacation. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | High training and re-training costs are straining the budget |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Best practices don't get communicated and saved |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |

Disaster Preparedness / Risk Management: (1=Not a problem 5=Severe Problem)

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Few employees know what to do in the event of a disaster/emergency |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Company liability risk is high |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Inability to function for even short periods could endanger business |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | |

Compliance / Policy & Procedure Management : (1=Not a problem 5=Severe Problem)

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Staff frequently fail to comply with regulatory and contractual obligations |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Risk of non-compliance lawsuits, sanctions, and lost contracts is high |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Compliance audits are disruptive, costly and stressful |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | Costs for compliance initiatives are too high |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |

Other (1=Not a problem 5=Severe Problem)

| | |
|-----------|-------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | _____ Other |

Inventory Survey Results:

Any item you ranked at 4 or 5 is an automatic candidate for issues you may want to address immediately. If you have done this inventory survey independently, assemble your management team in the next staff meeting and let them try it. Compare results. It can be an eye opening conversation.

We've got a knowledge management problem? Now what?

Now that you have identified critical business issues you want to address, the next step is to look for solutions to address the knowledge management or process problems that are holding you back. One of the most powerful tools in your arsenal is the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP.) Good SOPs can fix big operations headaches and cut your costs. An effective SOP system is your first line of defense against operating inefficiencies, errors, rework , staff training costs, skyrocketing compliance and liability costs, and more.

If you are sitting in meetings searching for practical ways to help your business move forward in this tough economy, stop searching! You can't afford to overlook time-tested ways to improve your bottom line though good SOPs.

For more information **visit www.comprose.com** to read our Blogs, read customer success stories, and learn more about our Zavanta tool and Operations Mapping method.

