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What you can achieve if you audit and map your knowledge consistently

Patrick Lambe

Agenda

- What happens in a knowledge audit?
  - Discovery and diagnostics, not compliance
  - Comparison with self, not others
- One organisation, 2 audits, 2010 & 2013
  - Descriptive self-awareness, continuity and change
  - Basis for collective agreement on important actions

Knowledge Audit

A systematic review of your knowledge assets and how they contribute to your organisation's key activities.

Covers both explicit knowledge (information in documents and data) and tacit knowledge (people's skills, experience and abilities).

Identifies knowledge flows and knowledge gaps.

May be supplemented by audit of culture, information and knowledge processes, and common pain points.

STEPS IN A KNOWLEDGE AUDIT

1. Communicate the intent and effort to your leadership team and department heads.
2. Get nominations for participation- 2-4 participants from each department, who should be familiar with the key activities of the department and how knowledge and information are used in them.
3. Brief participants on the process and schedule sessions for knowledge mapping.
4. Conduct knowledge mapping sessions in group discussion format, to capitalise on collective knowledge.
5. Have departments validate their draft maps, and finalise them.
6. Open all maps for organisation wide review, so that knowledge assets that could have wider use through sharing can be identified.
7. Analyse results and report back to participants, department heads and leadership team.
8. Encourage wider exploitation of the maps.

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Mapping Knowledge Assets

MAPPING KNOWLEDGE

TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE ASSET		WORKING WITH KNOWLEDGE ASSETS
Documents/Data	Explicit information assets	Information management improvements
Methods	Routines and ways of working belonging to the team	Knowledge capture and/or transfer processes
Skills	Competencies that can be trained	Incorporation into training plans
Experience	Tacit knowledge from years of practice and experience	Identify critical knowledge and plan for transfer/ succession processes
Relationships	Access to knowledge of others through trust networks	Processes for constant relationship building opportunities
Natural Talent	Unique abilities acquired through head-hunting	Maintain awareness of available talent and manage risk

Adapted from Dave Snowden, 'The ASHEN model: an enabler of action' *Knowledge Management* vol.3 issue 7 2000.

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Potential Knowledge Flows

Example of a gallery viewing exercise

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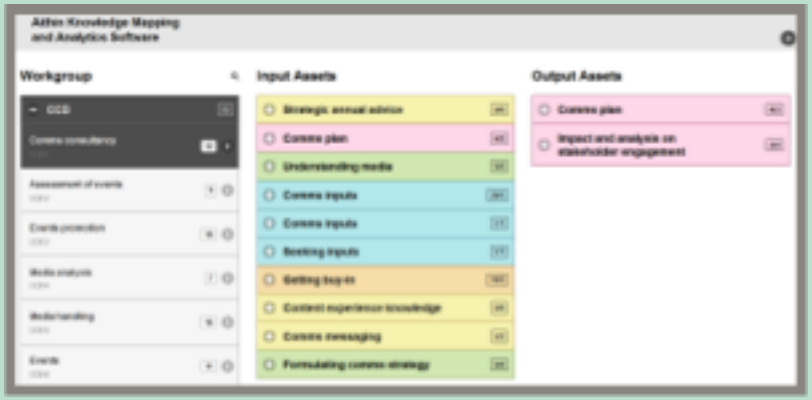
Exploiting the Knowledge Maps



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Exploiting the Knowledge Maps

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Culture Audit

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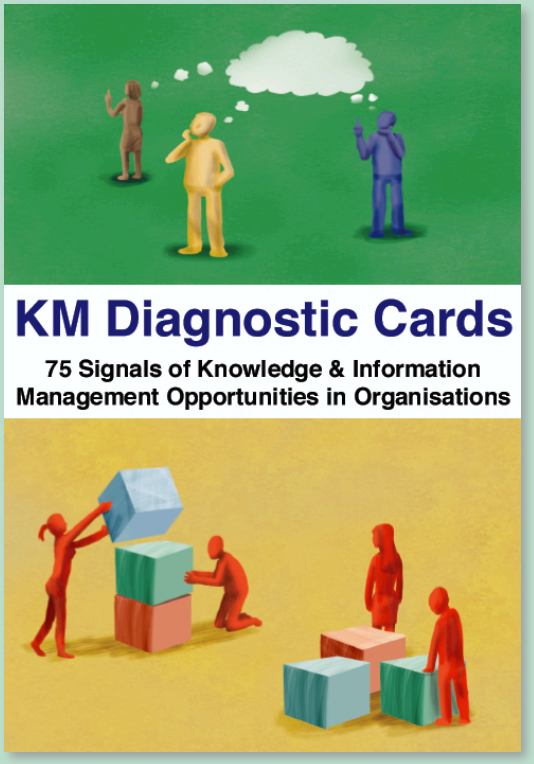
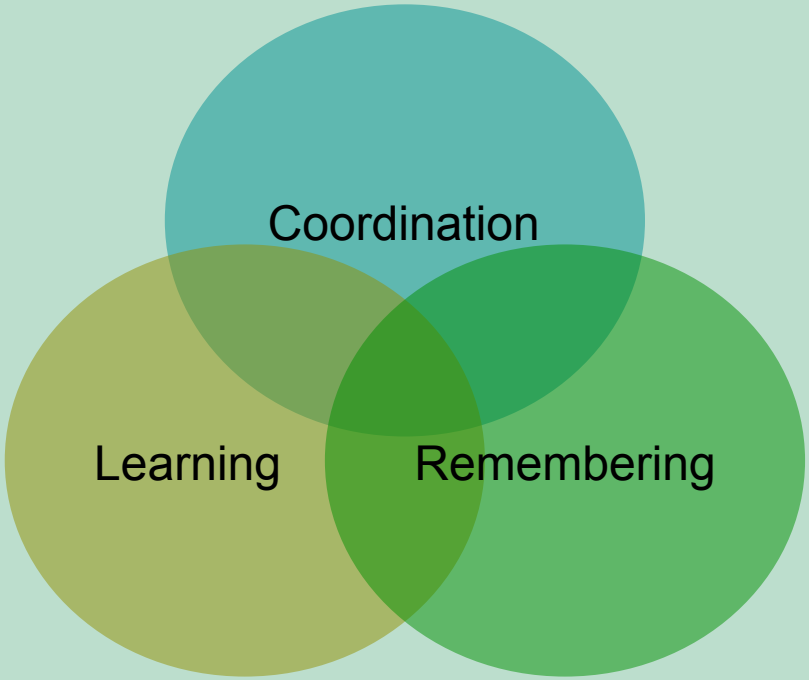
Pain Points Audit





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Knowledge Audit Case Study

One organisation, two audits – 2010 and 2013

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Case Profile

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International organisation

- Specialised in company match-making services
- Small offices in 40 countries
- About 500 people in HQ
- High, rapid turnover of staff
- Low motivation to do KM among senior management
- History of federalised working – "we're all different, no point forcing us to share"
- IT group felt improvements could be made, but wanted a basis for focusing effort

Post K-audit interventions 2010

- High value sharable information (non-sensitive) moved to intranet; taxonomy created to improve findability
- Experimented with corporate microblogging tool (on front page of intranet
- Used storytelling, interviews and knowledge capture writeups in magazine format for country managers as they cycled through HQ – used as input to tip sheets, FAQs, industry guides, procedures, etc.

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Culture Profile - 2010

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13/20 groups

11/20 groups

10/20 groups

9/20 groups

8/20 groups

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Culture Shifts - 2010-13

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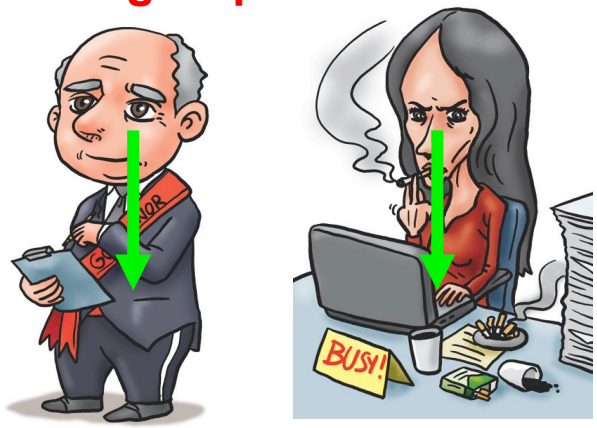
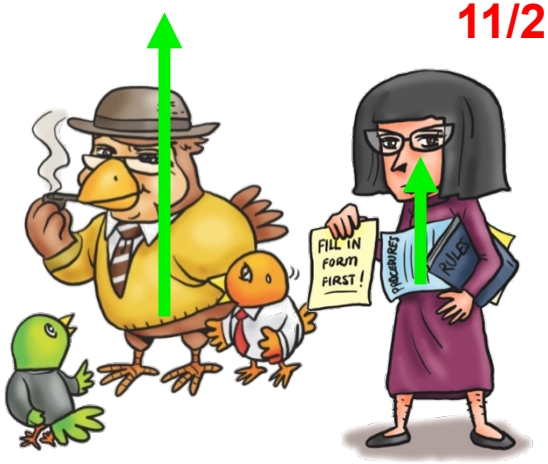
13/20 groups

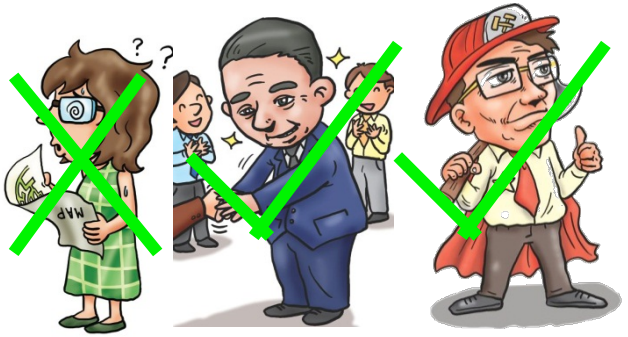
11/20 groups



10/20 groups



9/20 groups



8/20 groups

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Culture Profile 2013

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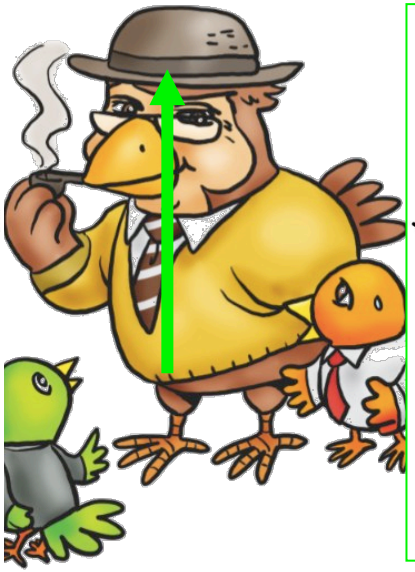
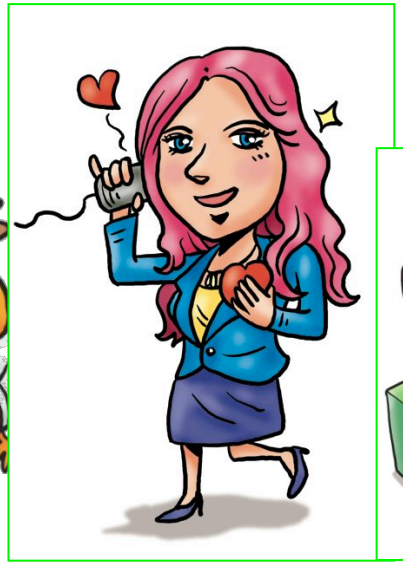
18/23 groups





16/23 groups

15/23 groups

14/23 groups

13/23 groups

12/23 groups

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Focus Groups 2013

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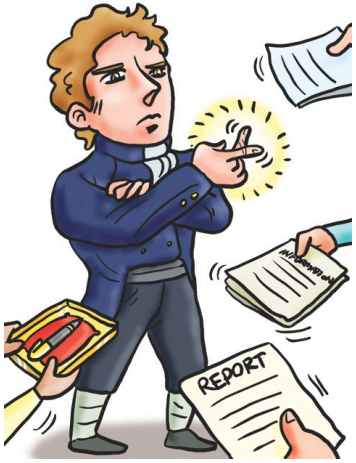

Need to give more context and understand stresses

Helpful but knowledge should be documented

Culture of sharing creates more work

Well-organised Busy Bees

Help make life bearable

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KM Pain Points

Groups were asked to identify knowledge and information management “pain points” that they considered significant

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KM Pain Points 2010-2013

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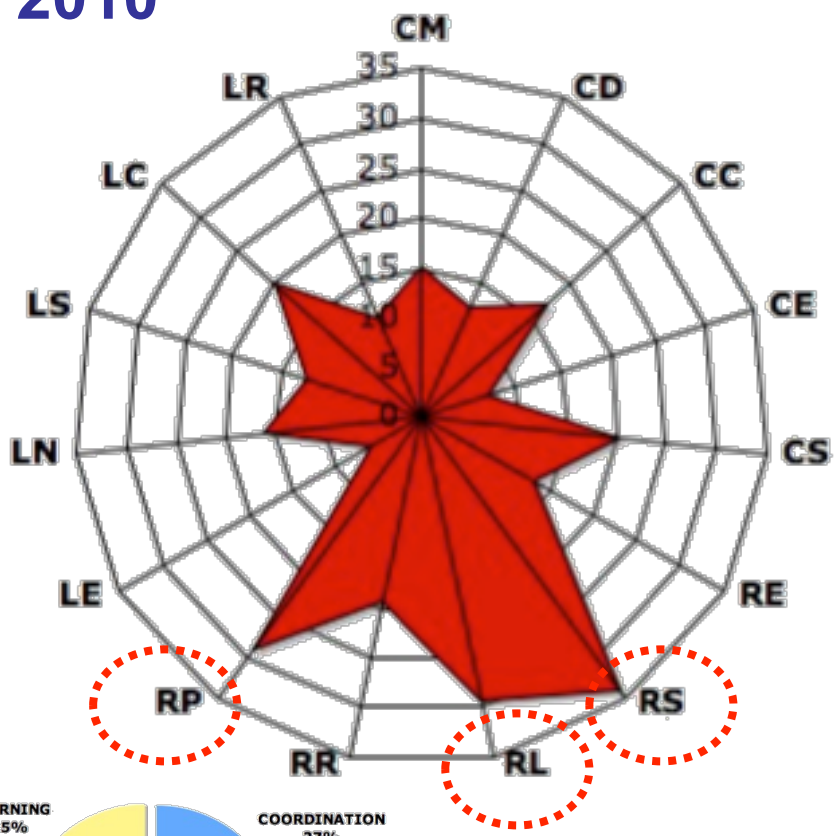
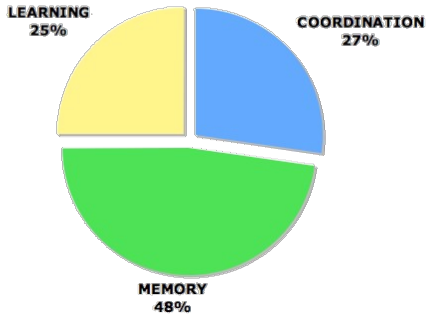
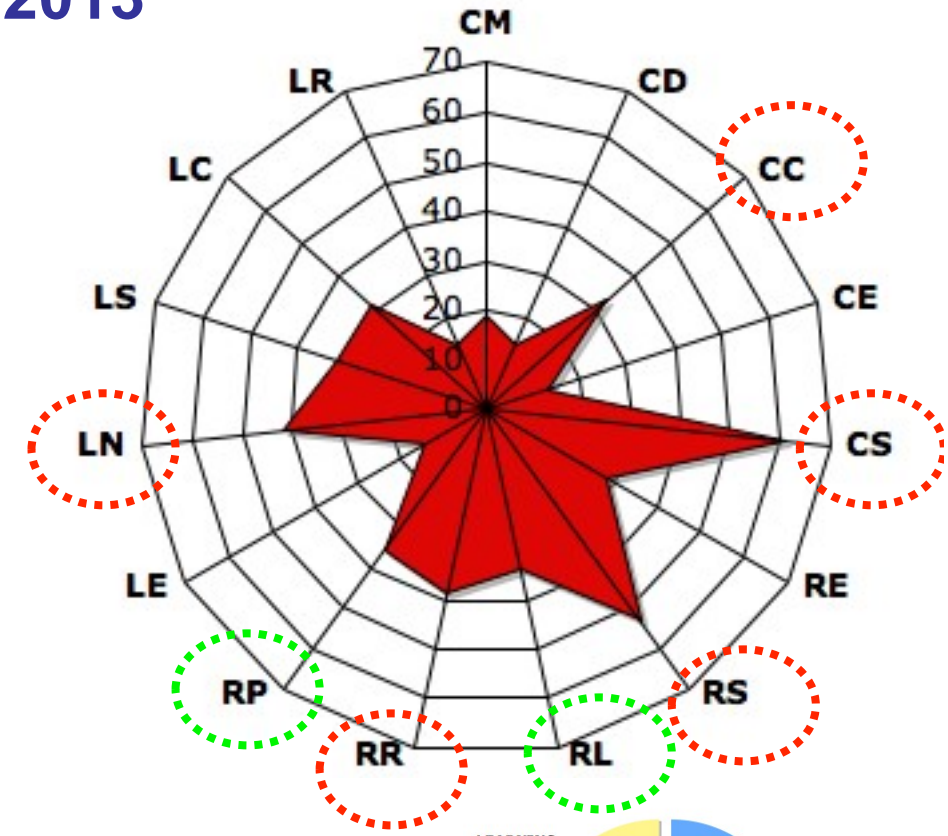
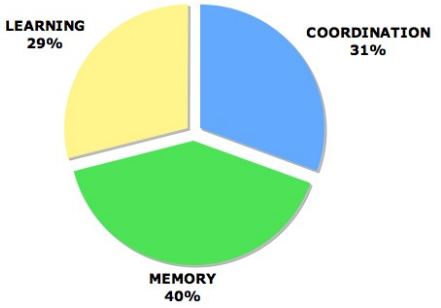
2010 → **2013**









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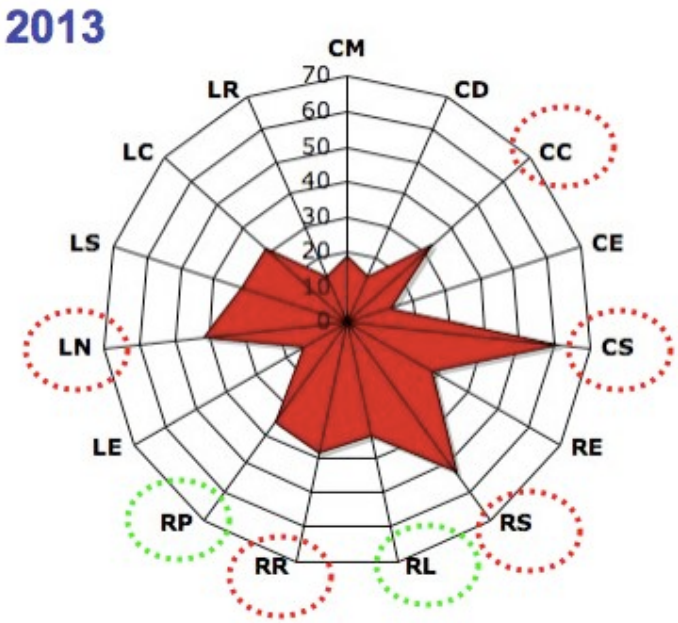
KM Pain Points Legend



Pain points highlighted in **red** indicate current 2013 negative issues. Pain points highlighted in **green** indicate improvements since 2010.

CM- COORDINATION-MISTAKES: Tasks that involve multiple workgroups are prone to mistakes, errors, and speed issues especially in task handoffs, because of poor information flows

CD- COORDINATION-DECISIONS: Decisionmaking is compromised because decisionmakers do not have easy and timely access to relevant and accurate information

CC- COORDINATION-CONFLICT: Conflict can arise between workgroups because they have inaccurate expectations and have a poor understanding of each others' work and deliverables

CE- COORDINATION-EXTERNAL: External parties receive different messages from different parts of the organisation

CS- COORDINATION-SILOS: It is difficult for workgroups to collaborate because they cannot gain access to each other's information so have to search or find the right people to talk to

RE- REMEMBERING-EXTERNAL: Internal institutional memory processes are so poor that you rely on external partners/consultants to brief you on your own past projects and activities

RS- REMEMBERING-SILOS: Silo-based working means that solutions derived in one part of the organisation do not transfer into the organisational memory and cannot be reused by others

RL- REMEMBERING-LOSS: Tacit knowledge in people's heads is not captured or transferred effectively, meaning it is lost when those people leave

RR- REMEMBERING-RECORDS: There is insufficient documentation of activities and decisions, and poor recordkeeping means it is difficult to reconstruct why things were done a certain way

RP- REMEMBERING-PROGRESS: Institutional memory processes are so poor that the organisation keeps solving the same old problems again and again and cannot progress

LE- LEARNING-EXTERNAL: The organisation does not adequately monitor the external environment so as to be able to anticipate change and adapt to it

LN- LEARNING-NEW HIRES: New hires are not well looked after, and their learning curves are stressful and slow before they come up to speed in their jobs

LS- LEARNING-SKILLS: The skills and competencies of staff do not keep up with the demands of the job and so the organisation cannot respond effectively to new needs or opportunities

LC- LEARNING-CHANGE: The culture is resistant to changes that are required for the organisation to remain effective

LR- LEARNING-RESPONSIVENESS: The organisation is seen as reactive and slow to respond to changing needs and opportunities in the environment

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KM Pain Points - Shifts

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Major 2010 issues:

- Silos accentuate memory loss and poor internal coordination – silo issues appear in **every** response
- Lack of knowledge retention processes - loses critical knowledge when people leave
- Lack of learning and memory processes - cannot easily make improvements and progress

Major 2013 issues:

- Silo issues have increased and coordination issues are now more keenly felt - silo issues still appear in **every** Group
- Focus shifted from retention of tacit knowledge to poor documentation of processes and decisions
- Slight improvement in using learning to make improvements, focus has shifted to lack of support for new hires

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KM Satisfaction

Groups were asked a series of questions to help identify patterns of knowledge and information use

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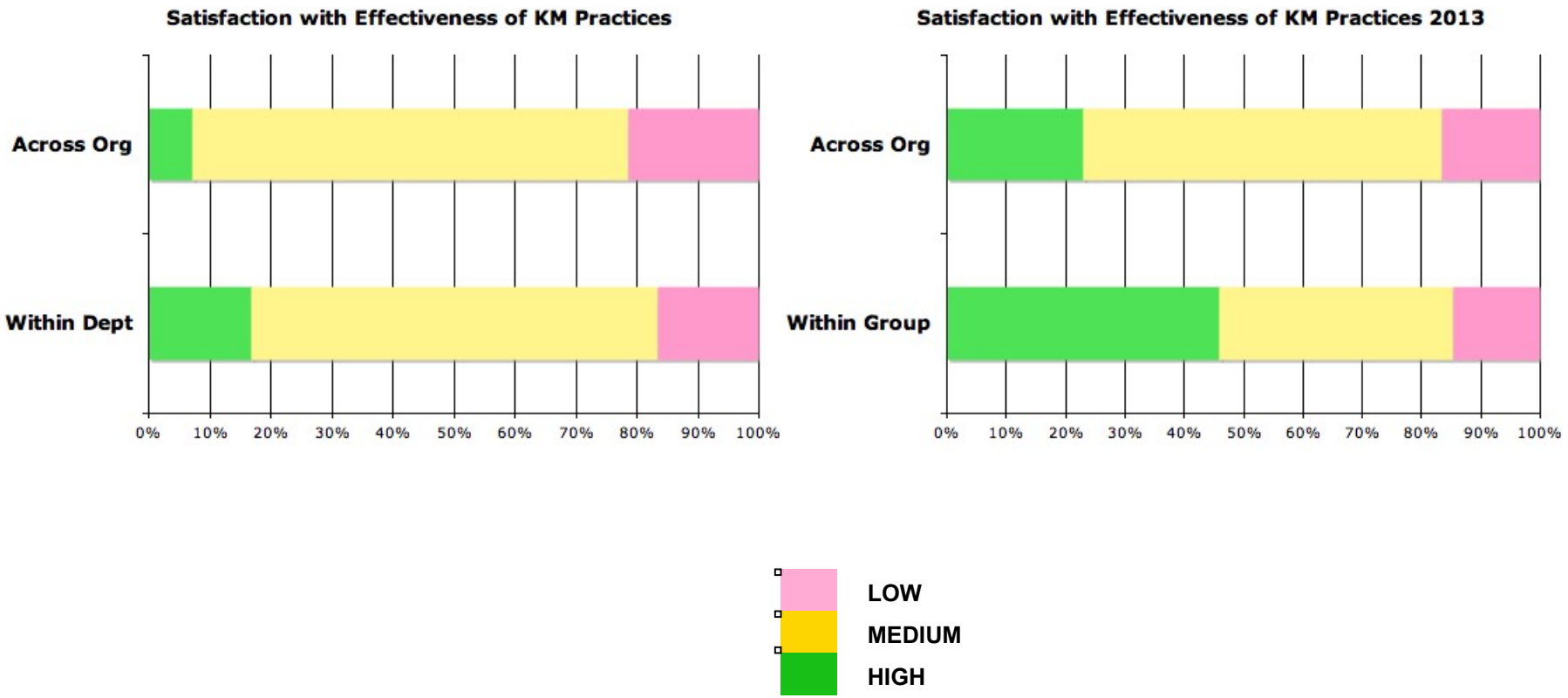
Satisfaction with Organizational KM

2010 · ▸ **2013**



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Knowledge Map Analysis

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Knowledge Maps 2010-13

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	2010	2013
Business Activities	279	251 (some divisions consolidated their maps)
Knowledge Assets Total	2398	2273
Knowledge Assets (Existing)	2145	2155
Knowledge Gaps	253	118
Subscriptions	2709 subs to 830 knowledge assets (35%)	3531 subs to 1335 knowledge assets (59%)
High Value Subscriptions	140 knowledge assets 3+ groups (6%)	264 knowledge assets 3+ groups (12%)

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What the Knowledge Maps Tell Us

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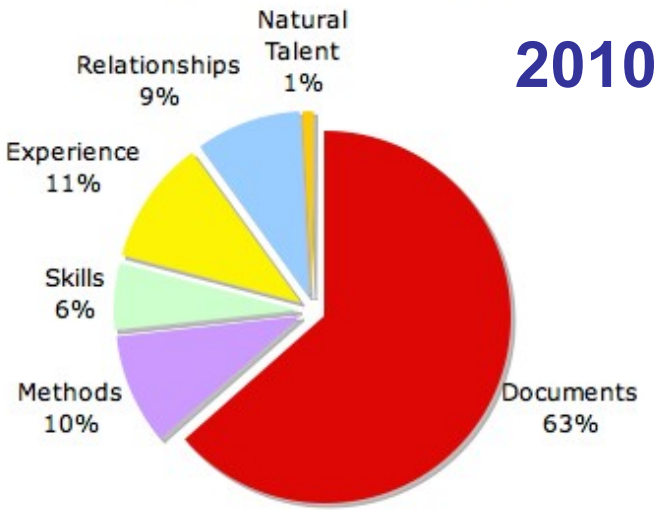
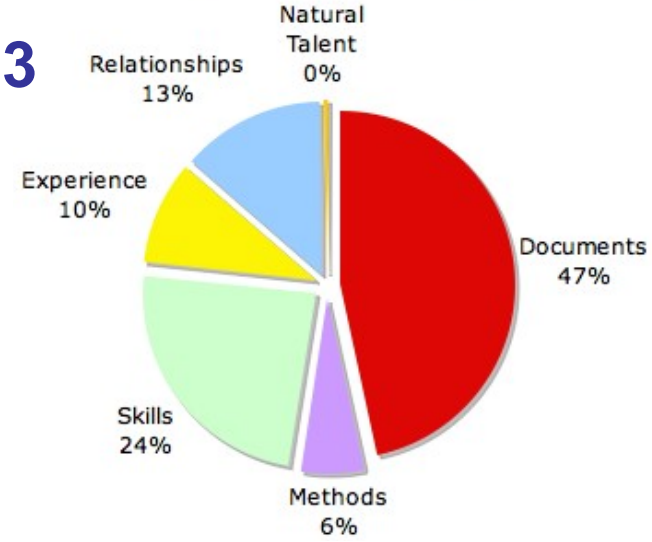
	2010	2013
Subscriptions	2709 subs to 830 knowledge assets (35%)	3531 subs to 1335 knowledge assets (59%)
High Value Subscriptions	140 knowledge assets 3+ groups (6%)	264 knowledge assets 3+ groups (12%)

All knowledge requests



2010 · ▸ 2013

All knowledge requests



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264 Most Subscribed Knowledge Assets by Type

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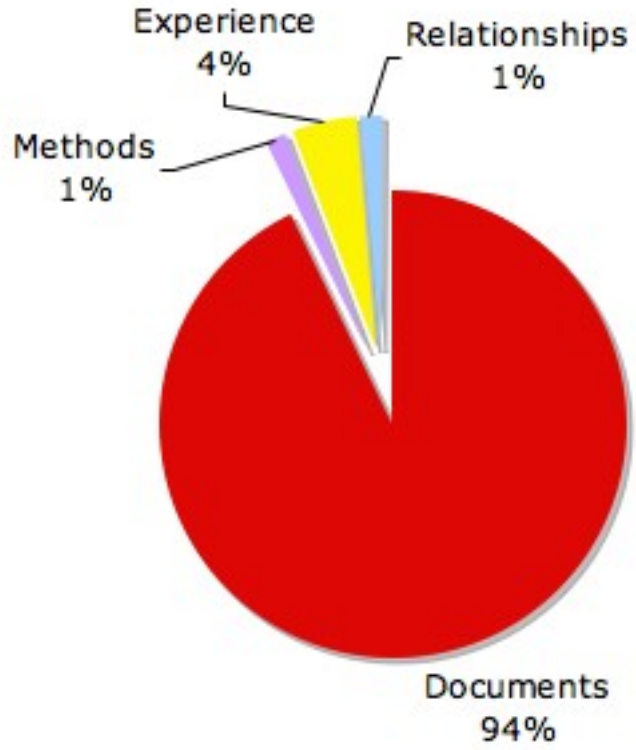
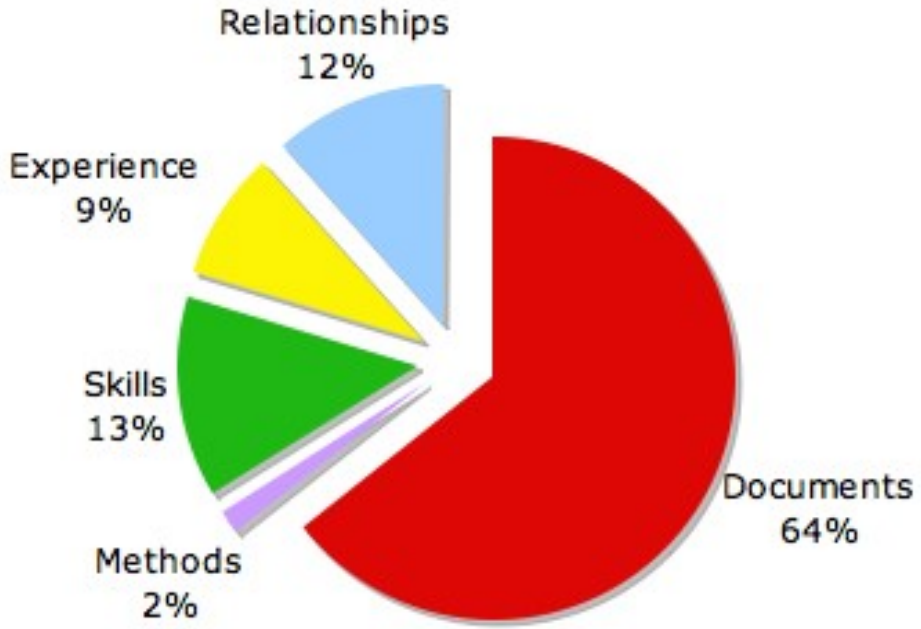
2010 → **2013**

140 Highly Subscribed KAssets by Type



264 Highly Subscribed KAssets by Type



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Relationship Needs

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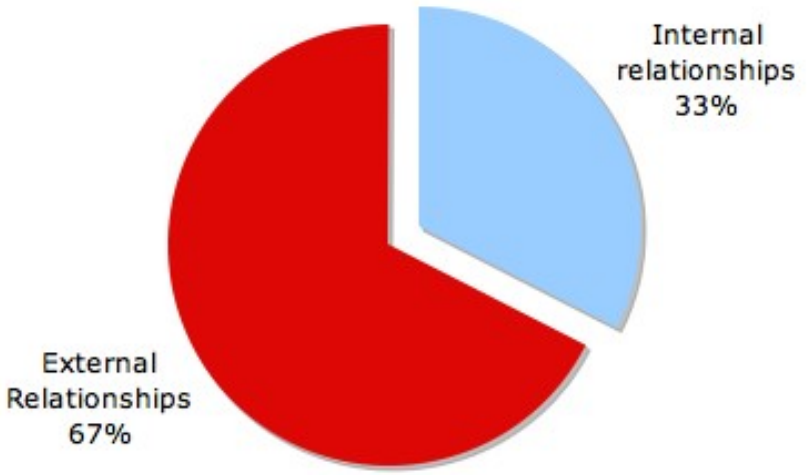
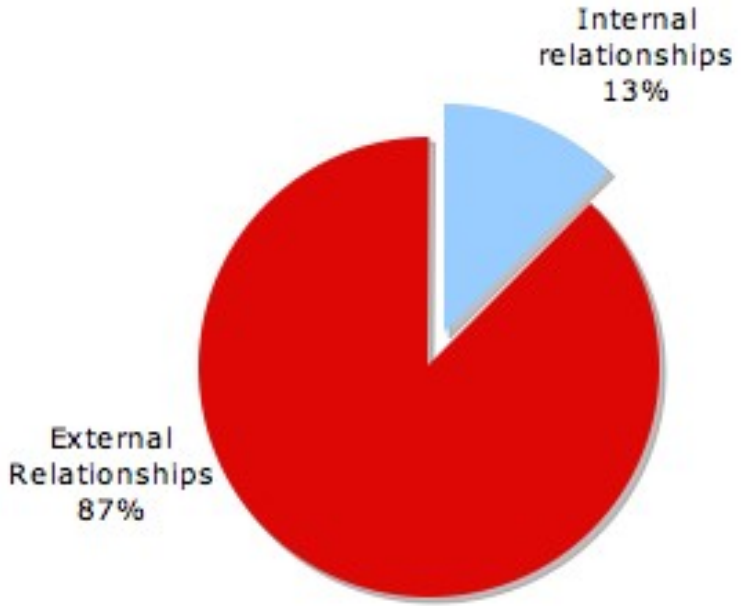
2010 → **2013**





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2013 Recommendations

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1. Focus on org-wide sharing of high-demand records eg past and current decisions around policies and strategies

2. Work on improving:
   - stresses arising from cultural issues - leadership behaviours related to information tasks
   - stresses of information working (all staff) in a very silo-based environment – greater exposure to different groups and socialisation
   - stresses imposed on new hires caused by cultural/ leadership style factors and the complex, silo-based information environment

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Any Questions?

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