

Executing Knowledge Management in Support of Mission Command for Leaders



**Army Operational Knowledge Management Proponent
1 April 2014**

“KMOs ensure that the Commander . . . as the leader and central figure in mission command . . . has the right knowledge from the various processes, from the right systems, at the right time, to make the right decision.”

**MG Thomas James, Jr.
Director, Mission Command Center of Excellence
Fort Leavenworth, 2014**

Forward

This handbook provides Army leaders a better understanding of Knowledge Management, and what they can do to better manage the knowledge processes in their units.

This handbook briefly addresses the roles and functions of leaders managing Knowledge Management Sections. The Army relies on Knowledge Management to assist the Commander and staff in developing more effective Mission Command processes. Knowledge Management is a key enabler in the Mission Command decision-making process.

This handbook has been developed using lessons learned from soldiers in the field. Input was provided by Knowledge Management soldiers serving in units in the Trained/Ready and Available/Deployed phases of ARFORGEN, and the Combat Training Centers (CTCs). Some key lessons learned include . . .

Leadership must actively participate and support the Knowledge Management program; gaining that leadership involvement must be one of the organizations first objectives.

Knowledge Management must be initiated during the plan/prepare phase of operations (Reset phase of ARFORGEN); the program is unlikely to succeed if the unit waits until execution.

Knowledge Management is an iterative process; a series of small changes will build into the larger changes desired, with less turmoil.

Knowledge Management is a people-centric process; the technical systems enable the Knowledge Management process, but cannot be the focus of it.

Andrew M. Mortensen
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Purpose of This Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to help Army leaders establish and manage knowledge management in their organization.

This handbook provides one approach to managing a knowledge management program. The tasks in this handbook are designed – not as a systematic method of implementing knowledge management – but as a means to generate thoughts and ideas on how knowledge leaders can manage organizational Knowledge Management programs.

This handbook is intended as a companion manual to “Executing Knowledge Management in Support of Mission Command, Establishing a Knowledge Management Program” (The KMO Handbook), and “Executing Knowledge Management in Support of Mission Command, Knowledge Management Representatives” (The KMR Handbook). These handbooks presume a new division Knowledge Management Officer (KMO) who has read, and is implementing the concepts in those handbooks. As a result, this handbook is also based a division staff scenario, though the concepts in this handbook can be adapted to any organizational level.

This handbook incorporates lessons learned from a variety of organizations which have established a successful KM program, but is not formal Army doctrine.

Before you begin using this handbook, read and understand FM 6-01.1, Knowledge Management Operations (July 2012). It will provide the background necessary to understanding this handbook.

“Knowledge Management adds understanding and precision to mass and firepower.”

**BG Charles A. Flynn
Acting CG, U. S. Army Combined Arms Center
Fort Leavenworth, 2011**

Why Knowledge Management?

The concept of collecting, analyzing, and distributing knowledge is not new to the U. S. Army. From the inception of the Continental Army in 1775, General George Washington developed organizations and processes designed to collect and disseminate information about British and American forces. Which means, the basic concepts of knowledge management are not new to the American Army; what is new is how we think of about the management of that knowledge.

Knowledge Management (KM) can be thought of as many things, and in the academic world there are hundreds of perspectives, theories, and definitions of KM. There are so many different perspectives of what would seem to be a simple subject that it can be difficult to grasp; especially when those academics are applied to a military context.

The Army, however, has an advantage over the academic world in that we have doctrine; which provides common definitions, terms, and techniques. Though KM doctrine is still emerging, it has developed enough that KM doctrinal concepts and techniques, are being employed across the Army with important results. In order for your organization to achieve those same results, it is important that you understand not only KM doctrine, but the purposes and objectives of Army Knowledge Management.

Even so, Army leaders attempting to manage dwindling resources continue to struggle with the concept of Knowledge Management, and must often deal with the question of “Why Knowledge Management?”

Knowledge Management; It’s Not Just a Good Idea Anymore

With the advent of FM 6-01.1 (Knowledge Management Operations) in August 2008, the Army began the development and publication of knowledge management doctrine, though it was not until FM 6-01.1 was republished in 2012 that Army KM doctrine really began to be implemented across the force. Since then, knowledge management doctrine has become integral to Army operational doctrine, affecting both commanders and staffs.

ADP 3-0 and ADRP 6-0 define three tasks for the Commander: (1) drive the operations process, (2) develop teams, and (3) inform and influence audiences. Knowledge Management directly enables the most important of these tasks – drive the operations process – and indirectly enables inform and influence.

ADO 6-0 defines four primary staff tasks, supporting the commander in the exercise of mission command: (1) conduct the operations process (plan, prepare, execute, and assess); (2) conduct knowledge management and information management; (3) conduct inform and influence activities, and (4) conduct cyber electromagnetic activities. Again, as with the Commander’s tasks, KM directly enables the most important of these tasks – conduct the operations process – and indirectly enables inform and influence.

Further, identifying a specific KM task for the staff places direct responsibility on the staff and the Chief of Staff to establish and implement knowledge management within the organization. ADP 6-0 explains why the organization's knowledge management program is of such importance: "Staffs use information and knowledge management practices to assist commanders in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information. This cycle of information exchange provides the basis for creating and maintaining understanding."

"KM bridges the gap between the art and science of command by creating a shared understanding and a learning organization through the alignment of people and processes with the necessary tools needed for knowledge to flow within in an organizational culture and structure." (ADP 3-0)

An effective Knowledge Management program provides a means of dealing with the inherent problems involved in collecting and managing knowledge. ADP 5-0 explains the overall objective behind the doctrine:

"Success in operations demands timely and effective decisions based upon applying judgment to available information and knowledge. As such, commanders and staffs seek to build and maintain situational understanding throughout the operations process. Situational understanding is the product of applying analysis and judgment to relevant information to determine the relationships among the operational and mission variables to facilitate decision-making."

This is actually another way of describing the **Knowledge Management objective**: "**Getting the right information, to the right people, in the right format, at the right time, in order to arrive at the right decision.**" This makes a Knowledge Management program a primary means of implementing Mission Command.

Knowledge Management is Integral to Mission Command

Mission Command is the exercise of authority and direction by commanders, supported by their staffs, using the art of command and the science of control, to integrate the other warfighting functions in the conduct of full-spectrum operations. It is an inherent part of all operations. Fundamental to Mission Command are the organization's decision-making and knowledge transfer processes, which is where the KM program takes on an important role.

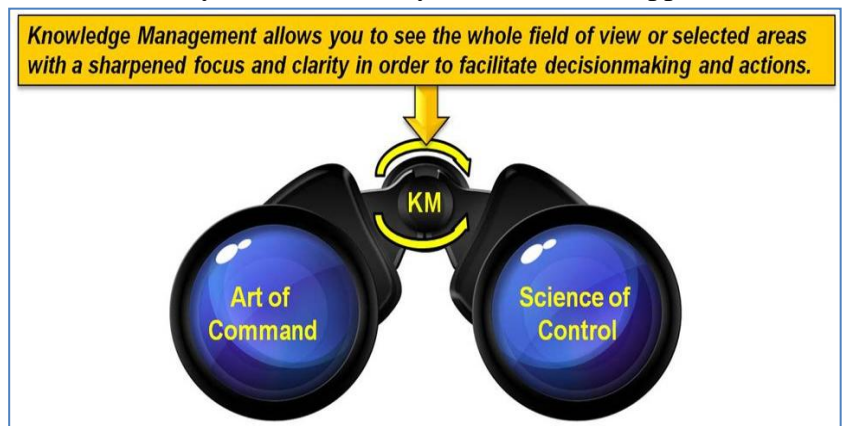


Figure 1: Mission Command in Focus.

ADP 6-0 defines six principles of Mission Command: (1) build cohesive teams through mutual trust, (2) create shared understanding, (3) provide a clear commander’s intent,(4) exercise disciplined initiative, (5) use mission orders, and (6) accept prudent risk.

One of these specified tasks – creating a shared understanding – is an important objective of a knowledge management program. This doctrinal link between the principals of Mission Command and Knowledge Management makes KM an essential enabler of Mission Command.

Knowledge Management Improves Decision-Making Processes

Just as the Mission Command warfighting function assists Commanders in balancing the art of command with the science of control, Knowledge Management (KM) supports the commander by providing the bridging focus between the art and science of command.

Knowledge Management helps the Commander focus these processes by enabling knowledge flow to enhance shared understanding, learning, and decision-making. KM balances people, process, tools, and organization, in order to create a shared understanding through the alignment of people, processes, and tools within the organizational structure and culture, in order to increase collaboration and understanding. The resulting improved knowledge flow and shared understanding, results in better decisions, resulting in improved flexibility, adaptability, integration, and synchronization.

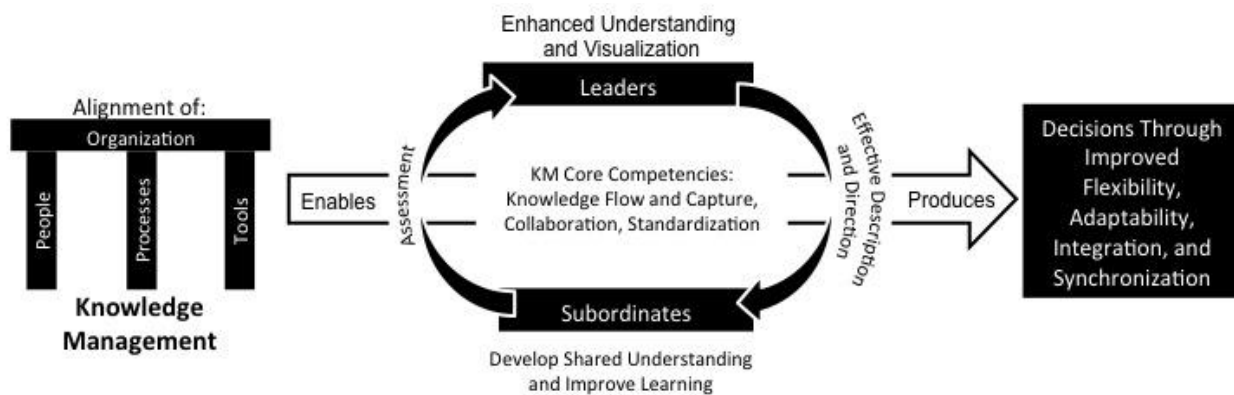


Figure 2. Knowledge Management Supports Decision-Making.

Knowledge Management enables commanders to make informed, timely decisions despite the uncertainty of operations or the type of operations, and is becoming an inherent part of joint and combined operations, making KM a primary enabler of Mission Command.

Knowledge Management Improves Staff Effectiveness

In an age of rapidly collected and distributed information, decision-making is often impaired by too much information. Sorting through computers full of information is time consuming and often difficult. This is further complicated by the fact that the size and

complexity of modern Command Posts, and the sheer scope, complexity, and pace of tactical operations, limit a staff's ability to collect, analyze and present decision-making information.

Further, as additional echelons and, joint, combined, or non-governmental organizations are added to a task organization, the level of complexity and friction increases, impeding decision-making and tactical effectiveness. The result is often confusion, and an inability to ensure the commander has all the relevant information necessary for timely decisions.

An effective KM program helps keep the staff focused on the KM tasks (FM 6-01.1) of create, organize, apply, and transfer knowledge. More specifically, the objective of creating a shared understanding through the alignment of people, processes, and tools within the organizational structure and culture in order to increase collaboration and interaction between leaders and subordinates enables effective decision-making through improved flexibility, adaptability, integration, synchronization. If the KM team gets it right, the Commander spends his time making critical decisions, and not trying to find documents.

“Knowledge Management is one of the things that make warfare in the future different from warfare in the past.”

**General Martin E. Dempsey
CG, U. S. Army Training and Doctrine Command
Fort Leavenworth, 2009**

Knowledge Management Concepts

If, as recommended, you read and understand FM 6-01.1, you should have a good understanding of the Knowledge Management; though Army Knowledge Management concepts and doctrine are relatively new, and may require some explanation.

FM 6-01.1 (Knowledge Management Operations) defines Knowledge Management as “the process of enabling knowledge flow to enhance shared understanding, learning and decision-making.” Note that KM is not an object or a technology, but rather a process with which the Commander enables the Mission Command principle of shared understanding, and accomplishes the Mission Command task of conduct knowledge management. Knowledge Management can also be thought of as a process of enabling knowledge flow in order to enhance shared understanding, learning and decision-making.

Knowledge Management Principles

Current doctrine establishes five principles of Army Knowledge Management:

Understand - Shared understanding across, between, and through Soldiers/leaders and organizations is the desired objective.

Share - Knowledge is a transferable asset which tends to grow with use and application. KM helps the Army to acquire and share knowledge in support of the operational objectives.

Integrate - KM breaks down stovepipes and enhances situational understanding.

Connect - KM focuses on transferring tacit knowledge between individuals, teams, and units through collaboration.

Learn - KM fosters individual and collective learning and contributes to developing learning organizations by integrating informal learning, organizational learning strategies, and KM capabilities.

Trust - Successful KM depends on willingness to share knowledge so that others can benefit. This sharing contributes to building an environment of trust and mutual understanding.

Knowledge Management Components

Army Knowledge Management is comprised four components: people, process, tools, and organization.

People - those who create, organize, apply, and transfer knowledge, and the leaders who act on that knowledge (i.e. *everyone*).

Processes - the methods of creating, organizing, applying, sharing, and transferring knowledge.

Tools – Digital and non-digital knowledge tools used to put knowledge products and services into organized frameworks.

Organization - the organization matrix in which people, processes, tools function to integrate individual learning, organizational learning strategies, and KM capabilities, and contribute to a learning organization.

Army Knowledge Management is the alignment and balancing of these components. Though tools – especially digital tools – are often thought to be the primary component of KM; the far more important aspects of KM are the people, and the processes they use to create, organize, apply, and transfer knowledge.

This is why this handbook focuses on analyzing and developing the processes used by the soldiers in an organization. It is also why the KM Proponent prefers to think of the KM process as a means of balancing the four components of Knowledge Management.

The Knowledge Management Process

Knowledge Management (KM) is the process of enabling knowledge flow to enhance shared understanding, learning and decision-making, and is a five-step process.

Assess information flow in the organization. Identify obstructions to the free flow of information (knowledge gaps), and identify the means of eliminating or minimizing those obstructions (knowledge solutions). The problem may be as simple as difficulty in finding reports on a website, with an equally simple solution, or as complicated as synchronizing the collective knowledge of an Army corps.

Design KM products and processes which effectively and efficiently improve information transfer. Determine which knowledge strategy will best meet the unit's information needs. This could be as complicated as designing a knowledge network, or as simple as redesigning reports that provide the commander decision-making information.

Develop a knowledge management solution to the problem, and requirements, processes and procedures which implement the KM solution.

Pilot the KM solution by implementing it on a small scale and testing it with soldiers. Identify and correct problems, and prepare it for full implementation in the organization.

Implement the validated, to include training and coaching personnel in their roles and responsibilities. Monitor the implementation in order to identify and correct problems.

Understand that knowledge management is not a single cycle process, but an integrated series of cycles – some sequential, some in parallel – which improve the processes of knowledge acquisition, analysis, and presentation. These processes are critical to Mission Command, which is why this handbook focuses on Mission Command, and the organizational knowledge processes that support decision-making.

Knowledge Management’s “Big Ideas”

A quick review of the developed and emerging Knowledge Management doctrine, as well as experience in the field, yields some basic concepts, applicable across the army. It is important, when developing and implementing an organizational Knowledge Management program, to keep in mind the Knowledge Management “Big Ideas.”

A Knowledge Management program is only as effective as the involvement of the organization’s knowledge leaders.

The effective knowledge manager is not a technologist, rather a balancer of the components of Army Knowledge Management: People, Processes, Tools, and Organization.

Knowledge Management enhances shared understanding, learning, and decision-making, directly enabling the commander’s Mission Command processes.

Knowledge Management is primarily about shared understanding; a key element of Mission Command; directly supporting the operation process.

Like safety, Knowledge Management is everyone's responsibility; all soldiers conduct Knowledge Management as part of their daily business.

The objective of a Knowledge Management program is to get the right information, to the right people, in the right format, at the right time, in order to arrive at the right decision. This makes a KM program a primary means of implementing Mission Command.

“We’ve been reminded that war is a fundamentally human endeavor and requires interaction with a broad range of actors and potential partners. We’ve discovered and rediscovered that technology provides important enablers but can never entirely lift the fog and friction inherent in war.”

**General Martin E. Dempsey, “Mission Command,”
Chief of Staff, U. S. Army
Army Magazine, January 2011**

The Knowledge Management Leadership Team

Knowledge Management is primarily a human process. As such, it is heavily dependent on organizational leadership for direction and supervision; especially, given the linkage between KM and Mission Command. Like all things; Knowledge Management programs will be successful only with the active involvement of the leadership.

The primary members of the leadership team are the Commander (the decision-maker); the Chief of Staff or Executive Officer (providing leadership, enforcement, and a Mission Command focus); the Knowledge Management Officer (staff officer responsible for assessing and improving knowledge processes); and noncommissioned leadership (responsible for developing and implementing knowledge processes).

Depending upon the position, knowledge leaders, perform five tasks: (1) establish and support an organizational KM program, (2) understand and implement Knowledge Management doctrine, (3) focus Knowledge Management efforts, (4) oversee the KMO, KM Section, and KM Working Group, and (5) implement KM training and planning,

The Commander as Chief Knowledge Officer

The doctrinal role of the Commander in Knowledge Management is still emerging, but it is becoming clear that as the decision-maker the Commander takes on more than a normal leadership role. In a process focused on the Commander's decision-making, the Commander must fully understand the information necessary for him to make decisions.

This requires more than just establishing Commander's Critical Information Requirements (CCIR). Effective collection, analysis, and transfer of knowledge among the staff and commander, requires an analysis of those processes. The commander must analyze his knowledge needs, analyze how the staff presents that knowledge, and determine if his needs are met by existing knowledge processes and products.

To this end, the commander should think about these knowledge processes, and assess whether critical information is easily accessible, and whether the staff providing the necessary decision-making information. Having conducted this quick knowledge requirements analysis, the Commander must then ensure the staff understands and begins to act on those needs. In other words, the commander must identify to his staff his knowledge requirements, and establish the means to acquire that knowledge.

The Chief of Staff as Knowledge Leader

Likewise, the Chief of Staff (or Executive Officer) plays a significant role in the organizations KM program. Experience in units implementing a KM program has shown that

early and effective involvement by the Chief of Staff makes a significant difference in the program.

As “Chief of the Staff”, the Chief of Staff (CoS) is the officer primarily responsible for coordinating and integrating the efforts of the staff as a whole. This includes the efforts of the KMO and KM Section. The CoS must be able to visualize the staff’s processes for collecting, analyzing, and transferring knowledge, assess those processes, and ensure the staff’s efforts are coordinated and effective. It will be important for the CoS to ensure the KMO and KM Section have visibility of all staff knowledge processes, and the ability to implement change in those processes, as required.

The primary means the CoS has of influencing the KM program is the Knowledge Management Working Group. This working group should be established by the CoS/XO, as an extension of the division staff, focused primarily on developing and improving the division’s knowledge processes. The KMWG is the primary resource with which the leadership can assess and improve knowledge flow within the organization.

The Knowledge Management Officer

Throughout the history of Army Knowledge Management, there has been a persistent believe that the KMO is “the SharePoint guy.” While technological tools are the most common means of implementing knowledge processes, experience has shown that the successful KMO must be more than a technologist. The successful KMO must also be well grounded in Mission Command, the operations process, the Military Decision-Making Process, and decision-making. An understanding of how technology supports those processes is useful, but not critical. What is critical in a KMO is an ability to analyze and improve those knowledge processes that most affect Mission Command and decision-making processes.

In short, the KMO must be more than just another staff officer. The KMO must be in a position to visualize, assess, and improve knowledge process across the division staff. As such, the KMO most often functions as a staff “catalyst;” making staff processes faster, more efficient, and more effective. This requires the KMO to focus on knowledge requirements and knowledge processes, and not the technology or tools.

Among the KMO’s specified duties are advise the Commander and staff, evaluate and improve staff knowledge processes monitor, conducted KM training, develop and implement a KM plan, and coordinate with the G3/S3 and G-6/S-6 for necessary support.

Noncommissioned Knowledge Leaders

Though Knowledge Management can be thought of as a “leader-centric” program, it should not be thought of as a commissioned leadership only program. Experience with units establishing KM programs has demonstrated that a significant aspect of successful KM programs

is the noncommissioned knowledge leaders within the organization. The noncommissioned aspect of the knowledge leadership team is important in three aspects.

First, senior non-commissioned officers (NCOs) are important, and visible, representatives the command, and often speak for the commander, in a leadership role. When the Division Command Sergeant Major emphasizes the importance of command knowledge processes, it is the same as the Commander emphasizing the importance of command knowledge processes. The importance of command involvement in a KM program cannot be over emphasized, and the unit's senior noncommissioned officers are an important means of imparting that emphasis.

Second, most of the work of developing and executing knowledge flow processes within a unit is accomplished by noncommissioned officers. Within the Knowledge Management section, the Knowledge Management Noncommissioned Officer to Content Management Specialists will execute most of the important work of knowledge processes. Within the staff as a whole, a significant portion of Knowledge Management Representatives will be NCOs, exerting significant influence on developing and improving knowledge processes. Just as significantly, these NCOs will conduct much of the KM training within the organization.

Third, and possibly most significant, the Army's noncommissioned officers are the primary enforcers of standards within an organization. Emphasizing and enforcing standards are a particularly important aspect of establishing and developing KM programs, and the only means of ensuring KM plans and SOPs become an effective KM program.

Knowledge Management Representatives

The Division KMO is responsible for planning and developing a division KM program, but Knowledge Management Representatives (KMRs) perform a critical role in implementing the division's KM program.

FM 6-01.1 defines KMRs as "staff section personnel officially designated as the agent of the staff principal to coordinate with the KM staff section," and describes the KMRs contribution to a KM program in terms of advocacy, support, and knowledge brokering. However, since the publication of FM 6-01.1 (July 2012), the Army Knowledge Management Proponent Office has come to understand that KMRs are much more important in establishing a KM program than originally thought.

Advocacy. FM 6-01.1 describes advocacy as spreading the KM message, educating and emphasizing the importance of sound KM practices. However, we are learning that KMRs must be more than mere advocates. They must also be leaders of change as the unit implements its KM program, and – more importantly – they must often function as KM enforcers, ensuring that KM standards, processes, and procedures are adhered to within the staff section.

Support. FM 6-01.1 describes support as acting as representative of their staff section for KM initiatives. But the KMR must be more than a representative. They must be an expert in

their staff section’s knowledge processes, and an active developer and implementer of KM initiatives, as part of the division KMWG. The KMWG is the division’s primary means of developing and implementing KM initiatives, and is effectively the center of gravity for the KMR – the primary means of accomplishing the division’s KM objectives.

Knowledge Brokering. FM 6-01.1 describes knowledge brokering as linking colleagues to knowledge and information sources outside their immediate context. But KMRs must be more than just a conduit for knowledge flow within and outside of the staff section. They must also be managers of that knowledge flow, the staff section’s leader in implementing KM, and the primary action officer in changing how their staff section does business.

A more doctrine-like perspective of KMR duties and responsibilities would be: (1) lead the implementation of KM within the staff section; (3) enforce KM SOPs, standards, and processes; (3) conduct section KM planning and integration; (4) conduct KM training within the section; (5) represent the staff section at KMWG and implement KMWG initiatives.

The sum of these updated concepts is the elevation of KMRs from “supporting partner” of the KMO, to active planner and implementer of KM initiatives within the staff section. KMRs will often function as “KM Enforcer” within the staff section; enforcing KM policies, processes, and standards. KMRs support the KMO’s plans as the organization implements its KM program, but they must also be KM leaders. Change is hard, and requires constant monitoring and enforcement, and the KMR has two specific roles in the developing and implementing a KM program. This means that selecting the right KMRs for the KMWG is critical to the success of an organization’s KM program.

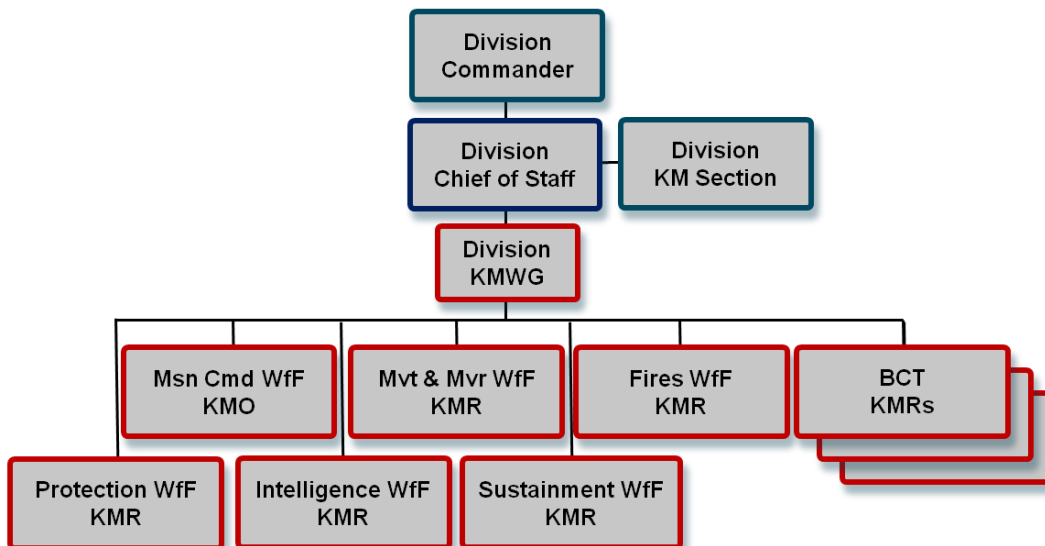


Figure 3. Example of a Division Knowledge Management Team.

The Knowledge Management Working Group

The Knowledge Management Working Group (KMWG), established by the CoS/XO and consisting of the division’s KMO and KMRs, will be the division’s primary means of developing

and implementing knowledge processes. The KMWG is the primary resource with which the leadership can assess and improve knowledge flow within the organization. It is also the knowledge leader's primary means of influencing and improving those processes. Hence, active participation in the KMWG is a critical task for knowledge leaders.

Techniques for establishing the KMWG are described in the KMO and KMR Handbooks, and need not be reproduced here. Knowledge leaders, however, must keep in mind, that knowledge integration, shared understanding, and organizational learning adaptability, in support of Mission Command should be at the core of the KMWGs efforts and the KMWG must be focused on the Knowledge Management objective: Getting the right information, to the right people, in the right format, at the right time, in order to arrive at the right decision.

Essential Guidance

As has been stated, KM programs will be successful only with the active involvement of the leadership, and a significant aspect of that involvement is guidance to staff. The nature of that guidance becomes clear as the organization conducts its knowledge assessment, but some essential guidance has become clear as units develop and implement their KM programs.

Early and clear command guidance, based upon an analysis of command knowledge requirements and Commander's intent, is critical to success. Clearly identify the knowledge required for decision-making and how that knowledge can best be presented to meet the commander's needs.

Identify early who the KMO works for, and if the answer is anything other than the Chief of Staff or Executive Officer, you will want to make a change. Experience has shown that a KM program is more successful when the KMO works for the CoS or XO, instead of the G6 (who looks for technical problems to solve with technical solutions) or the G3 (who tends to use the KMO as an additional staff officer, or KMO for the G3 instead of the organization as a whole.

Establish the KMWG's responsibilities and expectations early. Identify who else must be involved with the KMWG, and the KMWG's priorities. Make it clear that the KMWG has been established by the CoS/XO for the purpose of implementing change, and that change will be executed under the authority of the CoS/XO. Share the meeting results with the entire staff in a report or briefing.

Ensure that the right KMRs are selected to represent staff sections and subordinate units. KMRs must be an expert in their staff section's knowledge processes and fully authorized to implement KM initiatives; they must not be mere note-takers. Issue early guidance to staff principals to ensure this happens.

Early and effective guidance is a necessary aspect of leadership influence on developing Knowledge Management programs, and leaders must spend some time considering exactly what guidance they should give to their staff.

Implementing a Knowledge Management Program

When implementing a KM program, or improving an existing KM program, knowledge leaders will want to emphasize implementation of the KM process (Assess, Design, Develop, Pilot, and Implement). This process is adequately described in the various doctrinal publications, and will not be replicated in this handbook. This handbook, however, will focus on specific actions knowledge leaders will want to take.

Keep in mind that shared understanding is as much a function of how individuals collaborate and share knowledge, as it is adherence to a set of standardized procedures. In order for an organization to be successful, there must be effective collaboration, and an important aspect of KM is ensuring that occurs. Knowledge integration, shared understanding, and organizational learning, in support of Mission Command must be at the core of the KM effort.

The first step, must always be to establish KM as a concept that will make the Commander, staff, and organization more efficient and effective, and therefore more successful. Experience has shown that it is critical that the unit's leadership actively supports the KM program. When the Chief of Staff, Executive Officer, Commander are pushing the program, it will develop into greater effectiveness for the unit. If they don't, the KM program will flounder.

Use the Process

As it turns out, the most effective means of implementing a KM program is with the KM process (Assess, Design, Develop, Pilot, Implement), which begins with an assessment of organizational knowledge processes. However, while it is theoretically possible to assess all of the organizational knowledge processes, experience has shown it more practical to conduct a series of limited assessments; each designed to analyze a specific segment of the organization's knowledge processes (e.g. battle rhythm, meeting management, etc). In other words, each solution will likely require its own cycle of the Knowledge Management Process.

The purpose of this assessment is to identify knowledge gaps in order to establish procedures and processes to close those gaps. Or put another way, to ensure that the right information gets to the right people, in the right format, at the right time, in order to arrive at the right decision. Any bottleneck to that knowledge flow is a gap (the difference between perfect knowledge and current knowledge). The end result of an assessment is a list of knowledge gaps, which can then be used to develop solutions to address those gaps.

Knowledge Assessment Focus Areas

- Standards
- Time Management
- Meeting Management
- Reporting
- Technical Systems
- Content Management

Generally, these knowledge assessments should be conducted by the KMWG and managed by the KMO, under the guidance of the CoS/XO. This will allow KMRs to assist in developing solutions necessary to improving KM across the division, which will later facilitate the KMRs

implementing these solutions. Potential focus areas for assessments include standards, time management, meeting management, reporting, technical systems, and content management. Examples of the result of a KM assessment include.

Experience has shown that a good place to start is the organization's battle rhythm. The battle rhythm is the primary means for the unit to synchronize the collection, analysis, and presentation of information for decision-making. A battle rhythm that fails to provide critical information in a timely and presentable manner hinders Mission Command and decision-making.

Battle rhythm changes will affect the entire organization and should be approved by the CoS/XO. Make changes to the battle rhythm incrementally, in order to alleviate disruption in routines, identify how the changes affect other battle rhythm events, and to ensure the battle rhythm remains nested with that of higher headquarters. Battle rhythm changes that improve understanding, and require less time for the same work, will demonstrate the usefulness of the KM program and garner further support.

Develop a Knowledge Management Strategy

In Knowledge Management, as with most everything, success requires a good plan; in this case, a plan to implement a KM program. Experience in implementing KM programs in major Army organizations indicates a flexible approach, focused on Mission Command and decision-making. Keep in mind that developing a KM program is generally not a single cycle of the KM Process completed over the course of months or years, but an integrated series of cycles – some sequential, some in parallel – which improve the processes of knowledge acquisition, analysis, and presentation.

Among the important aspects of “essential guidance” is the development and implementation of a Knowledge Management Strategy. This strategy should define the organizations KM vision, goals, and objectives (e.g. developing shared understanding). These objectives can be described in terms of short, mid, and long-term goals, or in terms improvements to decision-making and Mission Command. Such a strategy should be based on the results of an initial knowledge assessment conducted by the KMO, and described in terms of the KM components (people, processes, tools, organization). This strategy should be a means to define an intended path from short-term accomplishments to long term success.

Implement a Knowledge Management Plan

Implementing, or improving, an organizational Knowledge Management programs is an exercise in executing the KM Process – Assess, Design, Develop, Pilot, and Implement. Any attempt to implement or improve organizations knowledge processes must begin with an assessment of the People, Processes, Tools, and Organization (the component of knowledge management).

Experience has shown that successful KM programs generally start with quick, simple, successes – the “low-hanging fruit” – easy actions that can have an immediate positive impact on knowledge management in the organization. Success breeds success, and nothing helps jump-start a KM program like demonstrating to non-supporters that KM can improve the quality and efficiency of their work. The KM plan will be changed often over time, but should continue to focus on the knowledge processes required for Mission Command and decision-making.

Knowledge Management Strategy Implementation Matrix

Assess	Design	Develop	Pilot	Implement
Battle rhythm events are not synchronized.	Redesign battle rhythm sequence.	Update KM SOP with new battle rhythm. Staff within Division. Obtain initial CoS approval for SOP and pilot.	Test new battle rhythm SOP with IED WG during division exercise (DivEx). Assess results and edit KM SOP as required.	Obtain final CoS approval of SOP. Implement battle rhythm SOP across division. Conduct periodic reassessments.
Organizational meetings are not effective.	Design meeting management training plan for division.	Develop meeting mgt training. Update KM SOP with meeting mgt training requirements. Obtain CoS approval; coordinate training plan w/ G3.	Train KMWG and IED WG. Test prior to next DivEx. Assess results and adjust training plan as required.	Conduct training for remaining WGs and division staff. Conduct periodic reassessments.
Content management plan has not been implemented.	Design a division SharePoint site for file storage. Design a division-wide file naming standard.	Identify staff and WG storage requirements. Update KM SOP to include SharePoint procedures and standards. Update KM SOP to include file naming standards. Obtain CoS approval for SOP and pilot. Prepare KMRs to enforce standards.	Conduct training for KMRs and Fires WG. Test with Fires WG during next DivEx. Assess results and adjust KM SOP as required.	Conduct training for remaining WGs and division staff. Implement SOP across division. KMRs enforce standards. Conduct periodic reassessments.

▼ Knowledge Management Working Group meeting

Develop a Knowledge Management Training Plan

Every unit, especially in the early stages of ARFORGEN, experiences problems with untrained or incompletely trained soldiers. This will be especially true when it comes to knowledge management. Develop training requirements for the KMO, KMRs, staff, and soldiers, who will be implementing the KM plan.

An important part of this training plan will be training in the primary Mission Command systems (CPOF, DCGS-A, AFTADS, BCS3, etc.). These systems are often used as a primary collaboration means, and generally require significant training programs within the unit to maintain effectiveness. Understanding how these systems process information and how they are

used to inform and collaborate is critical to the KM Program. Training on these systems should be established through the G3/G6.

Develop a Knowledge Management SOP

Establishing a KM program requires developing standardized practices and procedures. The “best practice” for accomplishing that within the Army is a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). Keep in mind the KM process (Assess, Design, Develop, Pilot, Implement) as you develop and implement this SOP.

The KMO should develop a division KM SOP, in conjunction with the KMWG and division staff. This SOP will define the procedures, standards, and KM responsibilities within the division. All soldiers must become familiar with the requirements of the SOP; especially the standards they will be expected to enforce.

The KMO and KMRs must not only know the KM SOP in detail, but must make sure the procedures and standards in that SOP are communicated to the staff and enforced. Without the enforcement of procedures and standards within each staff section, the division KM program will quickly become one more ignored program, discarded when no one is watching.

The KM SOP should be as comprehensive as possible, defining the organizations KM objectives (e.g. developing shared understanding) and procedures, and incorporating all elements of knowledge management. The AOKM Proponent is still developing example KM SOPs, but some elements currently thought to be required are included in the KMO and KMR handbooks.

Putting it All Together

In the final analysis, no document on Knowledge Management can be all inclusive, and any long-term implementation plan must consider of a variety of topics. This makes determining what to focus on when developing a KM program, the most important function of knowledge leaders. As it is with all other aspects of military operations; leaders must set and enforce standards, which is what Army Knowledge Management is about; setting and enforcing standards for organizational knowledge processes.

“Knowledge Management is the means we must leverage to empower our leaders with the knowledge needed to lift the fog of war from the most complicated battlefield in history.”

**LTG Robert Caslen
CG, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center
Ft. Leavenworth, 2010**

Some Final Thoughts

If, as recommended, you have read FM 6-01.1 before beginning this handbook, you would have noticed, this handbook has dealt with only a small portion of the tasks a knowledge leader might expect to deal with. The objective has not been to provide a detailed, step-by-step manual of how to implement KM in an Army organization, but with some common situations.

As such, this handbook is rather limited in scope, and has been written with the understanding that, as Knowledge Management progresses in the Army, better sets of TTPs will be developed. With this in mind, some modifications to the doctrinal KMR role, as described in FM 6-010.1, are being considered.

As Army Knowledge professionals, you have the mission of sharing those lessons you learn with the rest of the Army. The best way to do that is to record them and report them to the AOKM Proponent office.

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* ATP 6-01.1 is being developed as part of Doctrine 2015. The Proponent’s draft is posted for review, comment, and collaboration at https://www.milsuite.mil/wiki/ATP_6-01.1_Revision