KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND LIFELONG LEARNING:

Reflecting on successes and framing futures

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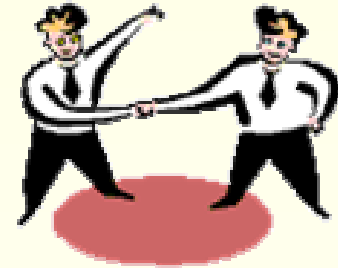### Central Queensland University and University of Southern Queensland

Paper presented at the 5th international lifelong learning conference,
Rydges Capricorn International Resort, Yeppoon, 19 June 2008

Introductions

- **Authors**

- **Audience?**
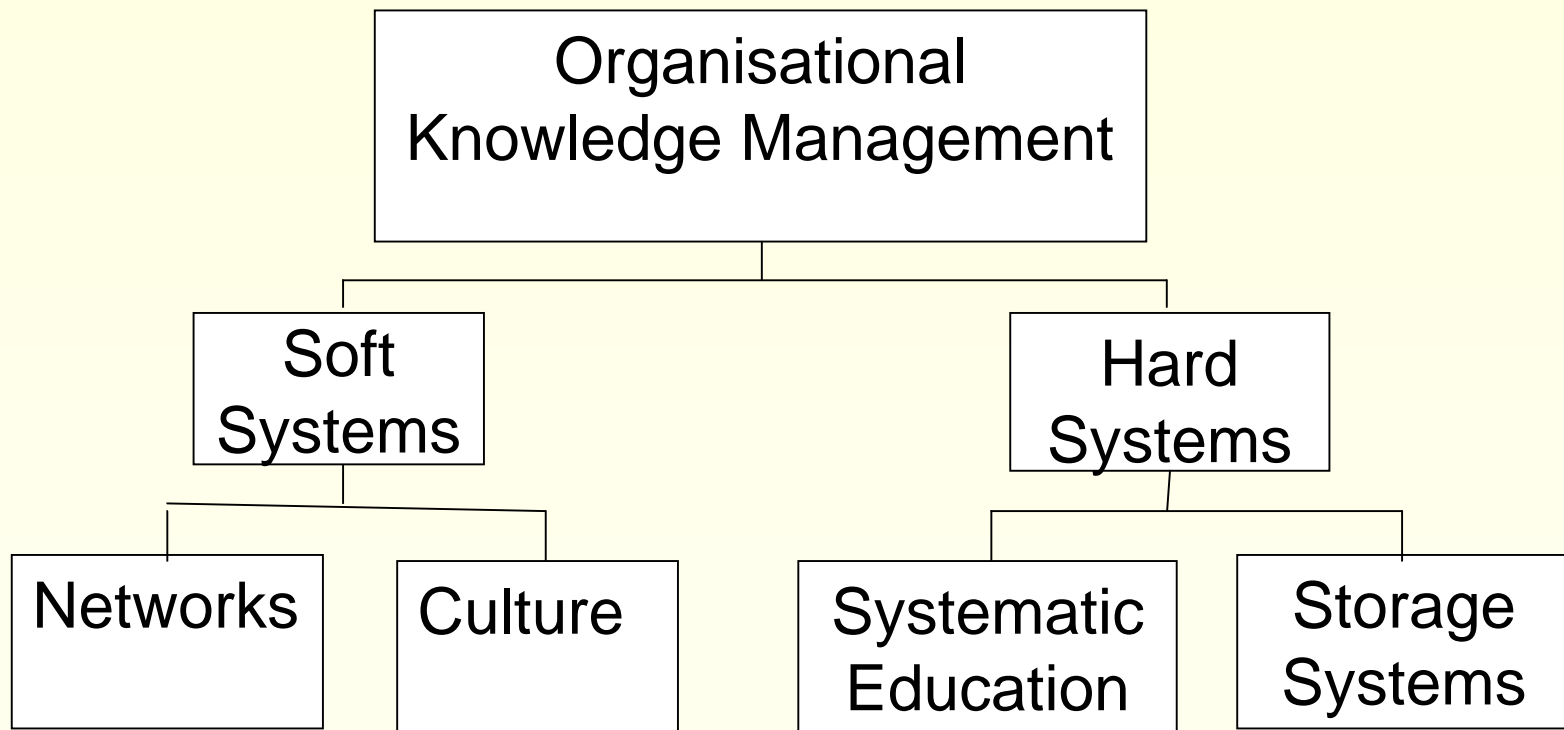
Overview

- Paper explores Knowledge Management (KM) in an IT project in a university
- Lifelong Learning : individual perspective
  KM   : organisational perspective
- Audience members are invited to relate the KM practices discussed to their own experience of lifelong learning practices
- We show that the KM practices in question are rich and diverse
- In reflecting on successes and framing futures we suggest an awareness of the rich and diverse ways learning occurs.

Model for Exploring KM

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              ┌─────────────────────────┐
              │      Organisational     │
              │   Knowledge Management  │
              └─────────────────────────┘
                   │                 │
          ┌────────────┐       ┌────────────┐
          │    Soft    │       │    Hard    │
          │   Systems  │       │   Systems  │
          └────────────┘       └────────────┘
            │        │            │        │
      ┌──────────┐ ┌─────────┐ ┌───────────┐ ┌──────────┐
      │ Networks │ │ Culture │ │ Systematic│ │ Storage  │
      │          │ │         │ │ Education │ │ Systems  │
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Soft Systems

- Networks
  - Social Networks
  - Communities of Practice
- Culture

  Culture is a broad term; we use it to include skills, attitudes and motivations that promote learning and knowledge management such as openness to new ideas, openness to…

Hard Systems

- **Systematic Education**
  - **Formal training, courses**

- **Storage Systems**
  - **Policies, manuals, documentation**

The Case Study

A project to implement elements of a Human Resource Information System between June and November 2007

The presentation will explore networks and, if time permits, storage systems to leave time for a discussion. The full paper explores all four.

Networks

- **Project needed to blend HR and IT knowledge. Staff recruited from these two groups; they provided and maintained networks back to their original divisions.**

- **External networks**

  - **Software vendor supported network**

  - **User base**

  Group communication: e-mail lists and conferences

  Person to person: e-mail and telephone

Networks (Cont'd)

Champions

as implementation tactic, key staff in various faculties and divisions were picked as Champions, and they were provided with extra training to act as nodal knowledge centres.

Knowledge transfer was two-way. They also advised on likely practical problems.

Networks (Cont'd)

Contrast Networks

Identified and communicated with those who may be antagonistic to the project – exchange of views and ideas

Networks (Cont'd)

Formal Approval/Consultation

- Use formal university protocols to tap into others' expertise, through process of getting sign-off from e.g. Vice Chancellor's Executive and Staff Consultative Committee

Networks (Cont'd)

- Mentoring, Coaching and Supervision

- Tapping into university's academic knowledge to support project goals

Both recognised by the project with an attempt to implement, but not very successful

Storage Systems

Standard framework of

- External law and standards
- University statutes, policies and rules
- Detailed procedures and how-to documents

Storage Systems (Cont'd)

Storage systems are now largely computerised, and easily accessible

- *both federal and state law is available off the web*

- *University policies (~450) available off the web*

- *Much of procedure stored in web or in "learning management systems"*

Storage Systems (Cont'd)

However, these tend to be huge (e.g., six polices on leave), and knowledge of what to look for and how remains complex. For example, when a technical legal issue came up, project first networked with the university lawyer, and then read the legislation.

Storage Systems (Cont'd)

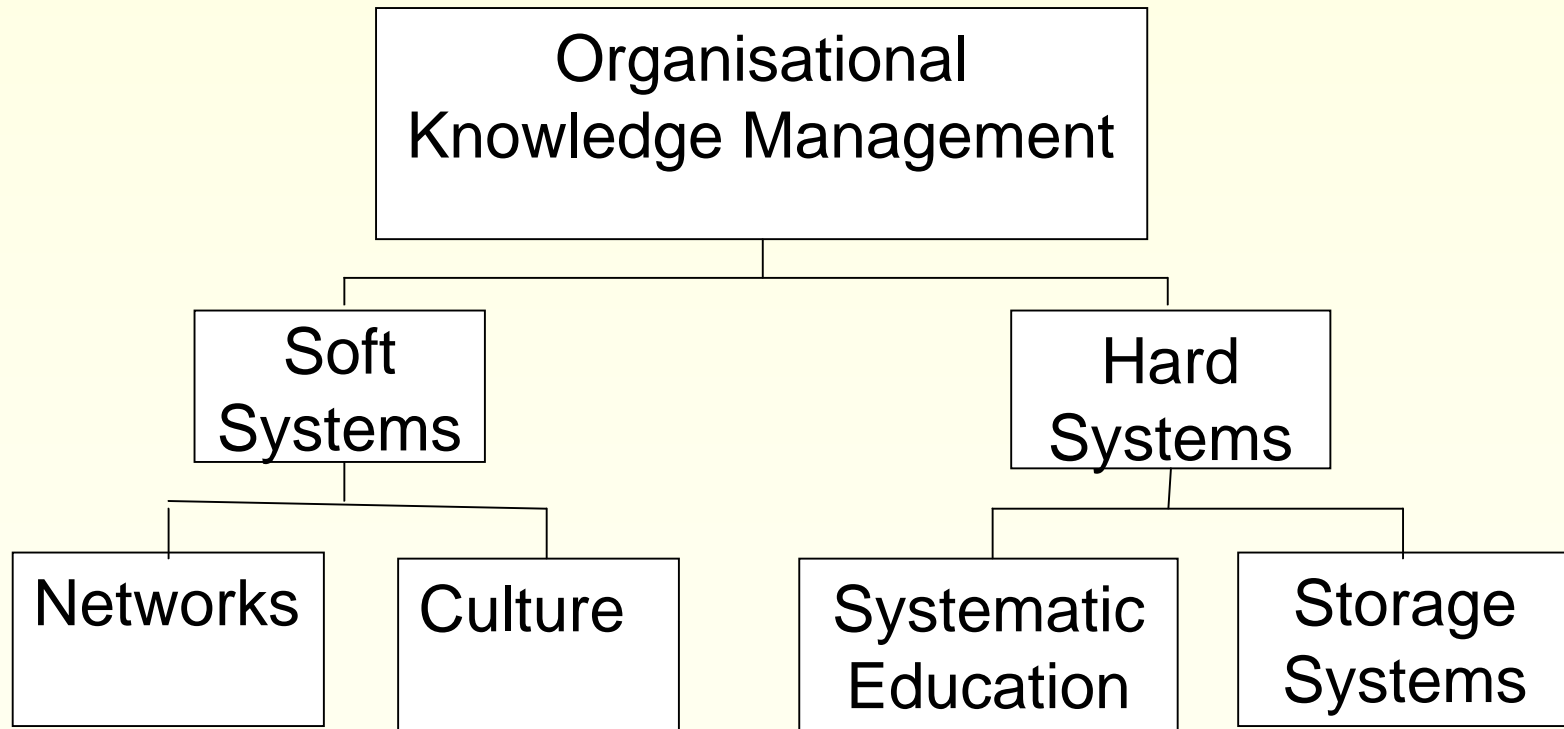Project responsible for capturing and storing knowledge

- Computer system collected and stored data
- Project created a significant amount of documentation

However, emphasis appeared to be more on collection than on ease of future use.

Discussion

Is the framework a useful model?

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Discussion

Parallels between KM and lifelong learning?

- *Networks*
- *Culture*
- *Systematic Education*
- *Storage Systems*

Authors' Conclusion

In reflecting on successes and framing futures we suggest an awareness of the rich and diverse ways learning occurs.