



Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology

Knowledge Management (IT4120)

## Tutorial 2

---

1. Identify the three items an organization's knowledge base may include.

**Answer:** A knowledge base may include (1) structured internal knowledge (explicit knowledge) (2) external knowledge of competitors, products, and markets, including competitive intelligence; and (3) informal internal knowledge, often called tacit knowledge, which resides in the minds of individual employees but has not been documented in structured form.

**Competitive intelligence** essentially means understanding and learning what's happening in the world outside your business so one can be as competitive as possible.

2. Identify four office activities. Provide a specific example of how technology supports each activity.

**Answer:** Managing documents (Word processing, desktop publishing, document imaging, Web publishing, workflow managers);  
Scheduling (Electronic calendars, groupware, intranets)  
Communicating (E-mail, voice mail, digital answering systems, groupware, intranets)  
Managing data (Desktop databases, spreadsheets, user-friendly interfaces to mainframe databases)

3. How do teams use groupware to support communication, coordination, and collaboration?

**Answer:** A growing number of companies are using Web conferencing tools to stage meetings, conferences, and presentations online. Web conferencing and collaboration software provides a “virtual” conference table, where participants can view and modify documents and slides and share their thoughts and comments using chat, telephone, or video.

Current tools work through a standard Web browser. Participants from many different locations can use these Web conferencing tools, which can include virtual whiteboards, slides, video, and Web pages as part of a presentation. Salespeople might use these tools for offering online product demonstrations, while senior executives might use them to analyze a contract proposal or to stage a presentation for hundreds of investors.

4. Describe how different systems technologies support knowledge management.

**Answer:** Knowledge systems support the activities of highly skilled knowledge workers and professionals as they create new knowledge and try to integrate them into the firm. Group collaboration and support systems help creation, identification, and sharing of knowledge among people working in groups. Office systems help disseminate and

coordinate the flow of information in the organization. AI systems capture new knowledge and provide managers in organizations with codified knowledge that can be reused by others in the organization.

5. What challenges do managers face in attempting to transform their firms through knowledge management programs?

**Answer:** Information systems that truly enhance the productivity of knowledge workers may be difficult to build because the manner in which information technology can enhance higher-level tasks, such as those performed by managers and professionals, is not always clearly understood. Some aspects of organizational knowledge cannot be captured easily or codified, or the information that organizations finally manage to capture may become outdated as environments change. It is very difficult to integrate knowledge management programs with business strategy. Processes and interactions between information technology and social elements in organizations must be carefully managed.