

Knowledge Management Engagement and Culture FAQ

This guide answers the questions APQC hears most related to engaging employees in knowledge management (KM) and building a knowledge sharing culture across the organization.

How Can I Create a Knowledge Sharing Culture Inside My Organization?

The best way to create a knowledge sharing culture is to encourage knowledge sharing behaviors and ensure. Our four top tips for this are:

1. **Lead by example.** Leaders should model responsible use of both KM practices and AI tools by contributing knowledge, encouraging collaboration, and reinforcing the importance of high-quality information.
2. **Build awareness and demonstrate value.** Help employees understand how KM supports both organizational learning and emerging technologies such as AI-powered search, knowledge assistants, and expertise discovery tools.
3. **Embed KM into the flow of work.** Integrate KM practices into employees' daily activities, processes, collaboration platforms, and AI-enabled tools so that finding, sharing, and applying knowledge becomes a natural part of work.
4. **Identify and remove barriers to knowledge sharing.** Look for factors that discourage knowledge sharing—including cultural, organizational, technological, and process-related obstacles—and work to eliminate them.

It's important to understand that you cannot change or influence your organizational culture without first understanding it. To apply the tips above, you will need to dig into the day-to-day ways of working and behaviors to understand how to engage your executives, what kind of branding and communications will resonate with your audience, and what knowledge sharing barriers your employees face.

As organizations adopt AI-enabled tools, a strong KM culture becomes even more important. Employees must be willing to share, validate, and continuously improve knowledge so that both people and AI systems can access reliable information.

How Can I Remove Barriers to Knowledge Sharing?

Best practices for [engagement](#)—such as making KM easy and addressing the value proposition (the “What’s in it for me?”) for target audiences—can help move employees toward knowledge sharing. However, these best practices will only go so far if employees face tangible barriers such as misaligned measures or a lack of trust.

APQC has identified 10 common [barriers to knowledge sharing](#). Addressing different barriers often requires different tactics. For example, are employees not sharing knowledge because they speak different languages, or is it that everyone feels overworked and sees sharing as an additional burden? All these challenges can be addressed, but you have to pinpoint the structural and cultural influences that are

discouraging knowledge sharing and then work within the context of the existing culture to solve the problems. For further guidance, see APQC's [Breaking Barriers to Knowledge Sharing](#) and [Change Management](#) collections.

How Do I Standardize KM Tools and Approaches in An Organization Where Everyone Has Their Own Ways or Tools for Communicating and Sharing?

Identify the value proposition for particular groups to standardize, whether it has to do with accessing knowledge and experts from other parts of the organization or reducing administrative work by leveraging economies of scale within the KM program. Develop partnerships and implement a cross-functional [KM steering or advisory committee](#) to help in determining the value proposition and communicating the need for standardization. Typical KM partners include IT and digital, HR, learning and development, process improvement, and, of course, the business areas that KM serves

For more in-depth guidance, see [Choosing the Right Knowledge Transfer Approach](#). To better understand the pros, cons, requirements, and expected outputs of different approaches, see APQC's [Understand and Compare Knowledge Management Approaches](#) collection.

How Can KM Increase Employee Engagement and Support Retention?

Employees are more likely to stay engaged when they:

- Feel a personal connection to their colleagues and the organization as a whole
- See clear opportunities to grow their careers
- Can focus on the “real work” they were hired to do

A well-designed KM program, including effective [change management](#), enables all of the above. It provides pathways for employees to connect with new and familiar colleagues, make meaningful contributions to the organization, and be recognized. It enables novices and [nexperts](#) to get up to speed faster and helps employees at all levels achieve their performance goals and progress in their careers. And by providing easy access to information and expertise, KM allows employees to spend more time on their day-to-day work instead of searching for answers, repeating the same mistakes, and doing redundant work.

How Can Organizations Better Engage Experts and Ensure They Have Time to Share Knowledge?

Experts are busy and important people, so KM teams need to ensure they are making their participation easy and rewarding. Specify exactly how and where you want experts to support KM and explain how it will benefit them personally (e.g., “If you document your knowledge, you won’t have to answer the same questions over and over again”). Then, look for opportunities to leverage novices, mid-career employees, and KM team members to make knowledge sharing easier on experts. When experts do share knowledge and support KM activities, celebrate their contributions and emphasize the impact they’re making. You may even consider creating a class of experts or an official subject matter expert (SME) designation, so they have the time they need to share and get the recognition they deserve.

How Can KM Practitioners Leverage Champions in The Business and Keep Them Engaged?

[KM champions](#) are employees who do not have KM-specific roles but devote some of their time to supporting knowledge sharing and reuse in their areas of the business. This means they provide hands-on support and visible advocacy, and they explain KM in ways that make sense to their peers and colleagues. In other words, champions are an invaluable resource to any KM effort, and KM teams should provide them with support and recognition. APQC recommends the following tactics:

- Provide champions with specialized training and communications just for them
- Create opportunities for champions to come together, learn, and network

- Recognize and reward champions with company gifts, acknowledgments, and thank yous
- Recognize activities such as validating AI-generated content, improving knowledge quality, and maintaining trusted knowledge sources.

Most importantly, listen to your champions. When champions offer feedback and suggestions, pay close attention and apply their ideas when possible.

How Can KM Better Engage and Leverage Senior Leaders?

To get senior leaders on board with KM, you need to focus on what matters to them. When starting out, clearly state the business problem KM will solve. Then, involve leaders in setting the KM strategy and priorities through a [KM steering or advisory committee](#). People support what they help create.

APQC also recommends that KM teams create robust [change management](#) plans that include communications, training, leader and employee engagement, and resistance plans, that can be shared with leaders. Like experts, executives are busy people who need clear directions and extra support.

How Does Artificial Intelligence Affect Knowledge Management culture?

AI can make knowledge easier to find, access, and reuse, but it does not eliminate the need for a strong KM culture. Organizations still depend on employees to share expertise, validate information, contribute lessons learned, and maintain trusted knowledge sources. In many cases, AI increases the importance of knowledge-sharing behaviors because the quality of AI outputs depends on the quality of the underlying knowledge.

As organizations increasingly integrate AI into daily work, engagement and culture remain critical success factors. Employees must trust knowledge sources, contribute their expertise, and actively participate in knowledge-sharing practices to ensure that both people and AI systems can deliver value.

See More KM FAQs

- [Knowledge Management FAQ](#)
- [KM Strategy & Program Development FAQ](#)
- [Communities and Networks FAQ](#)
- [Knowledge Retention & Transfer FAQ](#)
- [KM Partnerships FAQ](#)

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