meaningful RFP requires consensus among management and knowledge workers in the organization regarding what constitutes an ideal technical solution to the current KM challenges. The next three stages, leading to the identification of the best solution available that satisfies the constraints defined in the RFP, are primarily externally focused. They involve focusing not only on the technology but on the developer and vendor. A technologically superior product from a developer with an unrealistic business model or poor reputation is a high-risk investment.

Determine the Needs of the Organization

In the story of CGF, the technical needs of the organization become apparent to the senior management as the knowledge workers and management became familiar with how technology can support and enhance existing KM processes.

Similarly, a corporation faced with choosing its KM technology should look to current KM practices and how technology can be used to enable them. In addition, simply because a KM process is being performed with, for example, the aid of a meeting room with wall-to-wall whiteboards and a refrigerator full of soft drinks doesn't mean that moving to a computer-based system will improve on the effectiveness of communities of practice. Working collaboratively in the same space creates a certain group dynamic. Thus, the meeting room, designated for meetings of communities of practice, may be more valuable to the organization than a new videoconferencing system or electronic whiteboard. That's where the expertise and knowledge of a CKO comes into play—recognizing which KM processes should be technology enabled and which ones are best left alone. Only then can he or she find the most appropriate technological solutions for a given KM challenge. Examples of situations in a knowledge organization that suggest an enabling technology may be able to improve on the effectiveness of—or extend the