

## USE OF THE EXPLICIT AND TACIT KNOWLEDGE IN THE WORKPLACE

(Don Wells, from *The role of tacit and explicit knowledge in the workplace* by Elizabeth A. Smith, “Journal of Knowledge Management, Vol 5, #4 2001, pp. 311-321, MCG University Press – ISSN 1367-3270)

<b>Explicit Knowledge</b> – academic knowledge or “know-what” that is described in formal language, print or electronic media, often based on established work processes, use people-to-documents approach	<b>Tacit Knowledge</b> – practical, action-oriented knowledge of “know-how” based on practice, acquired by personal experience, seldom expressed openly, often resembles intuition
<b>Work process</b> – organized tasks, routine, orchestrated, assumes a predictable environment, linear, reuse codified knowledge, create knowledge objects	<b>Work practice</b> – spontaneous, improvised, web-like, responds to a changing, unpredictable environment, channels individual expertise, creates knowledge
<b>Learn</b> – on the job, trial-&-error, self-directed in areas of greatest expertise, meet work goals and objectives set by organization	<b>Learn</b> – supervisor or team leader facilitates and reinforces openness and trust to increase sharing of knowledge and business judgment
<b>Teach</b> – trainer designed using syllabus, uses formats selected by organization, based on goals and needs of the organization, may be outsourced	<b>Teach</b> – one-on-one, mentor, internships, coach, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, competency based, brainstorm, people to people
<b>Type of thinking</b> —logical, based on facts, use proven methods, primarily convergent thinking	<b>Type of thinking</b> – creative, flexible, uncharted, leads to divergent thinking, develop insights
<b>Share knowledge</b> – extract knowledge from person, code, store and reuse as needed for customers, e-mail, electronic discussions, forums	<b>Share knowledge</b> – altruistic sharing, networking, face-to-face contact, videoconferencing, chatting, storytelling, personalize knowledge
<b>Reward</b> – tied to business goals, competitive within workplace, compete for scarce rewards, may not be rewarded for information sharing	<b>Reward</b> – incorporate intrinsic or non-monetary motivators and rewards for sharing information directly, recognize creativity and innovation
<b>Relationships</b> – may be top-down from supervisor to subordinate or team leader to team members	<b>Relationships</b> – open, friendly, unstructured, based on open, spontaneous sharing of knowledge
<b>Technology</b> – related to the job, based on availability and cost, invest heavily in IT to develop professional library with hierarchy of databases using existing knowledge	<b>Technology</b> – tool to select personalized information, facilitate conversations, exchange tacit knowledge, invest moderately in the framework of IT, enable people to find one another
<b>Evaluation</b> – based on tangible work accomplishments, not necessarily on creativity and knowledge sharing	<b>Evaluation</b> – based on demonstrated performance, ongoing, spontaneous, formative and generative