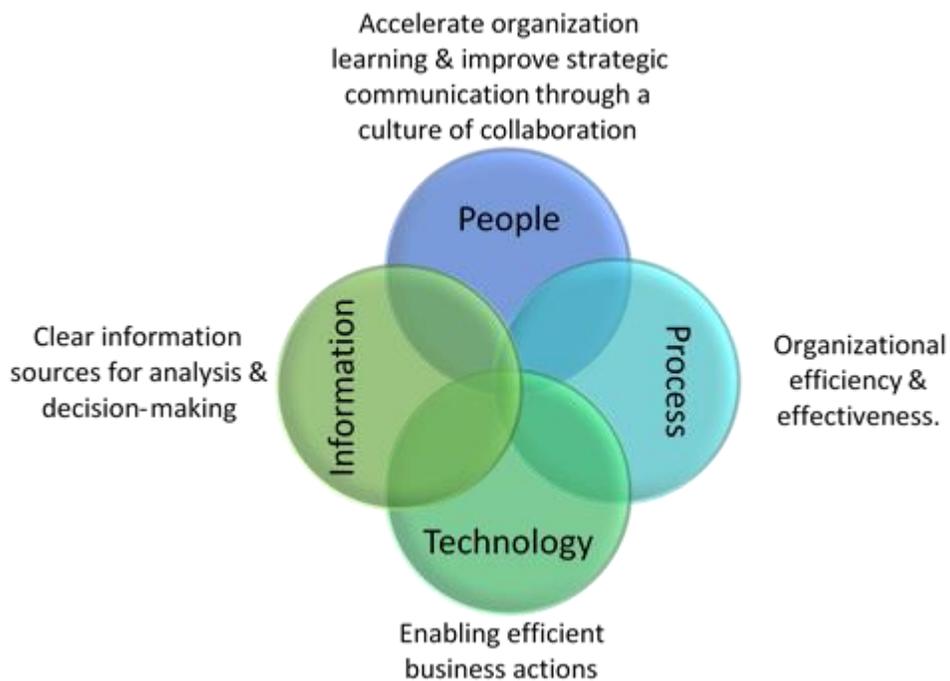


A crisis is building within the nation’s departments of transportation. The importance of asset management grows and one asset – knowledge – is in danger of being left to chance. Effective knowledge management (KM) is integral to a DOT’s sustainability and readiness for whatever challenges or opportunities come its way. When departments intentionally plan their knowledge management efforts in conjunction with their business and human capital strategies, they place the organization in the best position for ongoing success and mission accomplishment. When KM is left to chance, agencies suffer from institutional knowledge loss, ineffective business processes, and an excess of duplicative, unnecessary work.

What is knowledge management?

Knowledge Management is a collection of policies and practices relating to the identification, sharing, and retention of intellectual/knowledge-based assets in an organization.

It is a management practice fostering collaboration across organizational and disciplinary boundaries; linking people who have the requisite knowledge with those who need it to do their jobs.



State Departments of Transportation report increasing concerns about sustaining a qualified workforce. Many DOTs face 40% or more of their workforce potentially retiring in less than five years. This staggering volume of turnover is causing gaps that a robust KM system would significantly reduce by preserving valuable knowledge from departing employees and providing critical information and data for new employees.

How does a DOT get started? The good news is DOTs already have many KM resources. What appears to be lacking is KM strategy.

“KM includes a range of simple and relatively low cost actions that DOT executives can consider to reduce risks, leverage available opportunities for innovation, and ensure that what employees have learned in the course of their careers is shared with newer employees and contemporaries in other organizational units.”ⁱ

State Departments of Transportation can develop strategic KM plans to implement an effective and integrated knowledge management system for its mission-critical knowledge.

KM Litmus Testⁱⁱ

This brief survey can be used to quickly gauge KM needs across your agency. Typically, it is completed by organization executives and/or managers.

Scale: 4=Don't know; 3=Agree; 2=Somewhat agree; 1=Somewhat disagree; 0=Disagree

Your score	
_____	1. More than 20% of senior managers will be able to retire in the next 5 years
_____	2. One part of our organization may not know what the other part is doing – even if working on a similar task or problem
_____	3. We don't have standard ways of debriefing employees, contractors, and consultants
_____	4. We don't track how many employees we have with critical skills or experience
_____	5. We don't generally maintain up-to-date documentation of core business processes and procedures
_____	6. It is difficult to find current information that would help us improve efficiency (checklists, etc.)
_____	7. Many knowledgeable mid-career employees are likely to leave over the next few years to pursue other opportunities
_____	8. There are no mentoring programs or organized forums for sharing knowledge between experts and novices
_____	9. Employee training and development budgets are limited and shrinking
_____	10. We haven't identified specific skills or knowledge area important to [organization name]
_____	11. Employees don't feel they have time to chat with colleagues in an informal way
_____	12. Our peer agencies are ahead of us in implementing KM and retention strategies
_____	TOTAL

A score of 12 or higher indicates a strong need for an intentional KM strategy in your organization.

NEXT STEPS:

- ✓ Appoint up to 3 representatives on AASHTO's KM Committee – No member yet? sign up today
- ✓ KM resources are available on the AASHTO [CKM website](#) – begin strategic KM today
- ✓ Let your voice be heard, share what you know – complete the [CEO KM survey](#)

ⁱ [NCHRP Report 813 \(2015\)](#). *A guide to agency wide knowledge management for state departments of transportation*, pg.3

ⁱⁱ [NCHRP Report 813 \(2015\)](#). *A guide to agency wide knowledge management for state departments of transportation*, pg. 18