Given the lack of deliverables associated with communities of practice, it's difficult to put a value on any effort to support their formation. For example, how can management put a future value on an idea discussed between two engineers from different departments who met over a game of hoops at lunchtime? Proponents of knowledge organizations believe that communities of practice, as major contributors to the dissemination of information in the organization, often form the backbone of every KM program.

Management as Information Gatekeeper

In the knowledge organization, knowledge workers are the stars of the team, scoring points by contributing to the comapny's intellectual capital. From the knowledge worker's perspective, management's role is like that of a coach: to help establish common goals, to receive work, offer constructive criticism, and supply or orchestrate resources. Like a coach, management also focuses the knowledge worker's attention on the work at hand, in part by handling logistics, resource allocation, and conducting other activities that could distract or even demoralize the knowledge workers.

EXHIBIT 3.8