Personal Knowledge Management:

An approach to understanding what you know and need to know through conversation and story

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Personal Knowledge Management: An approach to understanding what you know and need to know through conversation and story

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If you are interested in remaining current in your field, staying up to date in relevant areas to your work, or simply pursuing a life of on-going learning, you will find value in reading this paper and doing these exercises. If you choose to use this method, you have the option to send the results of the attached evaluation form to mblair@Pelerei.com and qualify for a hour of free coaching.

This paper is the beginning of a new way to approach self-learning in a manner that assists individuals using it to apply the approach directly to their work, their passions, and their desires. The approach is built on several disciplines that recognize that you can never directly answer the question 'what do you know'; you discover and create new knowledge in conversation with others; and the exploration of your own stories offers a wealth of insight.

This approach has been developed to help individuals. It has been designed to be continuously updated through the reflection of experience. As a part of this exercise, you are asked to use this approach and record your experiences and reactions as to its ability to reveal insights into the critical questions faced by anyone interested in managing their own knowledge strategy. In the process of doing this, you will be exploring the general topic of knowledge management at the individual level.

You will see in reading this approach that it can be directed toward managers as well as knowledge workers. However, the approach is only useful if the individual finds value in doing the exercises laid out here. A set of questions are presented at the end of the exercises that may help you in your reflections on what you have learned, how you will direct your energies, and the process itself.

Please note that there are many computer tools offered to assist individuals in managing their knowledge. These tools assume that you already know your strengths, interests, and needs. The exercises that follow are about exploring these latter points and discovering new insights about them.

Introduction

Many people have been working on helping individuals think in terms of knowledge management for themselves. They have called it Personal Knowledge Management (PKM). This short paper outlines a new approach to this topic, one that is more effective because it is built around successful knowledge sharing techniques and models the experiences of this.

First, I will offer a definition of knowledge management (KM). There are many from which to choose, but for this work, I will use one from Karl Weik who defines KM (and I

am paraphrasing him) as providing access to knowledge, creating an environment that encourages the sharing of knowledge, and building a desire to learn.

This definition targets both the organization's part and the individual's part in this thing called knowledge management. KM only happens when the people involved get fully engaged. The process presented here is designed to give the individual insight into how she or he can enhance their own knowledge to aid them in achieving their goals while serving in the KM activities of the organization to aid in achieving the organization's goals. The process will also do this in a manner that provides line managers with a means to become a useful party to the creation of an individual's knowledge programme.

Why this topic is worthy

"It seems obvious, but it is not often said that knowledge management works best when knowledge workers take the initiative and responsibility for what they know, don't know and need to know. Doing so not only makes the individual more valuable to the corporation, it also enhances the value of intellectual capital for the corporation." From "The Power on One" by Steve Barth, KM Magazine, December 2000

There is a genuine need to remain employable. Outsourcing has placed an additional burden on employees to show value for their contributions to the company. While skills are essential, it is knowledge that is the best delimiter of value.

The problems faced today have a complexity that demands more and more understanding before resolution can be obtained. This understanding requires more and more knowledge.

New technologies are introducing changes in the world at an increasing rate. Every person must learn new things just to survive in this kind of world. To remain at top form or even reasonable form demands the same in the workplace. Life long learning is no longer an option, it is an essential. Besides, it makes life much more interesting.

The only place where knowledge can be turned into action is at the individual level. Organizations need to create learning organizations down to the individual level. The changes in technology are exacerbated by the widening of the economy to a global one. Competition at every segment of the value chain is now possible. An important strategy for any company in this setting is to remain knowledgeable in the areas critical to the company's survival as well as those areas that will add to its ability to thrive.

Current materials on PKM are rooted in traditional KM and tend to ignore the organic. The current literature claiming to talk about personal knowledge management has used similar frameworks to organizational KM strategies. While these have varying degrees of effectiveness at the organizational level, they are not truly compatible with how the individual mind works. For example, asking staff to enumerate their knowledge is an impossible task. Yet, PKM approaches written so far often begin with something like this.

Why I have treated this topic differently

For more than 20 years, I have worked with organizations and individuals to become better knowledge gatherers, to develop KM strategies that work at all levels. **Organic** mechanisms by their nature are the most effective for the individual. When organizations employ organic means (for example, communities of practice can be quite organic), their KM efforts are enhanced as well.

By designing learning experiences for workshops, seminars, and coaching sessions, I have learned through experience as well as study how individuals learn best. Although there are many learning styles, I have observed the power of **learning in interaction** with others. Moreover, the principles of **appreciative** enquiry[1] strengthen any group work and have long guided the direction of my designs. Even **thinking** can be enhanced through a "thinking partner."[2] We learn from our own experiences if we are conscious enough to observe and record them in memory. All of these aspects of learning have been taken into account and incorporated into the design of this PKM approach.

Think back yourself, and you will remember seeing people learn while they are in conversation with others. Even when the conversation is with a dead author, it is still a conversation between the reader and the author's words. When the conversation is alive and dynamic, the learning is richer and more likely to stretch to and beyond the edge of known knowledge. Moreover, it will be more likely to be remembered. "The art of remembering is the art of thinking. When we wish to fix a new thing in… our mind,… our conscious effort should … connect it with something else already there. The connecting is the thinking; and if we attend clearly to the connection, the connected thing will certainly be likely to remain within recall."[3]

What better way to connect than through stories. Stories engage our minds at emotional as well as intellectual levels. Rather than avoid the emotional, put it to good use by using it to learn more. The key is to seek out the right stories and learn from them.

"Innovation occurs in the white spaces between disciplines," said John Seeley-Brown. Seeing the same object from different perspectives is a powerful means of discovering totally new insights. What better way to see differing perspectives than by bringing in other people into the conversation.

We learn more from our observations than is normally recognized in the adult world. We all recognize that children learn how to eat, learn how to walk, learn how to talk from watching and listening to the world around them. In the adult world of work, we likewise learn how to behave in a corporation from our observations of what works. While we are often told that we learn from our mistakes, we learn what to do from watching what does work.

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[1] "Lessons from the Field: Applying Appreciative Inquiry," Hammond and Royal, editors.

[2] From "Time to Think: Listening to ignite the human mind" by Nancy Kline.

[3] William James, http://www.des.emory.edu/mfp/james.html#wisdom

Last by not least, the mind loves to work against specific questions that spark the connections the mind is so effective at making. Any KM strategy for the individual that does not use the power of the mind is missing the most important means.

How this approach can be used

The approach described here is meant to be a guide or model of how an individual can develop an understanding of the critical elements for a personal knowledge programme. It is also offered to give hope to those who feel confused by the issue or the enormity of the task, especially when they have been told that the place to start is by listing what they know (a question that the mind does not respond to well at all, if at all).

The approach can also be used to aid managers and their staff to develop solid development plans – plans that can be supported by management because the linkage to corporate goals can also be identified.

Who can use this
- Individuals who are already inspired to remain current and knowledgeable – and they can be computer mavens, computer literates, or those who use pen and pencil or other ordinary tools to help them become better at managing their own learning/ knowledge acquisition.
- A second audience is the line manager who sincerely wants to help her/his staff to develop in their abilities and careers.
- Parents may also find this a new way to inspire their children to learn.
- Retirees who wish to move toward their passions with greater knowledge and know how.
- Anyone who is a life long learner.

Building a KM Strategy for Yourself

Why you should read this

The desire to remain competitive (more valuable) in a fast moving world motivates the knowledge worker. However, there are those who wish to be life long learners and would like to assure their learning is consciously focused. In general the objectives are:
    To get better return for personal development time
    To create/set a new behavior around learning
    To discover personal strengths for learning
    To discover anew and focus on one's passions

How to read this document

This approach to personal KM is one based on narrative practice, social constructionist concepts, Appreciative Inquiry, adult learning theory, and the theories of group and thinking processes. This list is not given to impress or dissuade you. Rather it is here to assure that what you are offered here is solidly grounded in theory as well as years of experience.

As you read through it, try out as many of the steps as you can. It is through the experience that the meaning becomes clearest. Imagining what others will say is not the same as the exciting experience of actually hearing things you didn't expect – a key part of the strategy of this approach.

While there is no space in this text to allow you to place your responses, consider beginning this work with something to capture what you are learning – use a bound journal of some sort – perhaps as simple as a spiral bound notebook or a steno pad. Just make sure that it is bound so that you can easily keep the notes together and in order. For some who are more disciplined and are attached to their computers, a computer program – as simple as Word or one more directed at content management such as Compendium can be used. Just be sure that you can organize the information from the start.

Once you have decided to begin this work, read through the activities to decide where you want to begin. You can begin anywhere you wish, but I recommend starting at the beginning. One word of caution, don't use the same people over and over again. What you are looking for is varied perspectives. Also, you should be looking for individually inspired responses. So don't tell people what others have said in answer to your questions. Allow them to respond from their own experience of you. Your objective is to learn as much as you can. Don't short-change your own learning.

Expect to get real value from this work. When you finish, you should have five things in hand:
* A good sense of what you know – whether you knew it or not
* An appreciation of how you learn best
* A beginning awareness of how you find information for yourself
* A list of insights into your creative side
* A programme plan for harnessing this new understanding and moving to the next level

Let's get started.

Phase I: Discovering My Strengths

Congratulations on deciding to explore knowledge management for yourself. These activities can be done as a small group as well as individually. If you could entice a couple of friends to join you, the results will be enhanced through mutual support, not to mention expanded insights. Try to find one or two others who are willing to do the same exploration for themselves. Doing it as a team provides support and incentive to complete your individual part and gain the full benefits. Before you begin, is there anyone who might be willing to join you right now?

During this phase, you will gather insights from friends, colleagues, your manager, and yourself.

As you decide the people you would like to interview, consider two points. First, ask people who know you and/or your work, because they interact with you regularly. Second, ask people who will be willing to respond to you as openly as possible. You will find that the questions are ones that do not test friendships, they are ones designed to explore the possible, the workable, the valuable. People usually feel free to respond to these kinds of questions truthfully. But it is still important to consider if the person will be willing to think through the questions and respond fully. If you feel that someone you are interviewing is not doing so, thank them for their time, and find someone else. If they are telling you things you don't want to hear, but it appears to be honestly offered, then it usually contains some important information for you. The real question to ask yourself is if the person is answering you willingly and fully. If so, you are getting good and useful feedback.

Interview three friends or colleagues outside of your work

Ask for a half hour of time with your friend or professional colleague, and find a place where you are likely not to be disturbed. Explain what you are trying to do and ask them to be honest in their responses to you. Tell them that the information is just for you and won't be shared by you to anyone else. Confirm that they are clear about what you are doing, and when they are, ask your questions.

- Tell me about a time when you decided to come to me for information/ knowledge/know-how. What was the topic? Are there other topics that you feel I know.
- Tell me about a time when you came to me for help because you felt I knew something that would be helpful to you.

Tell them to take their time. And when you don't understand or want more information, ask for it. Thank them for their time and insights.

Interview at least 3 people.

After each interview, record or not record your notes as you prefer. But do take a moment and write in your journal the points you learned from each interview. At this point, you may have decided to use a computer tool. It can be a simple word processor or it can be sophisticated content management system. Use what works right for you. If that's doing it by hand, that's fine, too. Just try to use a bound notebook of some sort.

Interview three colleagues at work

Ask for a half hour of time with your work colleague, and find a place where you are likely not to be disturbed. Explain what you are trying to do and ask them to be honest in their responses to you. Tell them that the information is just for you and won't be shared by you to anyone else. Confirm that they are clear about what you are doing, and when they are, ask your questions.

- When I am contributing most to our work, what do I do that is of highest value?
- What do I contribute that helps best to achieve what we are trying to do here?
- What information can you always depend on me to provide?

Remind them to be thoughtful as the information is very important to you. When you don't understand or want more information, ask for it. Thank them for their time and insights.

Interview at least 3 work colleagues.

After each interview, record or not record the details as you prefer. But do take a moment and write in your journal the points you learned from each interview.

Interview your manager

Ask for a half hour of time with your manager, and find a place where she or he is likely not to be disturbed. It may be their office or it may be the Starbucks on the corner. Explain what you are trying to do and ask them to be honest in their responses to you. Tell them that the information is just for you and won't be shared by you to anyone else. Confirm that they are clear about what you are doing, and when they are, ask your questions.

- Tell me about a time when you felt that I was most successful in what I was trying to do for the organization.
- Tell me about a time when I was able to meet a challenge, resolve a difficult situation, or solve a problem.
- How do you see me share my knowledge with others?

Remind them that this work you are doing is your design to achieve your own professional development. You are doing it on your time, because it is that important to you.

After the interview, record or not record the details as you prefer. But do take a moment and write in your journal the points you learned from this interview.

Establish initial boundaries

Boundaries serve as a container, not a barrier. Your next step in creating a personal knowledge programme is to select your container, to set the boundaries. You'll need a container large enough to hold your dreams and goals, but not so big that you can't carry it. You'll be full of ideas from your interviews. This is a great time to put them to an immediate use. Use these insights to define for yourself the initial container for this work. You'll revisit this again and again, but it will serve you well even as it changes.

Create a short inventory

List the publications you regularly read. Mark the ones that match your areas of strength or areas of interest.

List the informative TV or radio shows you watch or listen to during the week. Do any of them serve a role in helping you achieve your knowledge goals? Can any?

Is your list of Favorites (Bookmarks) organized? Does it reflect your favorite blogs, chat rooms, news feeds?

What groups do you belong to or simply attend regularly where you have access to knowledge? (Community of Practice)

Who are those you seek out regularly for their knowledge?

What work groups, task forces, committees have you been a member of in the last two years? In which of them did you learn?

Record your results. If you are using a content management system, this should be simple to organize by topic.

Summarizing lessons learned

In your journal, write down the major lessons learned from this Phase. Write them in full sentences. Highlight the most important lessons to you.

Phase 2: Exploring how I learn and use knowledge

This phase can be done alone, but you may wish to find a partner who will help you explore these questions. A partner is great for helping you be clear about things, for helping you tackle what you would like to avoid as too hard, for helping you see limiting assumptions, and for asking you questions that pull out new insights you didn't know you had yourself. (See immediately below for more on thinking with a partner.)

On learning new knowledge

Although it is possible to do this work in any order, you will find that this step is best done after the interviews of others. And if you still want to do it first, then come back to this step after your interviews are done. You'll find you have learned something from those interviews that will enhance your responses here.

Set aside some time – as much or as little as you wish – and find a place where you won't be disturbed during the time. Keep your notebook or computer tool handy so that you can record your thoughts as well as think them. We all think we will remember what we think, but in this case, the task of recording will serve also to sharpen your thinking as well as record what you have learned.

These are such important questions, you may find it helpful to have a friend ask them of you. So if you want help, ask someone else to ask you the same questions and to keep

pushing you to be as specific as possible. This is a time when your significant other might be of help. Or find a 'thinking partner'. [4]

- Think of a time when you were able to **learn** something new, and you were able to learn it very rapidly and well. What was it about that time that seemed to make it different from other learning events? Who was involved? What was it about the situation that encouraged learning? Why did you decide to participate in this learning? Be as specific as you can.

Now gather up from this story what seemed to be the means that helped make that learning experience so effective. Continue to explore other learning experiences this way until you stop gaining new insights into your best learning approach/setting.

Write up what you have just learned about your own learning. Use at least a half page to record the lessons you just learned.

Now move to the second set of questions:

- Think of times when you had to **find new information**, and you were able to do so successfully. List all the methods you used that were successful for you. Next to each method on your list, note the situations in which you found yourself at the time you used the method.

- What seems to be the motivating factor of what you learn?

What insights do you gain from this? Write those insights down in your journal.

On creating new knowledge (optional advanced topic)

Knowledge management is about creating knowledge as well as sharing what we already know. So, in this section, you will explore the times when you have created new insights, new ideas – new knowledge. This section pushes you to think about your own thinking process and about the times when you have exceeded your own expectations – about the times when you have walked in the "white spaces between disciplines" as John Seeley-Brown would say.

These are such important questions, you may find it helpful to have a friend ask them of you. So if you want help, ask someone else to ask you the same questions and to keep pushing you to be as specific as possible. This is a time when your significant other might be of help. Or find a 'thinking partner'.

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[4] Nancy Kline has written a wonderful book, Time to Think: Listening to ignite the human mind (Warlock, 1999). It presents both the rationale and the process for thinking and how a partner in this process can lead to extraordinary results.

Some problems defy prediction. Some problems are so complex, there is no simple answer or solution. Some problems, called wicked problems, have so many variables that they can't be held in a single head. Some problems just demand creativity. Here are several questions to consider. Read through them all and pick the one that most resonates with you.

- Think of a time when you saw yourself or anyone come up with a brilliant solution 'out of the blue'. What was happening? Who was there? What was unusual about the situation that may have helped this to occur?

- Have you ever looked at a problem from a new perspective and suddenly seen a solution? What was it about that time that helped you see that new perspective?

- Watch a child deal with something totally new. How do they deal with it? What is different about how they deal with a new thing and the way you do? What can you learn from this?

- When do you feel least in control of the information that is coming to you? What is it about these situations that distract you? disinterest you? detract from your goals?

Once you have explored one of the sets of questions, take time to write a story (yes, a story) of when you think most creatively – and be creative!

Summarizing lessons learned
In your journal, write down the major lessons learned from this Phase. Write them in full sentences. Highlight the most important lessons to you.

Phase 3: Deciding what to do

You have gained great insights into what you are known for, your strengths, the way in which you learn best, and what makes you most creative in using what you know. Now is the time for you to look at your desires for your work and career (or your life). Where can you build on your knowledge strengths, where can you shore up, where you would like to improve, where can you be more efficient in your regular information gathering, and where can you further develop your use of what you know? Here are some questions that will help you reflect on what you have just learned. Answer one or more of the following questions using the summary lessons learned from Phases 1 and 2.

- What did you learn in each of the sections of inquiry? Write down what was surprising to you.
- Of what you learned (new or otherwise), what was most useful to you and why?
- For each of the sections of inquiry, what questions did you find the most useful? Why?
- For each of the sections of inquiry, what questions would you add?

- What kind of information does an individual need to set the right priorities about what he or she should spend time learning about, staying current on, or discovering? Do you have that information now? (If you don't, take some time and go get it.)
- What insights did you gain through the exercise on learning? How can they serve your personal KM strategy?
- If you were a manager, how might you use this knowledge for yourself? If you are helping to develop staff, how might you use this knowledge for or with your staff?

You are now ready to put together your plan. To help you do that, a list of possible actions and several design options are presented. The list of possible actions is from a list of actions chosen by others who have already done this exercise. You can find it in Table 1.

Second, several design options are offered in pages at the end called "Helpful Hints." In them, you will find different ways to approach your plan that are offered to suggest possible ways to do this. More than one is suggested so that you can choose which approach is closest to your own personal style. And if your style isn't included, create one for yourself. The objective is to move you from gathering insights to making decisions.

If you prefer to plan simply by listing your intended actions -- a very simple approach to planning, we recommend that you challenge yourself to develop at least three actions that will move you toward your desires. The most important thing is that you list actions that you can commit yourself to doing. As you do this, you may find that some of the actions require that your organization play a role. If so, use your plan as a conversation starter with your manager. If you interviewed him or her in Phase 1, this is a great time to show her or him that you have worked through the exercises. Be sure to be able to say why each of your actions support the mission of your organization. It always helps to do that. See Table 1 below.

Table 1: Actions Identified by Others in their Personal Knowledge Programmes

1. Seek out those who are **expert** in your areas of need or simply practice in them
2. Seek out and join new communities of practice
3. Create a community of practice
4. Reduce the number of **publications** you receive and try to read
5. Increase the number of publications you receive and read
6. Learn to 'speed read'
7. Learn to 'trash read'
8. Hire a reader who is adept at summarizing
9. Join only the most essential **societies** of your profession and then become active in them
10. Volunteer to be a **mentor** for a young person (learning is part of teaching, too)
11. Identify **courses, workshops, or conferences** that focus on your areas of need
12. Propose to speak at conferences in order to sharpen your understanding of a topic and to meet experts now known to you today
13. Select a computer application that will allow you to organize content (**content manager**) that is of value to you and is already in your possession or to be obtained
14. Review your '**bookmarks**' or 'favorites' and trim them down to those that really are useful (or organize them to speed up your searching)
15. Seek out **discussion spaces** on the Internet that are relevant and take time to determine if they are worth regular visits or occasional check-ins
16. Join **List Serves** that regularly post items of interest
17. Explore **Wikipedia** to see what is already available; open up a new topic area where you begin the discussion and monitor regularly
18. Set aside time for **journaling** lessons learned
19. Insist on conducting **AARs** after every major activity of a project
20. Call in **peers to assist** you in your next challenge (offer to be available if they ever call you in, and certainly offer them food)
21. Suggest that your team select a time when all members will come together and have an **informal coffee** (with pastries!)
22. Organize an **informal symposium** (perhaps over lunch) where a knotty problem is put before it
23. Explore the value of using **Open Space** for bringing lots of issues out for discussion
24. Learn what '**dialogue**' can be and practice the behaviors characteristic of dialogue in meetings (be prepared to wait for others to discover what you are trying to do)
25. Make it a habit to regularly ask the question, "What am I **assuming** about this?"
26. Find a '**thinking partne**r' and learn together how to be each others thinking partner (See Nancy Kline's book)
27. Take a few hours and **organize the files** on your computer (efficiency opens up time for learning)
28. Read article **summaries** and select only valuable articles to read in total.

Phase 4: Sharpening the vision

This is the last step. You have your insights; you have your plan; now you need to make the vision of the achievement of your plan as clear as possible. One of the best ways to do so is to write a story about a time when you are doing or have even completed your plan. Caste your mind out a couple of years. Be a reporter, look around, and write about what you are seeing. Take as much time and space as you wish, but make sure that you write it down. To help you, a story structure is provided (See the Helpful Hints section for an example to help you understand this story structure more.) Use it or not, but write the story down.

My story[5]

LANDSCAPE

(description of time and space)

DWELLING PLACE (where the action begins)

CHARACTERS (including their attributes) & OBJECTS

DILEMMA/ PROBLEM (which leads to…)

ACTION (which includes obstacles, helpers and a turning point)

RESOLUTION (including the moral or lesson)

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[5] This story structure is from the work of Sparknow.

Helpful Hints for Completing Your Personal Knowledge Programme

Several step are needed to create your own individual knowledge programme. Each has been designed to assure that all aspects of KM have been addressed. Using Karl Weik's definition of KM (access, environment of sharing, willingness to learn), the following relate to the three points of his definition:

- Reviewing your sources confirms that you have the **access** you need to the knowledge
- Even though it is the last step, the question that asks you to consider how you can share your own knowledge more allows you to create an **environment of sharing**. Certainly, there are many questions to touch on whether you are living in a sharing environment. But for you it is a question of making that decision yourself to share. Sharing is also a powerful way to clarify your thinking and, thus, your learning.
- By highlighting the three most effective ways in which you learn, any action that utilizes these will be more conducive to your learning and your **willingness to learn**.

Thus, the three dimensions of KM that Weik points out are all covered in this approach.

Now, let's proceed to the steps in the order you might wish to take them.

Conducting the interviews

Record your **interviews** in a bound notebook of some variety. To help you in the interview, have the three questions (numbered) listed on a separate sheet which I call a 'side page'. It is also helpful to have the reason for the interview noted on this side sheet. People like to know why they are doing something before they invest their time. You have a legitimate reason for interviewing them, and they should know it. As you record the responses to the questions in your notebook, do so next to the number of the question or perhaps you prefer to place a key word just before beginning the response. Either will work. Here is an example of what your 'side page' might look like.

Introduction
I appreciate your time in agreeing to be interviewed. My purpose in doing this is that I wish to create a plan for myself that will help me focus on the areas where my knowledge can be best put to use or enhanced to be more useful. This interview will last about 30 minutes, but if you want to take more time, I have set that aside. Do you have any questions of me before we begin?

1. Tell me about a time when you decided to come to me for **information/knowledge/ know-how**. What was the topic? Are there other topics that you feel I know.

2. Tell me about a time when you came to me for help because you felt I knew something that would be **helpful to you**.

Be sure to put the names of those you interviewed at the top of the page. (I always record the date as well. It seems to help in my memory process.) You'll be surprised at how hard it will become to separate out the notes later if you don't. If you decide to also record the session electronically, this can be a great way to capture even more, but it does take time to listen that second time.

When you record your **Lessons Learned**, write them down as they come to you or take time out to read through all your notes again and let the ideas form. Then assemble the list of lessons into a single list. Record it in some way that makes it easy to refer to them later on. My preference is to record them as I discover them and then again after rereading the findings. I then have to gather up the lessons that were recorded at the time with those discovered in the second reading. This may mean typing up a list, or even rewriting them. Rewriting them helps in deepening the lesson's meaning to you. Write them in any order and check for duplicates. (Yes, you will 'discover' some lesson several times.)

Assembling your findings

Developing the **programme** will take time and involves several steps. Here are some pictures of how you might organize your thoughts to help you make decisions about the actions.

Using two different colored pencils, circle the **strengths** you have with one color, and then circle those areas where you feel you wish to pursue further in another color. Please note that these are not weaknesses, they are areas you feel you should pursue further, even if it is a strength of today. So, yes, you can circle some things with both colors.

Review the **list of sources** of information you regularly seek out (the inventory) and notate how each serves your strengths or areas you wish to pursue. You might do it in a simple matrix as noted below, or do it some other way. The point is to note how each is serving what is important to you.

List of Sources	Strengths Served	Pursuit Areas Served

Review again **how you seem to learn best** and select the three ways that seem to be **most effective** for you. List them here as reference and order them as **1, 2, or 3**. They'll be used as you develop your programme below.

1.

2.

3.

Bring together your lists of lessons (marked with strengths and areas to pursue), the table of sources you regularly use and how they serve each of your strengths and areas to pursue, and the three ways you seem to learn best. Keep your interview notes handy, too.

Developing the Programme

Now comes the most exciting part. You are almost ready to make decisions about what actions you feel are most important for you in your personal knowledge programme. It involves a bit of thinking as well as organizing of what you have learned from your work so far. A suggested table is offered for those who like to do things that way and as a way

to get things organized so that it helps you think through this activity. Others may prefer to use MindMapping. (A picture of what one might look like is also offered.) Some may prefer the classic objective, responsibility, and target date format. (A sample table is offered.) Some may prefer to do it on the back of a napkin. (Yes, even a sample napkin is offered.) Using whatever works for you, here are the steps you need to think through to assure that you have covered all the points of a real knowledge management programme.

No matter which you choose to use, here are the steps that will help you discover the best programme for you. Columns for those using the Matrix are indicated to assure clarity.

Step 1: assemble the list of strengths and areas to pursue in order of their relative value. (Columns A and B)

Step 2: Develop a name for the each of the 3 ways you learn most effectively. Write them at the top of the columns (Columns C, D, and E)

Step 3 Using the sources you listed earlier, the lessons you have learned from Phases 1 & 2, develop actions you would like to consider for your programme and put them into the columns C through E. Try to create actions that take advantage of one or more of your learning preferences (see step 2)

Step 4: Consider how you could enhance sharing your knowledge with others, and put your ideas into column F. Remember that learning is truly enhanced when the subject is 'taught' <u>by</u> you.

Step 5: Look over all the possible actions you can do. Now circle the three you think you want most to do.

Matrix: Actions of My Personal Knowledge Programme

A	B	C	D	E	F
	Value	**Most effective ways to learn**			**Sharing**
Strengths		**1**	**2**	**3**	
List your strengths	Indicate the relative value of each strength				
Pursuit Area List those areas you wish to pursue	Indicate the relative value of each pursuit area				

MindMapping your programme
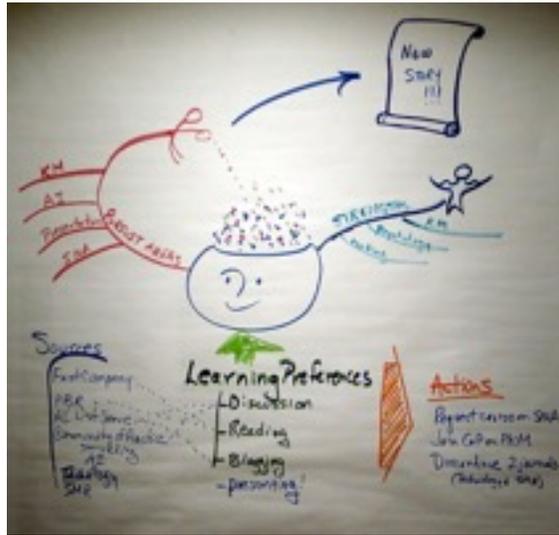
Using a Matrix for your programme

If you prefer to do your plan in matrix form with objectives, actions, time tables, and responsibilities, use a form like the one below to develop your plan.

Objectives & Actions	Responsibility	Target Date

Objective 1
    Action 1.1
    Action 1.2		

Objective 2
    Action 2.1
    Action 2.2		

Using the "Napkin" Approach

And if you really like things informal – try the 'back-of-a-napkin' approach

Do this starting today!!!

*Request support to attend a course
on SNA*

*Join a Community of Practice on
PKM*

*Discontinue 2 journals
(Technology
and SMR)*

Writing Your Story

When you are ready to write the story of what things will look like when you implement this plan, the following table gives you more about the story structure offered above in **Phase 4: Sharpening the Vision**.

An example story within the framework

PART	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE
1.TITLE	Formulate a catchy title to capture the essence of your story.	*'The Hare and the Tortoise' – Aesop's Fables*
2. LANDSCAPE	Paint a vivid picture of the context including the historical moment and general location in which the events occurred. Build in a sense of significance.	*Once upon a time, in a land far, far away…*
3. DWELLING PLACE	Pinpoint where the action begins. Include sounds, tastes, smells, feelings to transport your audience.	*The race course*
4. CHARACTERS including their attributes) & OBJECTS	Introduce the central characters and their roles. For each, identify two key details to give clues about personality.	*Tortoise – meek, perseverant. Hare – boastful, arrogant, lazy, greedy. Objects include the sun, the cabbages and the finish line.*
5. DILEMMA (which leads to…)	"Everything was normal until suddenly…" What was the unexpected dilemma or conflict?	*(For the tortoise) To race or not to race?*
6. ACTION (which includes obstacles, helpers and a turning point)	What happened next? Describe the sequence of events as they unfolded, linked by cause and effect. Identify factors that helped and hindered progress. Clarify the turning point in your drama. Seed in emotion and surprising details, such as plot twists, to keep your audience engaged.	*Tortoise plods slowly on. Hare greedily eats too many cabbages for lunch and falls asleep, believing he will certainly win. He wakes too late (turning point) and can not beat the tortoise. Tortoise's physical slowness was an obstacle, but his determination helped.*
7. RESOLUTION (including the moral or lesson)	How does the story end? What was the change implicit in the story? What can we learn from it?	*Tortoise beats hare, which is reversal of previous fortunes. The moral is "slow and steady wins the race"*

Source: Sparknow