**ISKO Singapore – 23 April 2021 – How Can We Make KM More Evidence-Based? With Stephen Bounds, Charles Dhewa and Bruce Boyes**

*This is a lightly edited transcript of the chat channel; it represents reflections, comments and questions posed during the panel discussion. For context, it would be best to view the videos of the discussion.*

**NATURE OF EVIDENCE**

David Williams: Under what conditions would you not take an evidence based approach to KM?

Brett Patron -: Can tacit knowledge be considered "Evidence-based"? e.g Farmer experience, vs Academic Study in Agriculture vs Agriculture "policy studies"?

Arief Amron Ariffin: We tend not to recognise or miss the elephant in the room. What would be some strategies to overcome this?

Stu French (Melbourne): I believe with social forms of peer review, informal knowledge can be a form of evidence.

Edgar Tan: Brett, I think tacit knowledge in the form of lived experience can be evidence.

Lloyd Lawrence, Brisbane Australia: Once that tacit knowledge is captured, it could become a candidate possibly for evidence.

Brett Patron -: @Edgar: agree....but is "lived experience" considered "evidence"?

Edgar Tan: Why is expertise sometimes (or often) ignored?

Shaharudin MI: Experience depends on the context. Might not necessarily be wholly relevant.

bill\_p: Ignoring experts and expertise is what we see with the COVID-19 response.

Brett Patron -: Is "evidence" contextual?

Edgar Tan: Is evidence subjective?

Brett Patron -: I think when politics is applied to evidence, it becomes "subjective"... (truths vs "my truths")

Brett Patron -: So is it "evidence-based" or "credibility-based"?

Chris Zielinski: Further to Stephen's health metaphor for KM, I have been writing about "essential information" using WHO's definition of "essential medicines" - https://fdocuments.in/document/essential-health-information-is-there-a-right-of-access-chris-zielinski-informania.html

Meena Arivananthan: I find it interesting that people trust so quickly when a person or entity claims expertise where there is not. These experts/ entities often have the eye-catching accreditation that is usually dodgy

bill\_p: KM’s love of the importance of ‘story’ has contributed to the rise of organisational bullshit

Stu French (Melbourne): The conversation is so important. Engineering organisational systems and cultures that not only allow, but encourage the injection of research and evidence alright at the point of need and focus is a key approach for me at CFA.

**EVIDENCE-BASED PROCESSES**

Kay Kutschkau, Switzerland: My thoughts on “evidence-based experiences” would be to (1) define a specific topic in which you want to collect different experiences and collect them. (2) These experiences could be analysed and translated into a framework which outlines commonalities and differences. (3) Set up a consensus building process (Delphi) to reach agreement on objective experience structures.

Arief Amron Ariffin: Social evidence like Charles mentioned gets easily downplayed by people with authority but lacks the "knowledge".

bill\_p: Personal experience - Charles just said ‘even when you try to humble yourself’ … Unfortunately English just does not have as many grammatical and linguistic structures we use ‘to humble ourself’ which are found in French, Japanese, Chinese (Cantonese)… it is much easier to ‘be humble’ when speaking or writing in the F, J, C than in Egnlish.

Bruce Boyes: Critical discourse analysis allows evaluation of the origin of people's points of view

Brett Patron -: Point of language... when I watch Brit TV shows, they say "give evidence" in court, when in US shows, the language would be "give testimony". Are we maybe using "evidence" to mean more than specific "facts" (empirical, as Steven noted) vs one's understanding?

Brett Patron -: "Expertise requires a level of humility" --Charles Dhewa

Brett Patron -: Expertise vs Ego

David Williams: Evidence does not always need to be factual

Beto do Valle [Impakt]: Here in Brazil we have a popular expression used that says something like "when he/she kills a snake, he/she shows the stick". Translating this to our subject, frequently "showing a stick" is enough to provide credibility to a statement.

Andrew.Trickett: Genchi Genbutsu is a good technique in terms of evidence gathering - go to the source

bill\_p: Getting everyone together is challenging, maybe impossible. The scientists are too busy, etc.

Beto do Valle [Impakt]: Identifying shared objectives is key to gather people around a subject.

Patricia Lumba: There appears to be policy support in identifying indigenous knowledge among some Regional Economic Communities; e.g. The SADC Regional Strategic Action Plan, that supports stakeholder engagement processes incorporating IK…however, it is difficult to get people in one place to discuss these issues.

Lloyd Lawrence, Brisbane Australia: doughnuts can attract!

bill\_p: When the CEO dictates to the organisation management “You will cooperate with Bill” it worked for 10 years. He retired and participation dropped …

Andrew.Trickett: also remember that people will have different perspectives based on position- the Rashomon effect though I do like the phrase psychological difference.

Eileen Tan: Motivation- what’s in it for them?

Lloyd Lawrence, Brisbane Australia: tie it to an important announcement with a brief morning/afternoon tea, then hit them with it.

Andrew.Trickett: The Swedes have a nice concept of fika - people meeting over coffee and cakes (or in Australia, Lamingtons)

Stephen Bounds: Andrew: psychological distance

-- see https://realkm.com/2017/02/17/psychological-distance-why-our-plans-about-knowledge-can-fail-realkm-connect-introductory-series/

Stu French (Melbourne): I have never seen this work at the top of the hierarchy in ego land. But I have seen multiple cases of expert and practitioner communities where ongoing discussion, debate and synthesis has happened in real time in response to organisational needs.

Brett Patron -: The value of shared objectives to enable collaborative efforts - Beto de Valle

Arief Amron Ariffin: For organisation, sometimes the "pain" can help get people to start talking sensitive issues. The more the pain and more people are affected by the pain, tends to being people together to talk about sensitive issues

Brett Patron -: I've always been reticent about the idea that "KM" work can be done "remotely".. some aspects certainly, and having remote tools like Zoom causes more meetings of disparate views...but talking in person beats "talking to the box" every time!

Beto do Valle [Impakt]: Yes, Arief, killing the pain becomes the shared challenge.

bill\_p: For years I did annual records reviews across Asia which took about 2 weeks. We provided food everyday and ended with a buffet lunch for all participants. In HK that was a buffet for 125 people/

Beto do Valle [Impakt]: Maybe in KM we should discuss 'evidence building' as a continuous process, or as part of evidence-based management, rather than considering valid evidence only as a starting point. Evidence building may create conditions to sharing knowledge, trust building and so on.

Brett Patron -: Concur @Beto

Andrew.Trickett: Agree @Charles about curiosity and discussing- my biggest concern in organisations at the moment is that this seems to not be as strong as it was say 5 years ago. Its more my and others observations but one for me look for more evidence to convince others

bill\_p: ‘Modern’ Corporate Organisations have many oral traditions which are ignored. Interestingly, Law Firms realise they have oral traditions which must be passed from partners to associates and in particular to those associates which have been identified as likely to be asked to become partners of the firm.

Arief Amron Ariffin: Documenting, recording and curating the knowledge

Kay Kutschkau, Switzerland: @Charles: I think the Médecins Sans Frontières in Geneva are working on creating experience archives (video and audio) to overcome the barriers you talked about.

Brett Patron -: Again, the military has a major "oral tradition" even as we have a massive "doctrinal" basis from which we operate. I am discovering that the broader federal workspace Is even more "oral tradition" and that the written/policy aspects are reflective of politics rather than acquired "knowledge"

bill\_p: Will anyone look at the archive? This is a major issue in archive creation.

Lloyd Lawrence, Brisbane Australia: valid concerns @bill

Lloyd Lawrence, Brisbane Australia: forgotten? so doesn't exist?

Brett Patron -: @Billp: people don't see an "archive" as necessarily a source - so maybe the term of art may be part of the problem with leveraging these repositories.

Andrew.Trickett: Though based on the past lessons in the UK government that nudge theory had worked made them think it could work for everything.

Dhewa: Thanks Kay for bringing the video/audio work being done. That's how knowledge transferred through dreams can be captured.

**CRITICAL ROLE OF TRUST**

Kay Kutschkau, Switzerland: Change the incentive system. As long as knowledge is a value only when it is protected and not used by many nothing will change. Trust in knowledge sharing should be established so that everybody can benefit.

Brett Patron -: Trust!

Arief Amron Ariffin: Yes, correct, the silo mentality tends to kill trust and motivation

Edgar Tan: In an organisation, Sr Mgmt seldom share the same pain as the ground level

Lloyd Lawrence, Brisbane Australia: yes, yes, yes

Brett Patron -: But even trust within the silo...

Lloyd Lawrence, Brisbane Australia: "safe environment"

Brett Patron -: Not for nuthin…. but with 104 published definitions (probably even more)...does KM have the anchor point to get people trust that KM approaches are going to be helpful?

Andrew.Trickett: Sometimes lessons learned in organisations can be perceived as always indicating what went wrong. I work on the power of positives and what went well or a near miss. Yes I like to know what didn’t go to plan but I don't want lessons learnt to be the 21st century equivalent of the confessional box with the KM person as providing absolution.

Arief Amron Ariffin: Within the silo there is strong trust. We see that. Trust gets reduced in cross teams/functional work

Brett Patron -: Spot On Stephen: explicit knowledge as a way to "protect" team members

Brett Patron -: Patron's Law #3: You can't think "outside the box" until everyone agrees where "the box" is!

Lloyd Lawrence, Brisbane Australia: Trust builds when people get to know each other beyond the morning "Hi" and/or nod when passing.

Brett Patron -: There's plenty of evidence of this... the military...

Brett Patron -: Why worry about "success" or "failure"? Why not just called them "outcomes"?

bill\_p: Participation where you are not where you want to be.

Lloyd Lawrence, Brisbane Australia: 100%

bill\_p: The myth of ‘it’s impossible to manage email’ falls apart when you report to each person in the organisation 1. How many emails they send each day, week, month. 2 How many emails they receive etc. 3. How many each have attachments. 4. Break down the emails by counting the number of characters (letters) in each.

Brett Patron -: Managing Email is chasing the wrong rabbit.. Is information shared in ways that achieve outcomes?

Stu French (Melbourne): Very true Patrick. I regularly run into the MacNamara fallacy where managers heavily weight metrics that are quantitative and easy to measure.

bill\_p: People lie when they say the are too many emails for me to manage. It’s too much work. It’s take too much time.

Brett Patron -: Steven's point about Trust is massive... 'the evidence" that is trusted is likely to be compelling; that which is tinged as "political" or presented by untrustworthy sources distracts the broader acceptance of "all" voices

bill\_p: Management Literacy - something missing in too many MBA programmes

Brett Patron -: As a KMer, we have to understand "the business of the business". KM is probably better as a second career, after you understand what an organization, profession, or career field helps makes KM more acceptable

bill\_p: In big tobacco where I worked for decades bringing in the experienced tobacco person to keep the conversation real and valid often times meant the experienced tobacco business person said ‘change is not a good idea’ ‘do not rock the boat’