

**PAPER: AC**

**INFORMATION WAREHOUSING VS LEARNING  
ORGANIZATION: THE MORE DYNAMIC INFORMATION  
PROFESSIONAL**

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*[In the context of information age the only thing which gives organization a competitive edge is information. Success of an organization is heavily depending upon the ability to process the business information generated both internally and externally to the organization. Information warehousing is perceived as an efficient information management tool. The role of information professionals, who understand the value of information in an organizational set up is continuously evolving. In this paper an attempt has been made to highlight the role of an information professional in the development of an information warehouse in learning organization.]*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

It has been well accepted that the modern organizations are open systems where there is a continuous flow of information 'into and out' of the system. Success of an organization is greatly depend on their ability to process the business information generated both internally and externally to the organization. Many organizations have already established corporate intranets, information warehouses, etc. in order to bring in a control over the information and thereby establishing a learning and sharing culture.

There is a consensus on the fact that information is being increasingly recognized as a strategic resource for success. However due to the enormous increase in the volume of data/information available in the corporate premises, it has become more crucial to tap the relevant information at the right time in the right place in the right format. In other words they are information waste lands incapable of providing useful business to management.

No doubt the world library community is going through a comprehensive transition due to the challenge of technology and the opportunities available. In particular, the corporate librarians are to be more dynamic than ever before, they have to equip themselves with the new tools and techniques of information management. The scope of this paper is limited to underline importance of an information professional in the development of an information warehouse in a learning organization.

## **2 NATURE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

Today's organization face an external environment that is increasingly complex volatile and highly competitive. In an international survey conducted by HBR 1200 managers identify a wide array of forces of change, globalization of market, political realignment realignment, communication and technological improvement, flattening of organization, etc (Kanter, 1991) are the significant factors. Organization would like to survive during these times will have to reinvent themselves, restructure themselves, and rather reengineer themselves.

Leadership for successful transformation, change management, crisis management etc have become the talk of the day among the senior mangers and officials. Organizations are to be ready for a 180 degree departure from the previous angle. Presently organizations are developing corporate intranet, information warehouse, etc. for a better, effective and efficient decision making and to build a learning and sharing culture in order to:

- bridge the time lag between the transfer of knowledge into skills
- avoid repeating the old mistakes or would like to learn from experience.

- become learning organization

### **3. LEARNING ORGANIZATION VS INFORMATION WAREHOUSING**

#### **3.1 Learning Organization**

Basically it is the realization to develop mechanisms for continuous learning and thereby enhance the capacity to be adaptable to the external business environment that has underlined the need for learning organization. According to Skyrme associates, learning organizations are those that have in place systems, mechanisms and processes that are used to continuously enhance their capabilities and those work with it, for it to achieve sustainable objectives for themselves and the communities in which they participate.

Another definition given by Pedler[7] "A learning company is an organization that facilitates the learning of all its members and continuously transforms itself ". Nancy Dixon[7] explains "The essence of organizational learning is the organizations ability to use the amazing mental capabilities of all its members to create the kind of process that will improve its own.

In simple terms we can say that learning organizations are the one which shows a constant and a continuous thirst for knowledge in its entire dimensions i.e. to acquire knowledge, create new knowledge and its ultimate transfer into skills.

According to Skyrme associates free exchange and flow of information, efficient information management techniques are the two significant characteristics of a learning organization. Not to mention, information warehousing will lay down the foundation stones of information management *and ofcourse the information professionals have a greater role to play .*

#### **3.2 Information warehousing**

As we know that all organizations are information communication systems except the fact that some organizations are more information intensive than others. Depending on the nature and type of the organization, information use, its transfer and exchange also varies. However the data i.e. both internally generated and external to the organizations are to be gathered, analyzed, synthesized for its optimal use. So that the culture of a learning organization can be built into the system.

Majority of the cases the corporate environment is information poor but data rich owing to the enormous amount of crude or unrefined data available in the corporate premises. Rather they are information waste lands incapable of providing useful business to management. Many a time the private information kept on the corporate premises exceeds the total corporate information and they are accessible to a selected few, and the reason why it is information poor.

Recent articles dealing with information warehousing have raised a public interest or awareness in this topic but they have contributed very little towards answering the more significant question, i.e. what goes into an information warehouse? What kind of information do managers and workers use? What could be the depth of data abstraction/summarization required ? etc. it is in this context that an information professional, who understands the information seeking behavior of his clientele, comes into picture.

#### **4. DYNAMIC INFORMATION PROFESSIONAL**

The centrality of information to many activities in an organizational set up raises an important question about our over all ability to exploit new set of IT tools to carry out information activities more efficiently. What is termed information management skills are not associated with learning to use IT tools but requires new ways of thinking and working, a significant factor is the ability to derive sense out of the increasing amount of information available in the corporate premises. That is making sure that the right information is available at the right place at the right time in the right presentation. Here is an endeavor to delineate the dynamic role of an information professional in a learning organization.

In a learning organization it is essential that each individual learns and subsequently the group and the organization as a whole. So the question to be addressed by the information professional is therefore not only whether information is important but also how information intensive are operations, how do the individual seek information, acquire information and meet their demands/wants/needs. It is therefore important for the information professional to learn and understand the information seeking behavior of the organization and the individuals at large.

Information professional supposed to be the best person to know the needs and wants of an organizational clientele should know the wealth of the information that has been accumulated both inside and outside the organization.

On the other hand in a learning organization users need online facilities to help them retrieve information to get expert advises, to discuss issues concerning their work in a common platform/conference/meetings, to update their knowledge and locate resources that match their expectations and desires.

Conversely, an information professional is concerned with the finding and filtering information, mining facilities to track down the clients information seeking habits and desires. So the greater challenge is to know which subjects are becoming more important as indicated by the trends in the number of objects available against the number of requests being lodged.

In addition an information professional needs to know the cost of creating information, using information and transporting information and also the cost involved in finding and fixing errors.

We can also use supplemental facts such as the ratio of usefulness to extraneous information, the quantity of information destroyed and created annually. The relative value of information stored redundantly in multiple forms, the problem of homonyms and synonyms in a data warehouse to resolve the conflict by bringing control over the vocabulary being used etc. So that an efficient information warehouse can be built in order to facilitate the existence of a successful learning organization.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Information warehouse is a prerequisite for any learning organization who would like to persist in the success front. Information professionals in a learning organization should have to have the necessary skills for the management of a large volumes of information, data mining capabilities and thorough knowledge of information analysis and synthesis. Understanding of the information seeking behavior of the organizations and the individuals holds high. Lastly the gumption to seek and understand the value of information and the readiness to meet the challenges in this ever changing information arena will prove the dynamics of the information professionals.

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