

**TIPS & TECHNIQUES**

Dealing with Gamers

In virtually every knowledge organization, certain knowledge workers will attempt to game the system for personal gain. They'll get involved in the KM process in order to avoid their primary job responsibilities and make themselves known to the knowledge manager or chief knowledge officer (CKO) in order to obtain special privileges and assignments. A problem arises when they have no interest in the success of the KM project, other than as a means of avoiding real work. Knowledge workers who present themselves as shining stars to management but are viewed as slackers by other workers are especially problematic. Knowledge workers who otherwise would have contributed significantly to a KM initiative may not participate, simply to avoid assisting the gamers in their quest for personal gain.

One solution to the gaming problem is to make it clear to all Knowledge workers that they will be consulted on important issues, as opposed to having an open-door policy on all issues. Furthermore, it's important to control expectations, so that a request for a consultation isn't misinterpreted as a request for a decision or even a consensus. The ultimate decision-making responsibility and control should sit squarely with management.

Shaping Knowledge Worker Behavior

The role of management in a knowledge organization often faces competing needs. One need is to set the overall direction of the corporation through control of information. Another is to foster the development of an organization by encouraging contributions from individual knowledge workers. In this regard, it can help to think of a KM initiative as a behavior modification exercise. It should recognize basic human behavior traits, namely that knowledge workers:

- Need to control their environment
- Need to be recognized