Sharing Knowledge Management practices
Experiences of the UK Office of Fair Trading

Tony Penny (Team leader, Know-How team)

Presentation to

The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNCTAD.
The OFT Know-How team

- Set up in 2007
- Central team located within General Counsel’s Office
- Role: to gather and disseminate knowledge relating to use of the OFT’s competition, consumer and markets tools
- Originally 3 staff > expanded to 6 to set up and deliver the new Enforcement Academy
- Supported by network of Know-How Liaison Officers (KLOs)
Core know-how sharing tools

- Know-how intranet pages
- Monthly electronic float
- Cross-Office know-how presentations
- Enforcement Academy
  - Basic level training
  - Skills training
  - More enforcement-focused talks
  - Enforcement Academy meetings
**Why is Knowledge Management important?**

**Effective KM provides**
- Access to know-what/how and best practice
- Access to the right people and experience

**Leads to**
- Less time/effort to carry out tasks
- More time to add value
- Learning from experience
- Improved content

**Impacts on**
- Improved performance
- Higher quality decisions
- Reduced risk of repeating mistakes
- More efficient and cost-effective delivery
Focus areas when setting up a KM system

● Dedicated resources (personnel, infrastructure)

● Develop and embed the culture
  - Encourage senior buy-in
  - Raise the profile of KM: appointment of a Knowledge Champion
  - Increase awareness: KM Road shows
  - Remind staff that KM is about knowledge sharing and seeking
  - More value through diversity: people can bring different views to the table (no 'sole expert')
  - KM is part of the day job, not an extra task
    • But we can be more efficient in how we do it

We all need to make a cultural change to embed KM into our work.
Areas of focus when setting up a KM system (2)

● Skill up staff coming in (induction) and retain the knowledge of leavers (knowledge harvesting)

● Requirements vs incentives?
  - Stick: include KM in job descriptions/objectives
    • Knowledge sharing is a core skill under the UK Professional Skills in Government (PSG) framework
  - Carrots: eg Knowledge prizes, merit awards

● Think about KM Strategy and Evaluation
  - Identify priorities
  - Ways of measuring success?
How to share best practice with younger agencies?

- Participation at international conferences
- Contribution in international projects
  - eg ICN Agency Effectiveness WG – Competition Agency practice manual chapter on EKM
- Bilateral inter-agency visits – include KM on the agenda
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