

# Why Capturing Business Knowledge with Patterns Provides Strategic Advantage

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# EXPECTED BENEFITS

- concrete examples of what a company gains by using patterns for knowledge management
  - time
  - focus
  - solidarity
  - understanding
  - vision - translating organizational vision to individual vision

# CHALLENGES OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

- Knowledge is in the head's of people - when you lose people you lose knowledge
- Knowledge is inextricably linked with the context in which it comes into being
- Knowledge is not reducible to formal structures - as is data and information
- Knowledge is a valuable asset that must be preserved and shared within the organization

# WE ALREADY KNOW HOW TO MANAGE KNOWLEDGE

- Most of what anyone knows was not formally learned or taught
- We use an informal tool - the story - for capturing, preserving, and transmitting knowledge
- Routines, habits, rituals, and customs also embody knowledge
  - These may have started with stories, but often the stories are lost and only the habits - with their embedded knowledge - remain
- need to illustrate with examples

# THE POWER OF STORIES

- Used since humans first began communicating
- Easy to remember and share
- Evocative - recall to mind - the knowledge
- Can be structured

# STRUCTURED STORIES

- Business case studies
- Use-cases
- Scenarios
- Patterns

# PATTERNS AS STORIES

- Pattern Example as story (dancing in the streets, sleeping in public)
- Why patterns are effective stories
  - Identify the cast of characters
  - Identify the context - the situation - from which the knowledge came and in which the knowledge can be used
  - Identifies the “plot” and the “script”
  - Identifies the expected outcome, the “moral of the story”

# PATTERN LIBRARY AS STRATEGIC ASSET

- Effective tool for knowledge management
- Valuable insight - your competitive advantage vis-a-vis competitors
- Vocabulary and mental framework for creative thinking and strategic innovation
- Effective foundation for establishing organizational identity, branding, and marketing
- Foundation for establishing and maintaining corporate culture



# PATTERN LIBRARIES

- Collection of patterns
- Require “indexing” for organization and retrieval
  - Mandala and other visual representations
- Patterns Librarian
- Library must be integrated into the organizational culture - as vocabulary

# AN ACTION PLAN

- acknowledge and understand the strategic value of patterns (develop a passion)
- establish a patterns study group
- appoint a patterns librarian
- initial patterns
  - pattern mining and pattern writing
- use the librarian and study group members as to nurture a patterns culture
- use a patterns friendly technology - wiki - to create electronic tool for writing, retrieving and storing patterns
- Use external patterns experts to inspire and mentor the use of patterns
- establish a pattern sharing policy - encouraging sharing and attendance at PLoP and other patterns conferences while protecting patterns that comprise intellectual property