

Q
How does Knowledge Management affect Navy/Marine Corps Internet (N/MCI) applications?

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The many KM approaches previously described provide numerous possibilities for potential applications, which could be hosted on N/MCI, to expand KM and enable Department of the Navy to become a Knowledge Centric Organization. The outcome of such efforts would be synergistic in nature so as to improve not only effectiveness and efficiency within DON, but also to facilitate empowerment and result in a more horizontal organization.

In the present world of fierce competition for human talent and a time-sensitive brain drain within DoD, improvements in human and intellectual capital may become the paramount issues facing the Department in the near future. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon Department of the Navy to minimize applications fielded across DON and integrate them across DoD to be mutually supportive and to minimize training requirements.

Extensive training of hundreds of thousands of members of the workforce is not generally affordable. Potential applications should, therefore, be usable by multiple DON activities and large numbers of personnel throughout DoD. They should, for the most part, enable autonomous use by employees to accomplish an increasingly wider variety of tasks requiring extensive, widespread knowledge based upon rapidly changing data and information.

Thus, these IT solutions must support knowledge processes that are primarily intellectual capital-oriented and social capital-intensive. In other words, technology should support psychological and sociological processes that create positive organizational outcomes. Outcomes (unlike outputs) are results that affect how the organization interacts with outside individuals and organizations (not just internal ones). The Learning Organization approach (as described

in author Peter Senge's *The Fifth Discipline*, published in 1990), implies an Open Systems perspective. The KCO is an example of such an institution, which maintains its agility and timeliness through knowledge and learning.

Q
How can an Applications Acquirer specify knowledge solutions?

A
No longer is it sufficient merely to enable an individual to work better, faster, and cheaper because, in systems engineering terms, "optimizing the parts de-optimizes the whole, and optimizing the whole de-optimizes the parts." Therefore, new applications must enable the "Enterprise." (While Enterprise is a somewhat relative term, it usually refers to a large, cohesive, organization that interfaces with external entities. It can vary, for instance, from the entire corporate Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command [headquarters plus all subordinate commands], to the entire Department of the Navy or Department of Defense. As a familiar adage reminds us, "Where you stand depends on where you sit.")

To enable the Enterprise, each application must support the generation, stor-

age, distribution, and re-use of knowledge. Of course, no individual application is expected to do all of these. But if Enterprise applications are envisioned as a chain or system, the new application, once integrated into the whole, must strengthen the entire chain or system as a whole.

For instance, strengthening the strongest link in a chain may be a complete waste of effort. The weakest link may be a better target. Furthermore, a new application may be wonderful in and of itself, but may provide little institutional gain to the Department as a whole. In financial management, for instance, the proposed new project with the best ROI may be rejected if it does not fit into the optimal set of projects, including both existing ones as well as new ones.

The main thrust of N/MCI lies in its Enterprise orientation. Therefore, the acquirer's Business Case Analysis must show convincingly that the new application improves the Enterprise as a whole — and does this better than alternative uses of required resources.

Editor's Note: The author welcomes comments on this article. Contact him at Pollock.Neal@hq.navy.mil.

GENERAL OFFICER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld announced Jul. 13, 2001, that the President has nominated Army Maj. Gen. John S. Caldwell Jr., for appointment to the grade of Lieutenant General with assignment as Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology; and Director, Army Acquisition Corps, Washington, D.C. Caldwell is currently serving as Commanding General, U.S. Army Tank-Automotive and Armaments Command, Warren, Mich.

On Aug. 2, 2001, Rumsfeld also announced the President's nomination of Army Lt. Gen. Paul J. Kern, for appointment to the grade of General and assignment as Commanding General, United States Army Materiel Command, Alexandria, Va. Kern is currently serving as Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology; and Director, Army Acquisition Corps, Washington, D.C.

Editor's Note: This information is in the public domain at <http://www.defense.link.mil/news>.