# KM: from concept to theory to practice

## Knowledge leadership at Acquisition Solutions, Inc.

William S. Kaplan and Anne F. Thomson Reed
*Acquisition Solutions, Inc., Rosslyn, Virginia, USA*

### Abstract

**Purpose** – This paper aims to impart how Acquisition Solutions, Inc. is moving knowledge management "from concept to theory to practice" through an ability to connect, collect, and collaborate at all levels "as part of the way we do business". It demonstrates how the void that exists between the theories about "knowledge management" and the delivery of clear and specific knowledge management practices that "deliver on the promise of KM" is filled.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The authors provide brief company context and the knowledge challenges faced in considering future evolution and growth, such as improving the ability to leverage the hidden value of corporate knowledge in business development and new solution creation, strengthening the ability to learn from past challenges and successes in strategic decision making and client solution delivery, and creating value from knowledge, experience, and insight held by both employees and clients. The authors discuss a Knowledge Convergence© strategy, implementing framework and model and how to integrate these into consulting operations – employing an Applied Innovation Model© to continually improve solution delivery by integrating communities of practice, attention to business practice methodologies, and the development of competencies in the workforce.

**Findings** – The paper presents ten learnings, including the fundamental understandings that "it is not about knowledge management, it's about knowledge leadership" as well as "capture and reuse must be part of business operations and not something extra".

**Originality/value** – This paper is written for practitioners who are focused on performing and learning to improve the performance of individuals, teams, and organizations.

**Keywords** Knowledge management, Leadership, Business performance

**Paper type** Case study

### About Acquisition Solutions

Acquisition Solutions, a privately held company, was founded in 1996 to identify and implement innovative acquisition and performance management practices for our government clients. It is our vision to be recognized as the nation's thought leaders in government acquisition and to be the premier provider of transformational solutions that significantly improve our government clients' processes and mission results. The company is divided into four sectors:

(1) Acquisition Solutions Consulting Services™;

(2) Acquisition Solutions Research Institute™;

(3) Acquisition Solutions Strategic Sourcing™; and

(4) Acquisition Solutions Training Institute™.

From inception through 2005, the company operated 100 percent in a virtual environment, relying on a culture of collaboration and trust to develop and evolve our current business organization. In fall 2005, we moved into our current "brick and mortar" headquarters in Rosslyn, VA. This was part of an ongoing strategy to recognize that an investment in a more formal leadership and support infrastructure was essential for future growth.

Among the many functional disciplines and activities, the leadership recognized that an ongoing ability to capture and reuse knowledge, information and experience on a consistent and disciplined basis was a requirement for future growth and success that would pay great dividends not only in our ability to leverage what we know about what we do (continuous performance improvement), but also in providing consistent, quality delivery of our products and solutions to our clients (delivering value to clients, employees, and company). Doing this more effectively and efficiently was becoming an increasingly more difficult challenge due to the rapid growth of our workforce. In June 2005, Acquisition Solutions brought on board their first Chief Knowledge Officer (CKO).

### Our knowledge challenges

There were four immediate knowledge challenges to address:

(1) the explicit or formal management of knowledge in ongoing operations;

(2) improving the ability to leverage the hidden value of corporate knowledge in business development and new solution creation;

(3) improving the ability to learn from past challenges *and* successes in strategic decision making and client solution delivery; and

(4) creating value from knowledge, experience, and insight held both by our employees and our clients.

We knew we had an advantage with which to begin and that a key to success was to build on the existing corporate culture of trust and collaboration and investment in intellectual property (IP) and then expand this to a broader knowledge sharing culture where capturing and reusing knowledge is focused on performance improvement as part of the way everyone works. Specifically, it was to *help the company take KM concepts from theory to practice*.

To move from concept to theory to practice, to enable a corporate (top down) and workforce driven (bottom up) knowledge culture, we knew we had to focus on easily stated and easily understood outcomes tied to select measures of (KM) success that could be tracked to existing strategic initiatives and measures of value and then integrate these measures into the balanced scorecard, which we did. These outcomes included:

• learning and sharing knowledge in and across teams is a routine part of the way people work resulting in open behavior and fundamental change;

• capturing and reusing enterprise knowledge results in immediate improvements in operational and organizational performance;

• leveraging collective know-how through sustained networks or communities of practice (CoP) across our lines of business and practice areas; and

- continuously improving business and operational process performance in a sustainable manner that can be tracked to enterprise performance measures of success.

**Creating a knowledge enabled company**

We focus on a strategy we call Knowledge Convergence$^{©}$. Knowledge Convergence is the disciplined adoption of a "systematic framework to capture, transfer, and reuse information, experience, and insight to measurably improve organizational performance and customer, employee, and corporate value".

This strategy enables us to:

- leverage our knowledge in ongoing operations to immediately improve performance;
- improve our ability to learn from past challenges and successes in strategic decision making *and* client solution delivery;
- create long-term value from knowledge, experience, and insight held by employees; and
- create long-term value from knowledge, experience, and insight gained from clients.

This strategy and its implementing framework rely on several evolved learning points:

- Technology and information management alone cannot be relied upon for success for two reasons: people typically want to just "get their work done" and they may not go through the extra steps required to learn how to use what are often claimed as knowledge management (KM) technology or tools, and there must be a well thought out process for defining capturing, and reusing the relevant knowledge in the company. Knowledge is more about people and what they know than technology.
- Knowledge capture and knowledge reuse must work within the context of workflow — "part of the way people do business". When knowledge is captured within the context of a business process, it is more meaningful and easier to integrate. When organized and accessible in a way that makes sense to the knowledge users, it then adds value. Technology and tools cannot in and of themselves provide effective "context of use" and add this value. The value of knowledge enablement comes from the ability of people to effectively and efficiently reuse knowledge to improve performance, individually and organizationally.
- Knowledge capture and knowledge reuse must work within the context of organizational culture. Collaborative cultures provide a better foundation for knowledge convergence than highly competitive cultures. In Acquisition Solutions, learning and sharing knowledge in and across teams is a routine part of the way we work, resulting in open behavior and trust, an acceptance of change, and immediate improvements in our operational and organizational performance due to the agility that this provides.
- Continuous improvement in our business and operational process performance in a consistent and sustainable manner must be tied to enterprise performance

measures of success (e.g. balanced scorecard). In Acquisition Solutions, this also means that the quality framework and its integration into the company's business operations is led by the CKO and his team since quality, learning, and continuous performance improvement are inextricably tied together.

### From concept to theory to practice

We view knowledge as comprising all the information in the company and all the experience and insight in the company. We leverage and focus this knowledge, in context, to improve our individual, team, and corporate performance and to deliver value to our employees, our clients, and our company. This enables our collective workforce to make the best decisions and provide the best solutions. Figure 1 illustrates this view.

Our Knowledge Convergence strategy integrates an ability to *connect, collect, and collaborate* with a discipline of learning before, during, and after process execution to provide our professional acquisition workforce with the ability to access in real time not only codified knowledge (effective practices, relevant documents, templates), but also the most current tacit knowledge (experience and insight) that is the "know how" and "know why" of the separate practice and subject matter areas.

To enable our workforce to access this knowledge for reuse, we developed the Acquisition Solutions Knowledge Center™ (KC), a proprietary, web-enabled resource accessible 24/7/365. We continually update the KC – with lessons learned captured from the use of straightforward and effective learning processes, insights captured on video, and knowledge we have rated based on its effectiveness – using the most current workforce knowledge and experience. Figure 2 expands on our view of knowledge outlined in Figure 1 to reflect a more detailed framework of how knowledge flows and is accessed within the company.
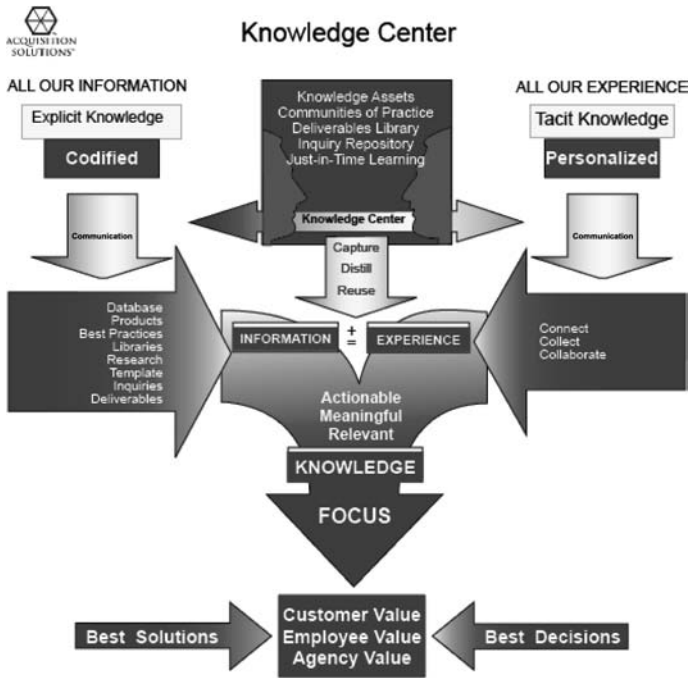
To create a knowledge-enabled organization with a culture of "performing and learning and performing" required an operating model that balanced four essential elements (shown as diamonds reflected in Figure 3):

(1) learning processes;
(2) communities of practice;



**Figure 1.**
How we view knowledge

2006 © Aquisition Solutions

Knowledge Center

ACQUISITION SOLUTIONS

ALL OUR INFORMATION

Explicit Knowledge

Codified

Knowledge Assets
Communities of Practice
Deliverables Library
Inquiry Repository
Just-in-Time Learning

Knowledge Center

ALL OUR EXPERIENCE

Tacit Knowledge

Personalized

Communication

Communication

Capture
Distill
Reuse

Database
Products
Best Practices
Libraries
Research
Template
Inquiries
Deliverables

INFORMATION $+$ EXPERIENCE $=$

Connect
Collect
Collaborate

Actionable
Meaningful
Relevant

KNOWLEDGE

FOCUS

Best Solutions

Customer Value
Employee Value
Agency Value

Best Decisions

2007 © Aquisition Solutions Inc.

**Figure 2.**
The Acquisition Solutions
Knowledge Convergence©
framework

(3) knowledge assets; and

(4) enabling technology.

*Element 1: learning processes*
The learning processes enable us to capture knowledge and make sense out of it before, during, and after we execute or deliver. These processes contribute the content for the knowledge assets (knowledge repositories with knowledge artifacts) which reside in the Acquisition Solutions Knowledge Center™.

*Learning before (peer assists).* "Learning before doing" is supported through the Peer Assist, a facilitated process which targets a specific challenge, imports knowledge from people outside the team, identifies possible approaches and new lines of inquiry, and promotes sharing of learning with each other through a facilitated meeting.

*Learning during (action reviews).* We modified a US Army technique called After Action Reviews. Action Reviews enable people to "learn while doing" by answering four questions immediately after an activity or event:

(1) What was supposed to happen?

(2) What actually happened?

(3) If different, why are they different?
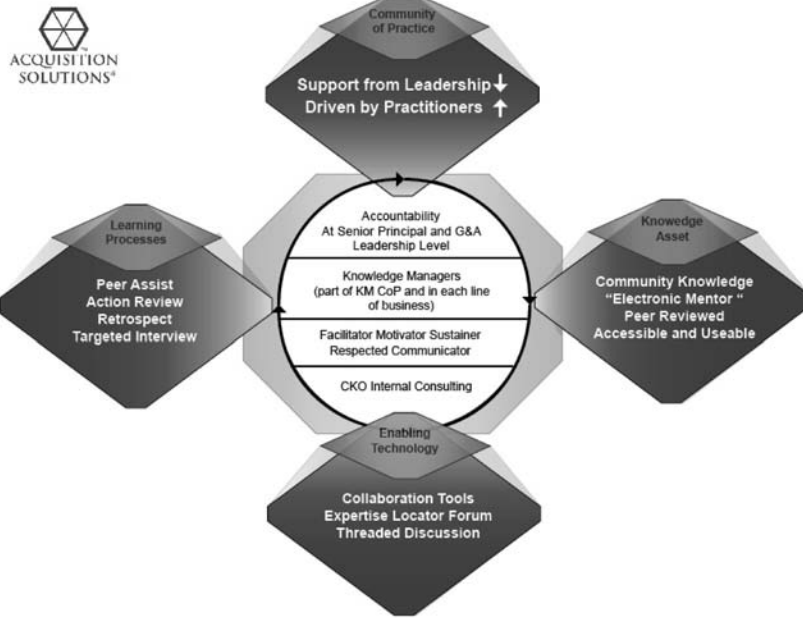
(4) What can we learn and immediately apply?

**Figure 3.**
The Acquisition Solutions
Knowledge Management
Operating Model: four
diamonds of a Knowledge
Enabled Organization©

An added benefit is that, if done well and if people feel safe and answer honestly, trust builds within the team.

*Learning after (retrospects)*. "Learning after doing" is supported by a facilitated process called a Retrospect. Immediately after the end of the project or project phase a retrospect encourages team members to look back at the project to discover what went well and why and what could have been done differently, with a view to helping a different team repeat their success and avoid any pitfalls – "learning after doing". The retrospect focuses *not* on what went wrong and who did it, rather it focuses what was learned and how this can be applied in future projects by future teams so they will be successful. It is a "process of inquiry, not inquisition".

*Interviews*. Targeted interviews with individuals can further elicit critical knowledge, experience and insight when used as follow up to the learning processes or as a standalone way to harvest this knowledge.

*Element 2: communities of practice (CoP)*
We have two types of CoPs: *organizationally driven* and *practitioner driven*. Both are voluntary and both are encouraged and supported at all levels of company leadership. Described below, a major 2007 knowledge initiative, our Applied Innovation Model©, positions our CoPs as the "guardians of competence" in our company practice areas. Knowledge from our CoPs is harvested and characterized for reuse in our knowledge assets so that it can be re-used and adapted by fellow practitioners within that CoP or within other CoPs (cross-linkage). Our CoPs help our workforce to develop the

competence to contribute individually and collaboratively within their business teams and across the company while focused on the objective at hand.

Further, our CoPs can be vertical and horizontal. In Acquisition Solutions, an example of a vertical community of practice could reasonably be thought of as a "line of business". An example of a horizontal community of practice might include all the practitioners from across the company who focus on what they know and are learning about the delivery of Performance Based Acquisition and Management, a consulting practice area. You can belong to one or more communities of practice. Key to the success of communities is the support of the leadership in terms of time, investment, and resources to participate, maintain, and most importantly, sustain the communities.

*Element 3: knowledge assets*
A simple way to describe a knowledge asset might be to call it simply a repository of knowledge. But it is really more multidimensional and dynamic than that when planned, constructed and applied effectively. Our knowledge assets contain:

- process methodologies;
- key insights, learnings and advice in the form of guidelines, checklists, effective practices and "first person told stories" in the form of short vignettes that clearly highlight critical learnings, insight or experience;
- the business "context" in which the learning occurred;
- an ability to act as an "electronic mentor" with an index of the available knowledge;
- a link to a Practice Library, a library of internally created documents and other artefacts that can save time;
- a capability for finding the person(s) who knows what you need to know when you need to know it along with their contact details; and
- a link directly to relevant "just-in-time" training associated with practitioner success in that process.

*Element 4: enabling technology*
Enabling technology is the IT infrastructure and applications that enable "connection, collection and collaboration" from any location. This provides the means for accessing the knowledge and communicating effectively and efficiently with members of the community and others outside the community.

*Additional notes*

- Accountability for knowledge capture and reuse resides at the operational level with our lines of business (verticals) and practice leaders (horizontals), not at the infrastructure support level with the CKO team.
- Employees do not need to be rewarded monetarily for contributing knowledge. We find that peer recognition and the value they find in connecting and collaborating as it helps them to improve their performance in solution delivery and professional growth results in direct impact to the bottom line and corresponding recognition at performance appraisal time.

### Knowledge initiatives

*Fiscal year 2006*

Acquisition Solutions implemented the balanced scorecard at the corporate, business area, and individual levels throughout the company. The overall focus and theme supported by the balanced scorecard perspectives in 2006 was "Creating a Learning Organization and Having Fun as We Grow". Each area required measurement against both objective and subjective measures of success. They included content such as:

- the planning, development, and standing up of our knowledge convergence framework including our communities of practice and knowledge assets;
- company-wide training and education projects to build understanding and support for the value of this approach;
- evolution through learning before, during, and after applied to integrating this framework into our business operations; and
- focus on our employees, our customers, and or corporate growth and profitability.

The year 2006 was a record year in performance for Acquisition Solutions, which is corporately credited to the evolution of our performing and learning culture. Employee turnover was extremely low and we view this as a sign that we are delivering the tools and techniques to our workforce to make them successful while they have fun achieving both their corporate and individual goals.

*Fiscal year 2007*

Our 2007 focus and scorecard perspectives and measurements of success, in addition to the basics of our business, built upon our previous success. This includes tracking and measuring our ability to leverage knowledge to foster innovation in business operations while also delivering ever-increasing value to our workforce, our corporation, and our clients. It is centered on understanding and implementing our evolving Applied Innovation Model©.

### The Acquisition Solutions Applied Innovation Model©

The Applied Innovation Model© (AIM) is a proprietary management concept for exclusive use within Acquisition Solutions (Figure 4). The Applied Innovation Model© ties (solution) practice areas to delivery through the synergistic intersection between methodology, communities, and competencies. It is a collaborative approach that:

- through our communities of practice focuses on the needs of our government clients and the support and assistance needed by our front-line employees (consultants);
- through our methodologies (practice area methodology and knowledge capture and reuse tools and techniques) enables a more disciplined approach to innovating and managing our solutions; and
- through competency management provides a roadmap for developing and enhancing the relevant competencies and skills of our workforce.

2006-7 © Aquisition Solutions, Inc.

Figure 4.
The Acquisition Solutions
Applied Innovation
Model©

*Practice Areas*
Beginning at the central intersection of AIM, we group our client solution sets into
Practice Areas. The Practice Area Leader (PA Lead) for each practice area is
responsible for and accountable for assuring that we are sustaining a learning
environment that allows us to be innovative, while still capturing the best concepts for
consistent application across the company and building a talent base to support
specialized knowledge and experience.

*Communities of Practice*
Our CoPs serve as our "marketplace for knowledge and ideas." We support
communities of practice around each defined practice area. Each CoP has a designated
leader who works closely with the Practice Leader.

By participating in a CoP, our front-line consultants (employees) can reach out to
each other across organizational lines to create a connection for discussing ideas,
debating strategies and sharing knowledge. The CoP is one means of stimulating
innovation in our thinking on an ongoing basis.

*Methodologies*
As we refine our understanding of client challenges and seek to develop repeatable
solutions, we constantly strive to define, develop, and refresh systematic approaches to
delivery. This is also inherent in our Quality Framework, which is closely integrated
with our capture and reuse methodologies. By having more clearly defined approaches
to our consulting practices, we are able to give our customers the assurance that we are
building upon a solid base of experience and knowledge.

*Competencies*
As we refine our practice area methodologies, Practice Leaders are charged with
thinking through what subject matter expertise and what talents will be needed in
order to achieve the best results. Working with our human capital organization, they

www.man

are able to identify those individuals who are subject matter experts or who have particular experiences important to that team often using the CoPs in this process.

**Embedding performing and learning into team and individual performance**
Our operating model (Acquisition Solutions Strategic Consulting Model$^{©}$) integrates our client facing and client focused activities and our practice areas (solutions). Figure 5 reflects this model. Each vertical is a line of business with an Account Executive lead. Each horizontal represents a practice area or solution that we provide to our clients through a line of business. Each has a Practice Area lead.

To continually deliver the highest quality solutions to our clients required that we *really* have an embedded and practical working ability to perform and learn as "part of the way we do business". This presented a unique opportunity to move from the concept of communities of practice to developing and sustaining working communities of practice.

Timing is everything and we were ready because at this point in our journey we had socialized and integrated across the company:

- what knowledge is (Figure 1);
- the framework for how knowledge flows and is accessed for reuse (Figure 2);
- the operating model, including tools and techniques, for creating a knowledge enabled company (Figure 3); and
- our Applied Innovation Model$^{©}$ as a means to embed performing and learning into the fabric of the consulting operation and our greater business and operational processes (Figure 4).

As can be seen from Figure 6, there is real synergy between the Acquisition Solutions Strategic Consulting Model$^{©}$ (operations model) and our communities of practice.

Each horizontal (practice area or solution) has a community of practice that supports the practice and its members. What is learned from execution across the
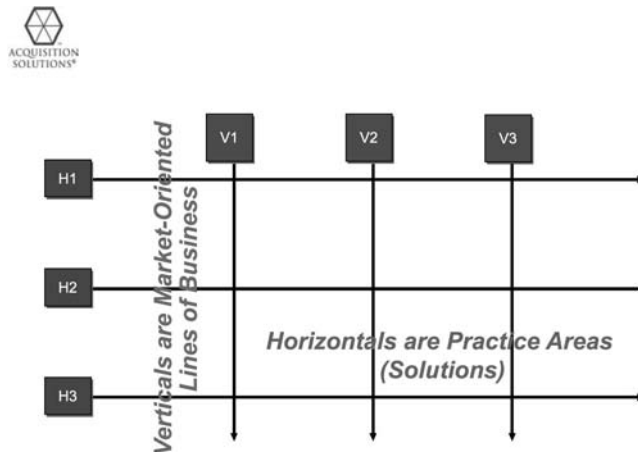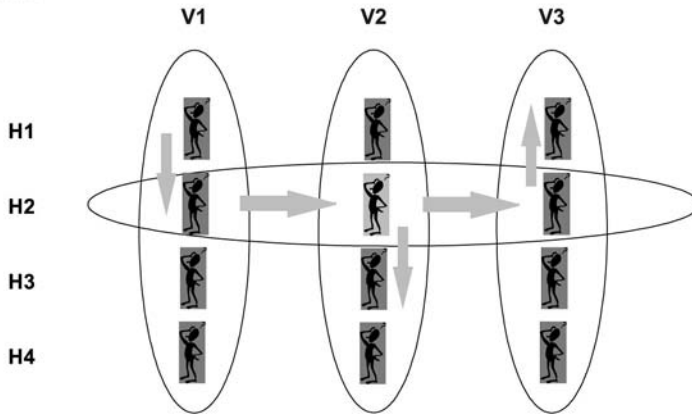


**Figure 5.**
The Acquisition Solutions Strategic Consulting Model$^{©}$

2006 © Acquisition Solutions

Figure 6.
Relationship and synergy
of the Acquisition
Solutions Strategic
Consulting Model© and
our communities of
practice

practice or delivery of the solution is available in any vertical or line of business. Conversely, what is learned about delivering the solution and the execution of that practice in any vertical is available across the horizontal and through the community of practice. The member at the intersection of V2 and H2 represents the dual transfer capability that this model presents both in concept and operations. It is "connection, collection, and collaboration" at its best.

To drive KM tools and techniques not only into the fabric of operations, but also into the operation and sustainment of our knowledge assets and our communities of practice, we created two roles:

(1) Knowledge Engineers (KE); and

(2) Engagement Knowledge Managers (EKM).

In Figure 3 these roles are reflected at the center of the four diamonds as "Knowledge Managers". It can also be noted in Figure 3 that accountability for the continued capture and reuse of knowledge resides at the operational level, not with the CKO team. Knowledge Managers support at the operational level.

The Knowledge Engineer is part of the CKO team and is responsible for supporting an assigned practice area and an assigned line of business in their ability to leverage our KM tools and techniques. This helps to ensure that the performing and learning concepts are really part of the way we work. The KE provides internal consulting to operations. For example, as discussions progress within a CoP forum, the KE and the subject matter experts (SME) will work to make sense out of the learnings from the discussion and characterize them for reuse. The captured knowledge is then logically placed within the CoPs web-based knowledge asset (repository), which is accessible by all employees across the company.

Each client project or engagement will have as part of their cross-functional team an Engagement Knowledge Manager (EKM), an individual on the team who has been trained in our KM concepts and tools at a working level. The EKM's role is to prompt,

prod, and remind the team about the use and value of the KM tools in their ongoing delivery and operations. For example, the EKM would prompt the team to do Action Reviews (Learning while Doing) at the end of a section of work and to do a Retrospect (Learning after Doing) at the end of a major project phase or at the end of the engagement. Eventually, they will acquire the skill to distill learnings from their ongoing operations and to ensure that this new knowledge gets into the right knowledge assets. They can reach back to the KE supporting that line business when the need arises for additional support or expertise in KM application.

The Knowledge Engineers and the Engagement Knowledge Managers also belong to the KM Community of Practice. This provides them, along with all other interested employees, with a link and ongoing support to better understand our KM concepts and the use of the tools and techniques necessary to make knowledge capture and reuse to improve performance part of the way we work.

### Lessons from our journey
There are many lessons we are learning and reapplying as we evolve and change. The top ten are:

(1) It isn't about knowledge management, it's about knowledge leadership.

(2) A shared context, a common understanding of an organization's purpose, a shared way of thinking about the company and its environment, how its business works, how to resolve problems, and required and expected behaviors, is a fundamental building block for success and implementation of any kind. Shared context differs from "rules and regulations" in that it provides a way of thinking about things, not prescriptions for what to do. The latter freezes organizations into prefabricated actions, sacrificing agility for control. Having acquired context and understanding, people are empowered to make better judgments and to act with a common goal and purpose, thereby allowing decisions to be made close to the customer rather than to the leadership.

(3) The fabric from which context is woven is organizational knowledge – that is, its skills, experiences, insight, capabilities and memory. Making this knowledge accessible, transferable, reusable, and relevant creates a shared context from which employees can act with agility.

(4) It is important to reward employees, in context with our culture, for seeking, sharing, creating, and reusing knowledge. It requires that employees find value in these activities to continue to tap into our company's intellectual resources.

(5) There must be senior leadership advocacy for the strategy. Know that, with the right leadership and strategy, it doesn't have to take a long time to show results. And the results must be about delivering specific, tangible, business-driven performance improvements.

(6) Transformational change, and it is transformational change for many in the company, requires experienced change agents who communicate effectively and can demonstrate value.

(7) The real cost and the most difficult effort lies in maintaining and sustaining the strategy and framework we are executing.

(8) Embedding and integrating a common, simple set of core capture, transfer and reuse practices which are easily understood, supported, and performed "on the job" and "in the job", is necessary to embed a sustainable way of working.

(9) The framework and models must be focused on the concept of *connection, collection, and collaboration*. It is most critical to *connect people . . .* then nurture a culture that will get them talking and sharing in order to leverage their insight and experience across the workforce. Success rests in focusing on that most important "people" part; failure to focus on people is one of the reasons that many knowledge strategies and initiatives do not succeed.

(10) Knowledge must move within our company *on two levels*. The first level involves the peer to peer interaction reflected through our ability to learn before, during, and after project or process execution (learning processes). This, in and of itself, is critical, but is not enough. There is a second level. We must continuously characterize what we know and are learning for reuse in the context of the re-user of the knowledge so that what is learned between the peers is made available and then accessible (enabling technology) when needed by others (knowledge assets and communities of practice). It is this sustainable ability to "connect, collect, and collaborate" that enables us to create the long term value required for continued company growth and success.

## Final thoughts

We recognize that both our clients' success and our success as a company requires us to sustain a balance between creativity and consistency, innovation and implementation, and learning and sharing, we know that it is critically important that we create and sustain internal operating mechanisms that enable us to:

· define and develop repeatable solutions to the challenges that our clients face;

· review and refresh the practice area methodologies as we learn from our experiences; and

· assure that we have the right subject matter expertise and tools to deliver consistently high quality results.

## About the authors



Named Chief Knowledge Officer in January 2005, William Kaplan is one of the early leaders and practitioners of knowledge management in the government sector. Bill is experienced in the planning and design of integrated knowledge architectures to support diverse organizational requirements. Prior to joining the Acquisition Solutions team, Bill served as the Deputy Knowledge Management Practice Manager and a Senior Consultant for Knowledge Management at Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC). He was one of the original thought leaders, practitioners, and consultants who developed the vision and strategy for the SAIC knowledge management consultancy. He was involved in all aspects of building the practice, including strategy, process, metrics for success, tools, systems, and the evolving creation of a corporate culture to support knowledge management. Bill also completed a distinguished 25-year active duty career in acquisition and program management in the United States Air Force and the Department of Defense, retiring in the rank of Colonel. He is a graduate of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, the Defense Systems Management College Program Managers Course, and has experience in system program offices as well as in contract

and acquisition management and policy development. Bill is widely familiar with the many aspects of the Government acquisition process. His post-military experience includes consulting support, special studies, and policy development for the senior acquisition leadership in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the development of several acquisition management and workforce training projects for both OSD and the military services. William S. Kaplan is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: bkaplan@acqsolinc.com

**232**

Named President of Acquisition Solutions in January 2003, Anne F. Thomson Reed provides key stewardship for the company as it continues along the path of rapid growth and expansion of services. Prior to joining Acquisition Solutions, Anne served as President of Electronic Data Systems (EDS) State & Local Government Solutions, where she provided leadership and direction to an organization that supported over $1 billion in state and local Government business. She joined EDS as Vice President of the Government Global Industry Group, where she consulted with CIOs and other Government leaders from across the world on e-Government strategies and on information technology strategic investment decision-making models. Anne capped a 20-year career in the public sector as Chief Information Officer (CIO) at the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), where she pioneered efforts in e-government and capital planning, while re-engineering business processes to take advantage of new technologies, telecommunications improvement, information assurance, computer security, and protection of privacy. She also served as Chair of the Federal CIO Council Interoperability Committee. She previously served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration at USDA, with a focus on business modernization, and served in the Department of the Navy, in the Office of the Comptroller and the Naval Sea Systems Command. In earlier years, she had a senior administrative appointment with the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and worked as a city planner in Nashville, Tennessee. Anne has received much recognition and numerous awards for her achievements in improving Government, including the John F. Kennedy School of Government's Alumni Achievement award (2001), the Vice President's Hammer Award for her leadership during Y2K planning and implementation (2000), Government Computer News's Government Executive of the Year (1998), the Federation of Industry and Government Information Processing Councils' Government Executive of the Year (1997), and *Federal Computer Week*'s Federal 100 award (1999 and 2002). In 1998, Anne was inducted into the Pi Alpha Alpha national honor society for public administration by the American University, and in 1995 she was commissioned a Kentucky Colonel by the Governor of Kentucky. Anne currently serves as a principal on the Council for Excellence in Government, as well as on advisory committees for numerous associations. In April 2002, the Governor of Virginia appointed her to serve on the Commonwealth's Chief Information Officer's Advisory Board.