



Bachelor's courses School of Business and Economics

VU University Amsterdam - Student- & Onderwijszaken - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit - 2018-2019

Knowledge Management

Course code	E_IBK3_KM ()
Period	Period 5
Credits	6.0
Language of tuition	English
Faculty	School of Business and Economics
Coordinator	dr. M.H. Rezazade Mehrizi
Examinator	dr. M.H. Rezazade Mehrizi
Teaching method(s)	Lecture, Seminar, Instruction course
Level	300

Course objective

The course enhances your knowledge and skills with regards to knowledge management theories and practices. More specifically, the course aims at the following learning objectives:

ACADEMIC & RESEARCH SKILLS (#1): Exercising how to conduct embedded research with organizations and professions to understand and analyse their challenges regarding the creation and delivery of practical knowledge

BRIDGING THEORY AND PRACTICE (#2): Learning the theories related to managing knowledge and expertise and relating them to the current challenges that organizations and professions face in creating and delivering practical knowledge

SOCIAL SKILLS: HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE AND THE ABILITY TO WORK IN A VARIETY OF PROFESSIONAL CONTEXTS (#3): being able to provide insights that solve the practical challenges that organizations and professions have in terms of effective creation and delivery of their practical knowledge

Course content

Around 80% of the market value of leading companies such as Google, Amazon, Apple come from their intangible assets in general, and their knowledge in particular. Can you imagine that a bank or a small software company works without effective use of the expertise that their employees have? That's why companies like Shell not only spend massive efforts to manage their knowledge, but also gain hundred millions of Euros each year by effective management of their knowledge. In other words, creating, sharing, and utilizing knowledge is the core fabric of successful organizations.

Think, for example, of a multi-national company like Heineken: how can Heineken make sure that benefits from what its employees know and the expertise developed in one part of the company can be shared with and used by members in other parts? How can Nike make use of all the creative ideas that are developed within various online communities, such as Niketalk.com and competitors' online communities? Such questions are on the minds of many managers today. The course helps you understand the inter-disciplinary nature of knowledge management (KM) and its importance for organizations to improve their performance and innovation. The course also provides you with practical insights that you can rely on when you serve as a manager, consultant, and entrepreneur for dealing with KM challenges.

As a result, when you work for organizations, knowledge management is part of your day-to-day activities, for which the course provides you with ample insights. Furthermore, new trends such as crowdsourcing, flexible work, and new ways of working have heightened the importance of

KM, yet adding further challenges to it. For instance, new knowledge sharing mechanisms are needed when organizations run innovation projects via crowdsourcing of innovation challenges online (e.g., via “InnoCentive”).

In spite of its importance, managing knowledge is challenging. Knowledge often is tacit and hidden in human capabilities and social interactions. It is difficult to pin point knowledge and capture it, since its fluidity requires paying attention to a range of social and motivational factors.

This KM course is meant to help you to understand these new organizational challenges and to think of possible solutions. The course not only offers various insights into how organizations manage their knowledge, but also poses novel questions and challenges that you can explore further and conduct research on. To gain a deep understanding of knowledge management, you conduct a research project in an organization to examine a specific knowledge management challenge and provide insights about it by drawing on scientific literature.

The course provides several opportunities for you to interact with organizations, to learn from hands-on managers and consultants who will give guest lectures, and to be exposed to various job opportunities related to knowledge management.

Form of tuition

Lectures and workshops

Tutorials and group discussions

Important: Please note that the participation in the lectures and tutorial sessions are highly recommended, partly since some interim assessments (in class-quizzes) are crucial parts of the course

Type of assessment

individual and group assessment

Course reading

A selection of book chapters and academic articles to be announced.

Recommended background knowledge

BK:

2.1 Business Information Technology; 2.4 Technology and Innovation Management; 2.4; 2.5 BRM II Qualitative research methods

IBA:

2.1 Business information systems; 2.4 Digital innovation and virtual organizations in a global setting; 2.5 BRM II – Qualitative research methods