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Knowledge Management: Why and how Occupational Therapists should plan to manage knowledge in the future.

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Introduction:

Knowledge Management (KM) is defined by The Yankee Group, (cited in The Economist, 2000) as a process which "involves efficiently connecting those who know with those who need to know and converting personal knowledge into organisational knowledge." For others such as Davenport (1994) it is "The process of capturing, storing, distributing and sharing knowledge".

It is used by organisations to support their corporate strategies. The business sector has to date been the main advocate of knowledge management initiatives with a cost perspective in mind (Mulligan, 2003).

Objectives:

The primary objective of the presentation is to provide the audience with an overview of the subject. The presentation will set forth the theory of Knowledge Management and will differentiate between tacit and explicit knowledge. It will outline models of Knowledge Management, 'knowledge tools' and will provide examples of best practice from the private business sector. It will provide recommendations for occupational therapists on how best to plan / manage knowledge in the future.

The presenter will present the results from her research and will incorporate an approach, which is cognisant of the need for value for money (VFM), best practice, communities of practice and evidence-based practice (EBP).

The best practice principles which have been devised by the presenter following her study of the business sector encourages occupational therapists to utilise their intellectual capital to contribute to the evidence base of the profession / to promote improved standards of practise / to share knowledge and to maximise their competitive advantage or to benefit their organisation ("knowledge modifying organisational behaviour", Garvin, 1993).

According to the management guru Peter Drucker (2001), 'Managing knowledge and knowledge workers is arguably the single most important challenge being faced by many kinds of organisations across both the private and public sectors in the years to come.'

Conclusions:

This session will facilitate understanding of this topic which is largely confined to the business sectors at this time. It will hopefully promote the desire amongst occupational therapists to leverage knowledge as an asset for the benefit of our clients and our profession.