Internet and other networks; a variety of tools to manipulate, transform, and create information; and database technologies that can enable the rapid storage and retrieval of information.

In addition to general technologies, specific tools enhance and secure the flow of information in the KM life cycle. For example, security systems provide data encryption and user authentication; software systems and processes insure the version of information used is appropriate to the intended use; and program instrumentation is an automated means of tracking use of information throughout the KM life cycle. Other niche technologies range from erasure programs, the equivalent of paper shredders in an office environment, to decision support tools to help a librarian or management decide, for example, what information to archive and what information to destroy. Expert system technologies can help guide knowledge workers and other employees by providing them with access to instant expertise. Even the media used to store information has implications regarding ease of use, transport, and long-term storage.

Standards

Standards provide the basis for control and consistency of information. In the context of supporting a KM initiative, standards are extensions of the KM process because they encapsulate rules and heuristics and thereby represent knowledge. Standards also represent best practices, the best way of accomplishing Knowledge Management. Furthermore, standards provide benchmarks for comparing performance. As such, they provide a basis for optimizing KM phases.

Knowledge Workers

As Mary's career illustrates in the story of Custom Gene Factory, knowledge workers are some of the most important assets in a knowledge organization. In supporting the KM process, knowledge workers contribute