

**CONDUCTING A KNOWLEDGE AUDIT AT THE NATIONAL
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING**

By

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I, Oseaus Peacefull Xolani Dube declare that

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DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my grandmother MaKhumalo Dube and my late friend Lizwi Magudulela (1978-2005).

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge Management (KM) has become an important area of focus in many organizations. This is not surprising given that KM is increasingly associated with organizational success in today's business environment. However, despite the fact that KM is important, organizations are still reluctant to undertake it, due to a high rate of failure of KM initiatives or programmes. The failure is often attributed to the organization failing to incorporate a knowledge audit in the KM programme. KM experts agree that the knowledge audit is an essential process in any KM initiative.

The purpose of the study was to conduct a knowledge audit at the National Department of Housing, so as to redevelop its KM strategies and subsequently revive its KM programme. To achieve this key questions were formulated and these questions provided the basis for the investigation.

The survey method was used to conduct the knowledge audit. Self-administered questionnaires for Chief Directors, Directors, Deputy Directors and Junior Staff were designed, pre-tested and distributed for data collection. A response rate of 33 percent was achieved. SPSS and Microsoft Excel were used to analyse the data.

The general findings revealed that the majority of respondents were aware of KM. They seemed to be aware of the Department's KM programme, although their level of awareness varied. The results indicated that Junior Staff and Deputy Directors have good working relationships with their supervisors and colleagues, including Directors. This bodes well for the successful implementation of KM. It was found that most respondents prefer to consult their supervisors and colleagues, and were also assisting those who consulted them. This is indicative of a knowledge sharing culture in the Department, although senior managers were not seen as encouraging the open sharing of knowledge. The "silo" working mentality and lack of communication were noted as common knowledge sharing barriers in the Department. Frequent communication was cited as the main mechanism to encourage knowledge sharing. Telephone, e-mail and face-to-face

communication were the main mechanisms used in this regard. It was also revealed that not all employees have access to the InfoHub (the intranet used at the Department).

It was recommended that information sessions be conducted to inform staff about KM and its importance in achieving the organizational goals. Furthermore all staff should be provided with access to the InfoHub and training in its use should be provided. The InfoHub can be used as a start-up knowledge sharing and storage tool, while e-mail can be used as means of communicating KM activities. Suggestions for further research were made.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AGIMO	Australian Government Information Management Office
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
HSS	Housing Subsidy System
HUIMS	Housing Urban Information Management System
KM	Knowledge management
MIS	Management Information Services (Chief Directorate)
No	Number
NeLH	The National Electronic Library for Health
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development