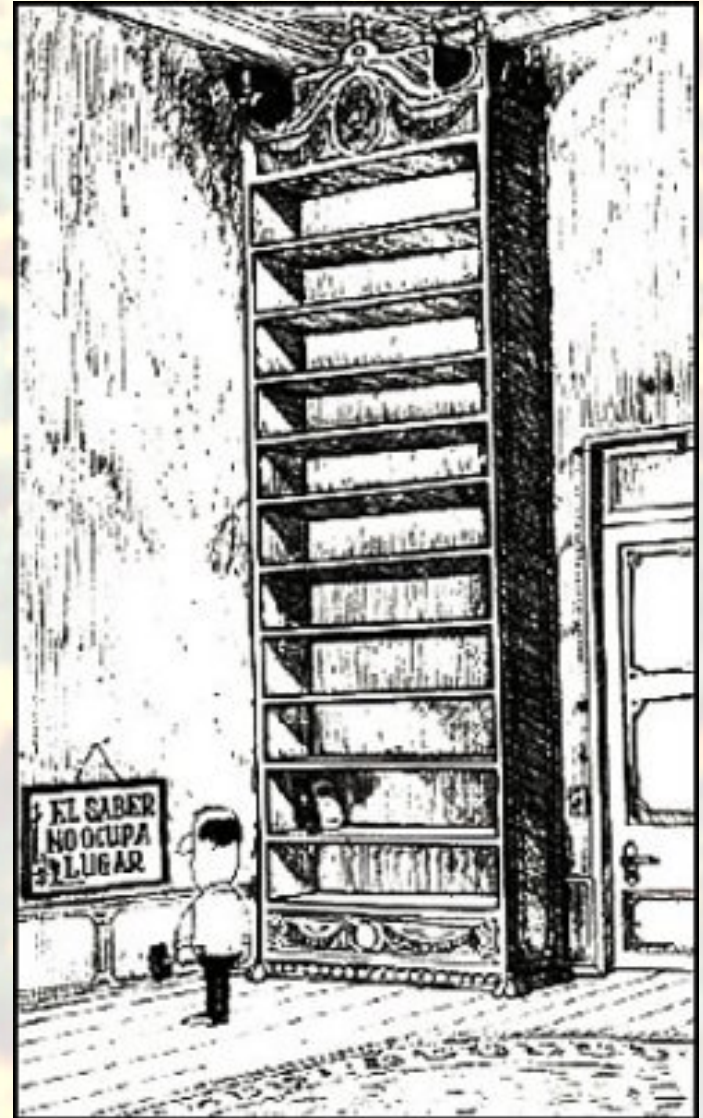


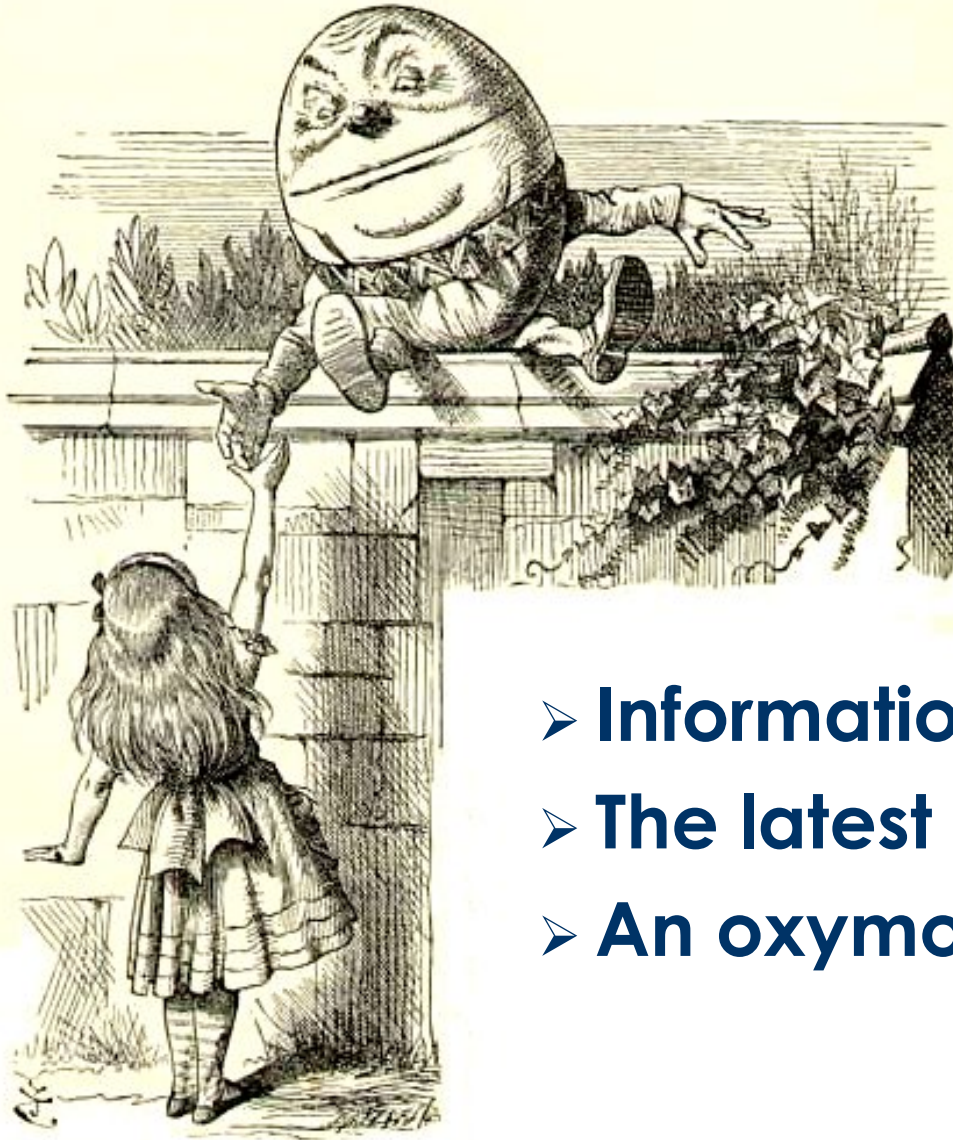
# Knowledge Management

## Origins And Implications

Steve Song  
3 Dec 2001  
Smart  
Communities  
Industry Canada



# Knowledge Management...



*"When I use a word,  
it means just what I  
choose it to mean -  
neither more nor less."*

- Information Management?
- The latest IT fad?
- An oxymoron...?



# Origins of Knowledge Management

- In the late 80's, early 90's, large organisations began to experience new pressures
- They found that they were unable to respond quickly enough to changing environments
- Being a large organisation went from being an asset to a liability.

New Pressures on Organisations

Cheaper  
Telecommunications

Internet



Deregulation

Globalisation

# Example – Barnes&Noble – Amazon.com

## ➤ Barnes & Noble

- Largest book retailer in America
- 542 stores in 49 states

## ➤ Amazon.com

- Opened 1995
- 4.7 million items for sale
- 29 million

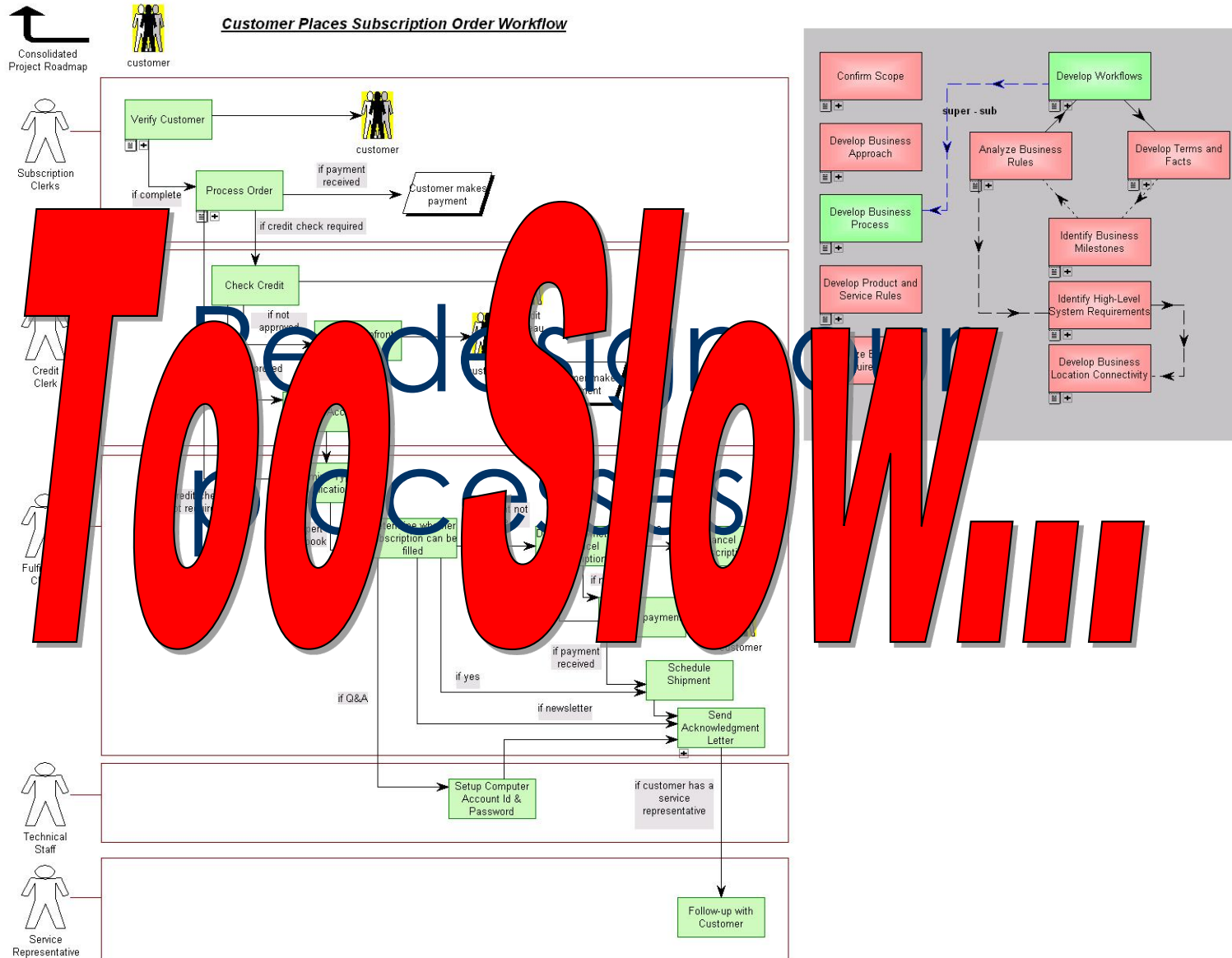


Sales: 1999 – 193 million  
2000 – 320 million



Sales: 1999 – 1.64 billion  
2000 – 2.76 billion

# Traditional approaches...

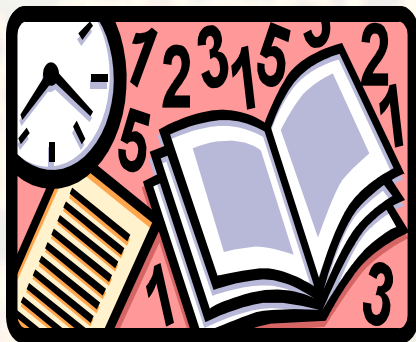




# Back to the drawing board...

- **Where is the value within our organisation?**
  - What is it that makes us unique and worthwhile?
  - How do we differentiate ourselves from similar organisations?
  - Result: **Recognition of role and importance of knowledge**
- **Does this change how we define ourselves?**
  - Just how important is knowledge to what we do?
  - Result: **“Knowledge” becomes part of the mission**
- **What should we do about it?**
  - Where does knowledge lie within our organisation and which knowledge is valuable?
  - How can we husband, nurture, develop knowledge within our organisation?

# But what is knowledge?



## Data

A record of a change of state



A Music Note



## Information

Data organized with a purpose.  
A message



A Music Score



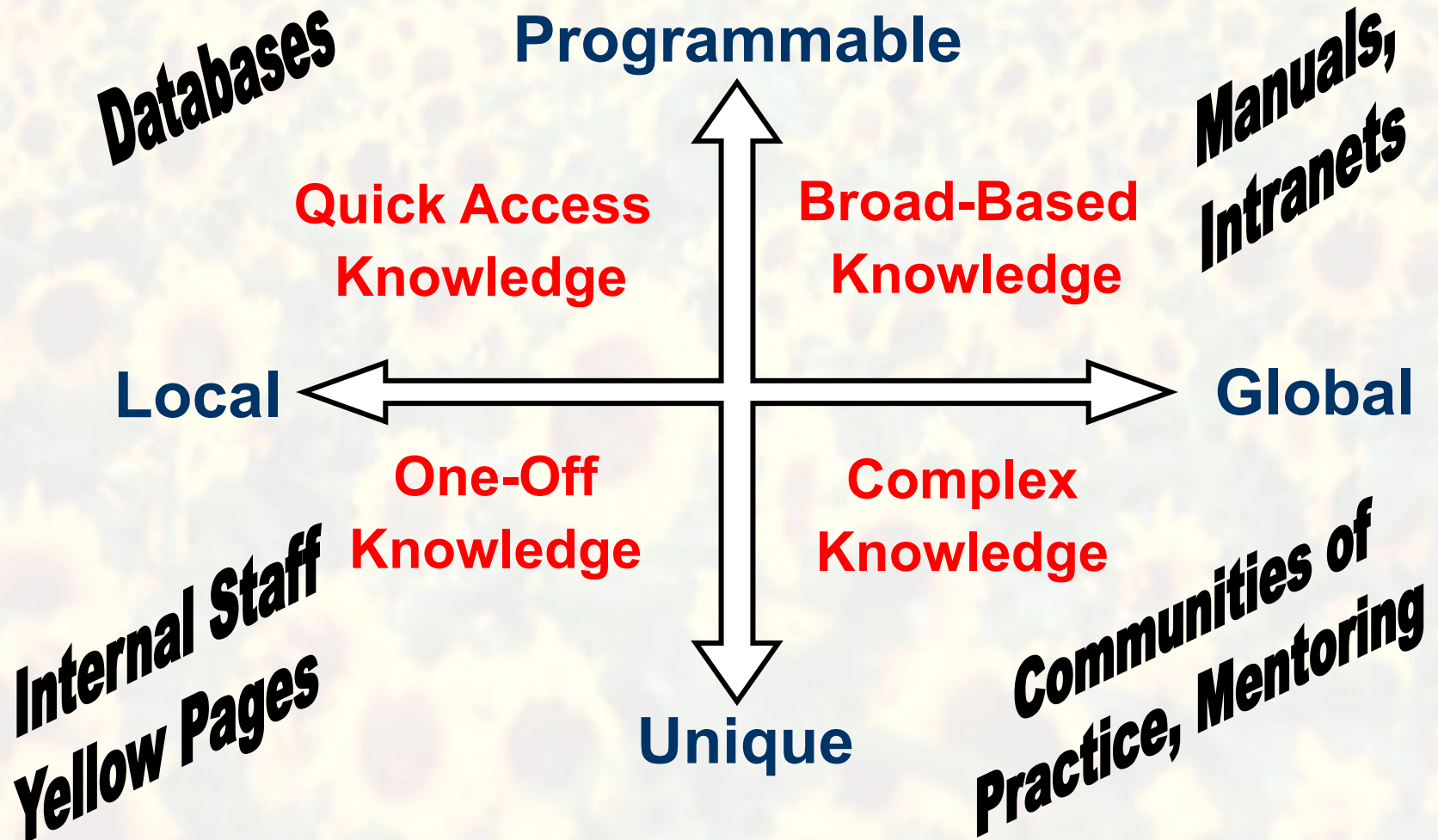
## Knowledge

Literally... what people know.



A Performance

# Differentiating Knowledge

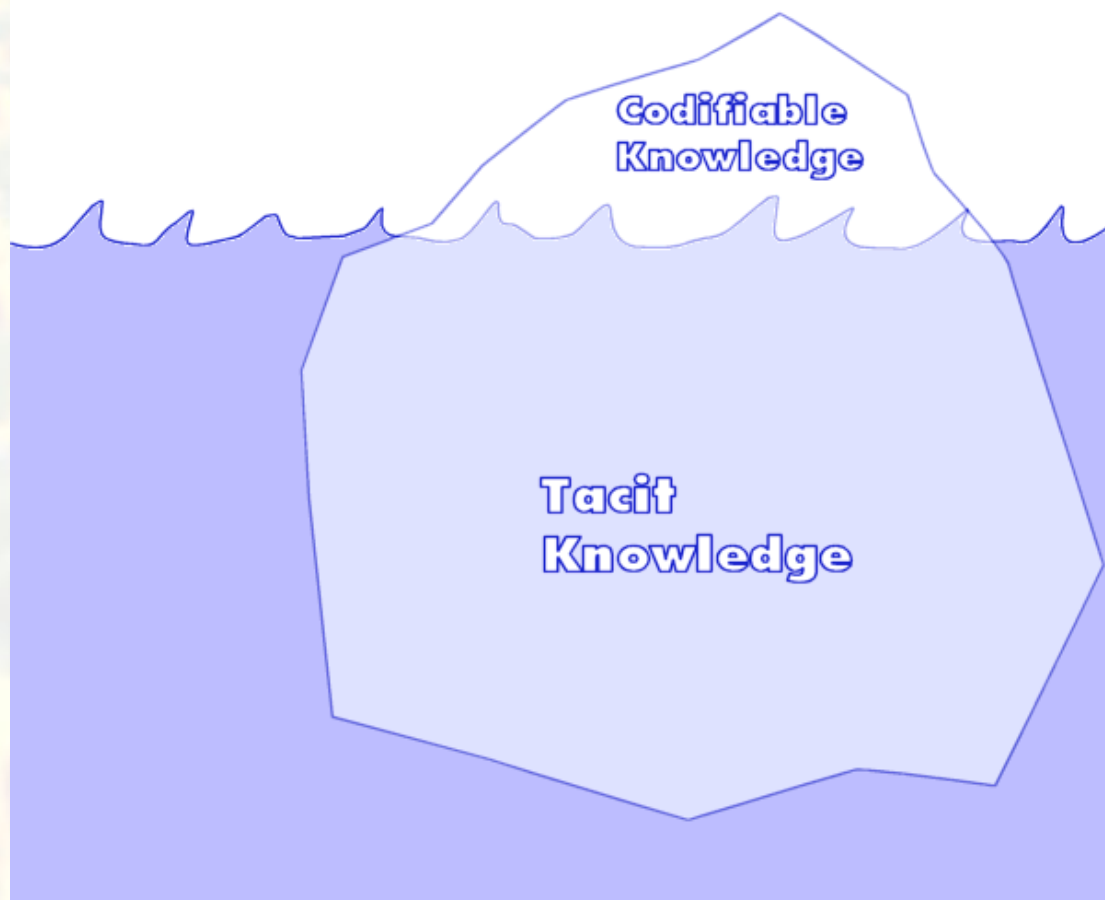




# Tacit vs. Explicit Knowledge

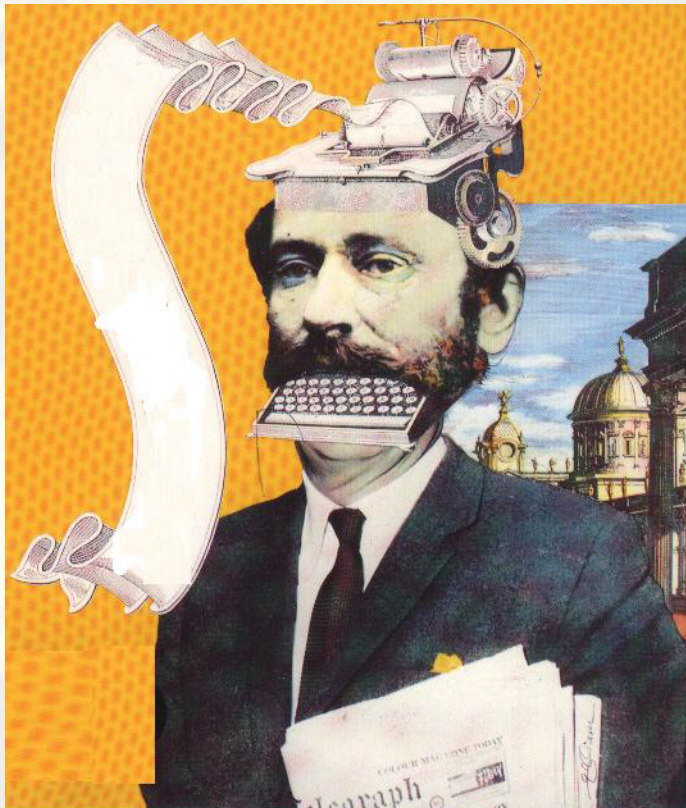
- Only a small portion of what we know is codifiable or “explicit”
- The vast majority of knowledge is “tacit” or uncodifiable.

The Knowledge Iceberg



# Early KM Efforts...

- Failed to recognize the importance of tacit knowledge
- Focused more on Knowledge Stock rather than Knowledge Flow



- Examples
  - Document Management Systems
  - Best Practice Databases
  - More reporting

# People are the key...



## ➤ Best Knowledge Transfer Technology

– Face-to-Face Interaction

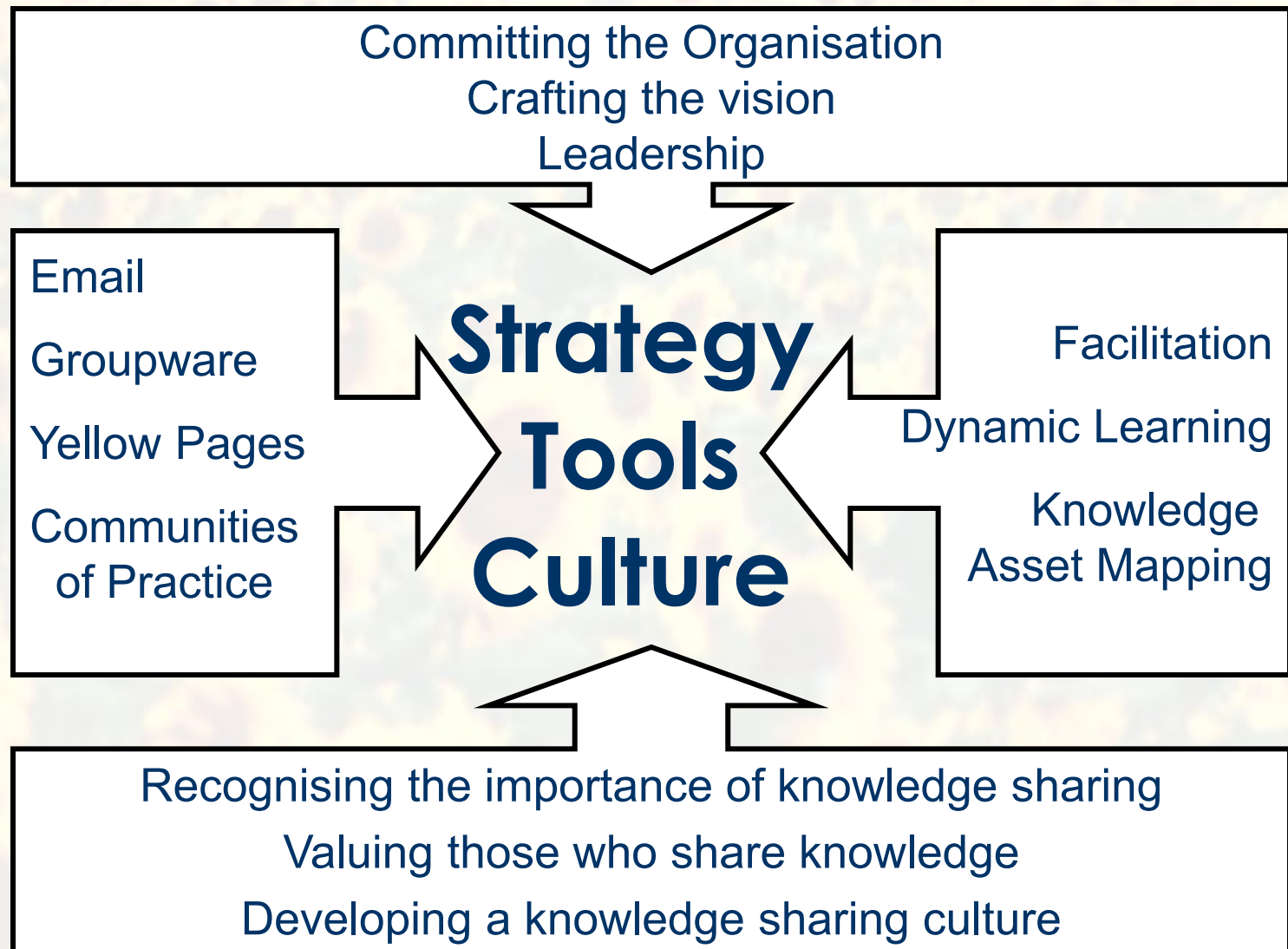
– Not always possible but everything else aspires to it

## ➤ Best Knowledge Repository

- A Community or Group of people
- The holographic effect of knowledge in community
  - break a hologram into many pieces each piece will still contain the whole image, but with a limited perspective.



# Elements of Knowledge Management



# Communities of Practice

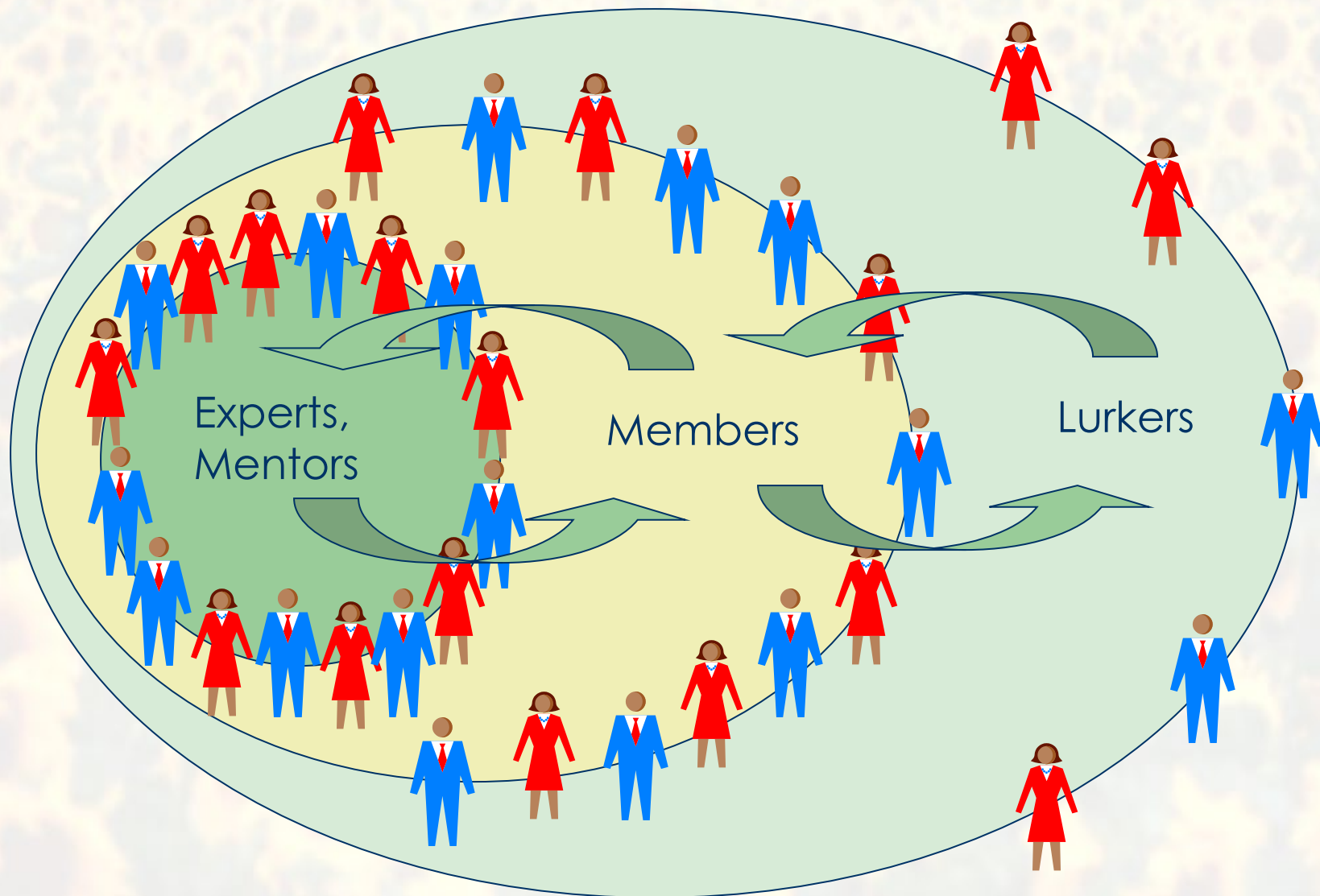
**“groups informally bound together by shared expertise & passion for a joint enterprise”**

- Etienne Wenger

**“peers in the execution of real work. What holds them together is a common sense of purpose and a real need to know what each other knows”**

- John Seely Brown

# A Community of Practice



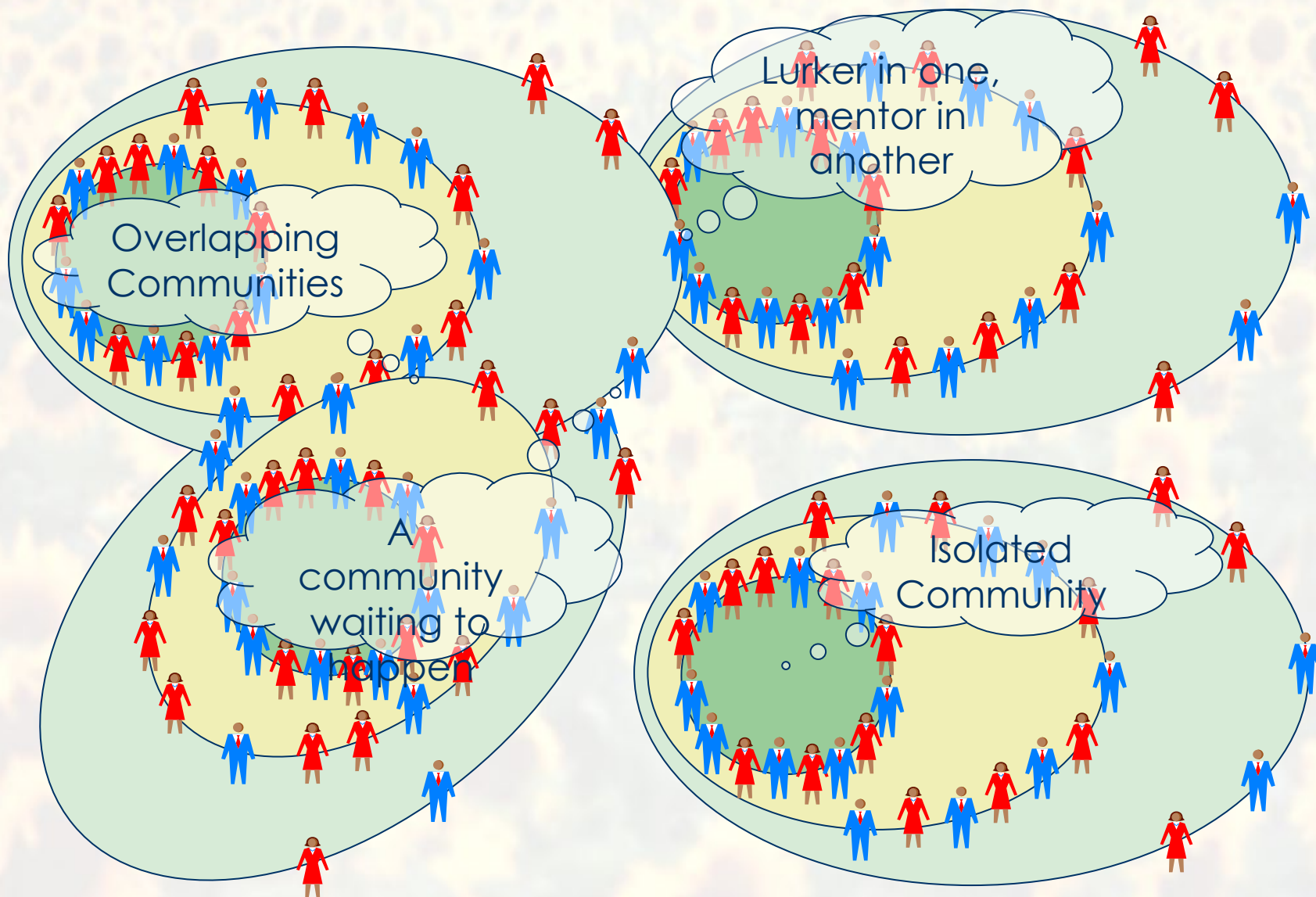


# How are Communities of Practice Different?

	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Glue</b>	<b>Duration</b>
<b>Community of Practice</b>	Exchange knowledge	Self select	Passion, identification with group	As long as the interest lasts
<b>Work Group</b>	Deliver product	All under manager	Job & common goal	Until restructured
<b>Project Team</b>	Accomplish specific task	Assigned or selected	Project milestones and goal	Project completed
<b>Informal networks</b>	Pass on business information	Friends & business acquaintances	Mutual need	As long as reason exists

(excerpt from "Communities of Practice: The Organizational Frontier, by Etienne Wenger)

# Multiple Communities



# Benefits of Communities of Practice

## ➤ For the organization



- Help drive strategy
- Solve problems quickly
- Diffuse best practices
- Cross-fertilize ideas, increase opportunities for innovation
- Build organizational memory

## ➤ For the community

- Develop professional skills
- Develop a common language




## ➤ For the individual




- Help people do their jobs & save time
- Building a sense of community bonds within organization
- Helps people to keep up to date
- Provides challenges and opportunities to contribute



# Before, During, and After Learning

- 
- A vertical strip on the left side of the slide showing a sunflower against a blue sky with clouds.
- **Lessons from the US Army, BP Amoco, et al..**
    - Learning should happen immediately
    - The bar needs to be set very low
    - Learning needs to connect to behaviour change
  - **Types of learning**
    - Learning **Before** (Peer Assists)
    - Learning **During** (After Action Reviews)
    - Learning **After** (Retrospects)

# Changing work culture

- 
- A vertical image of a sunflower on the left side of the slide, with its head at the top and its stem extending downwards.
- **Include knowledge sharing in performance appraisal**
  - **Reward conspicuous knowledge sharers**
  - **Create spaces for knowledge sharing**
  - **Recognize conversation as a core practice**

# Technology...

- Necessary for distributed organizations
- Should facilitate the way people already work
- Should never drive the process





# Thank you...

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