

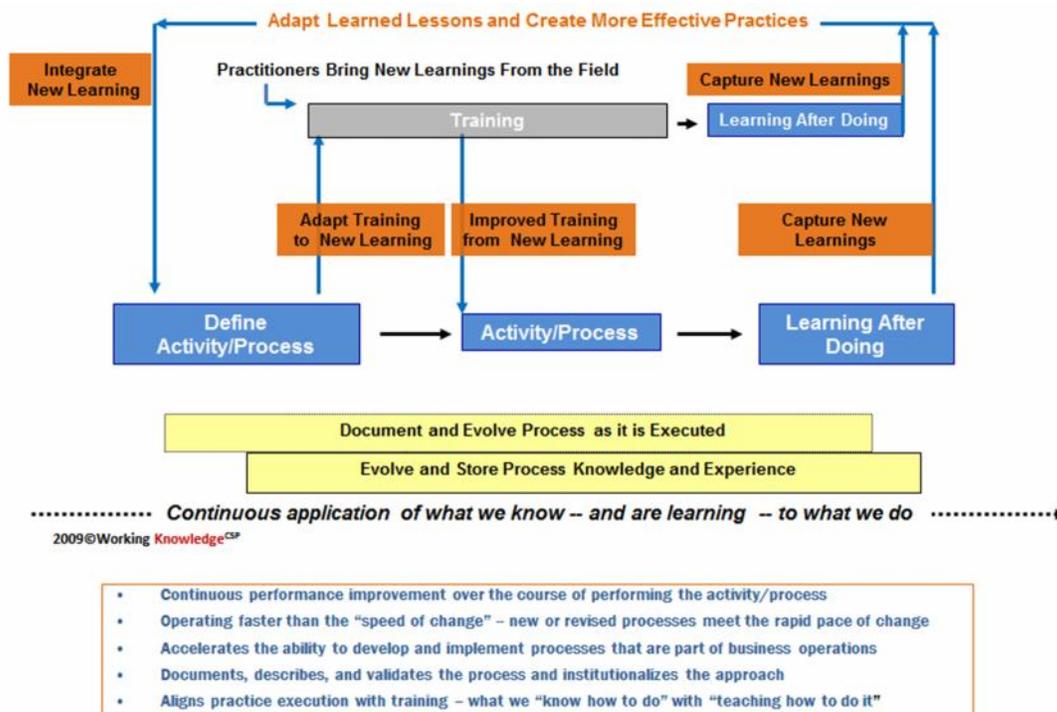
KM Concepts: Operationalizing Learning (13 in a series)

Addressing Workforce Turnover and Knowledge Loss



The challenge of workforce turnover and knowledge loss is pervasive across both public and private organizations. Therefore, it is important to understand that when a person, at the leadership or at the workforce level, leaves an organization, or changes jobs, or moves based on some other type of turnover, the knowledge that they possess leaves with them...unless the organization has a consistent and disciplined process for capturing knowledge, adapting it in the context of the organization so it can be effectively used, enabling its transfer across the organization, and ensuring it is findable, downloadable, and reusable by members of the organization when needed.

The KM concepts, strategies and implementing practices shared in previous articles, when implemented, can help to ensure that the risks of knowledge loss due to workforce turnover are mitigated across an organization through embedding the right knowledge sharing behaviors and practices into the work processes and work flow of the organization. Working Knowledge^{CSP} developed "**Operationalizing Learning**" to further embed this capture, adapt, transfer, and reuse discipline into an organization in order to mitigate the impacts and risks of workforce turnover and knowledge loss. The figure below shows this solution and how making "KM" part of the way the organization operates can begin to address the issues of workforce turnover and knowledge loss.



You can see the integration of the previously discussed concepts, strategies, and implementing practices into operations. The following explains how this is done.

In many organizations, processes that exist may not be mapped nor broadly understood. It is necessary to analyze and map the process at a high but meaningful level. The organization executes the process and then takes the time to "learn after doing." These learnings, in the form of action items, are captured (lessons learned) and integrated back into the process so that what has been effective is repeated and what needs to be done differently is addressed for the next time.

But that alone is insufficient. A common but very critical step that is often overlooked or bypassed is to then make corresponding changes in the training associated with that process so that people completing training are trained on the most *current and effective* processes and practices that are *actually being used*. This reduces "time to performance," reduces the chance of errors, and increases quality of effort, outputs, and outcomes.

Further, for refresher or supplemental subject matter training, field or operational employees bring their practices into the classroom, so that once again, people are trained on the way work actually is being accomplished. Effectively aligning process, execution of the process, and training on the process, helps to ensure that performance (and quality of effort) is continuously improved as "part of the way work gets done" and that the critical and relevant knowledge necessary for success remains in the organization when turnover occurs.

Comments and questions: bill@workingknowledge-csp.com

Website: www.workingknowledge-csp.com

Next: Understanding the Concept and Myth of KM Certification