

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Why Individual Knowledge is Important and how it
Applies to Organizational Effectiveness.

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General Introduction

- ▣ In September 2007, I joined with five other individuals and took part in a study of knowledge management (KM) and learning organizations.
- ▣ In January 2008 we gathered at George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon for intensive discussions around our common subject.
- ▣ We were joined in our discussions by corporate leaders from A-dec, Intel, and IBM.
- ▣ The information I will present tonight is based on these discussions and additional literary research.

Topical Introduction

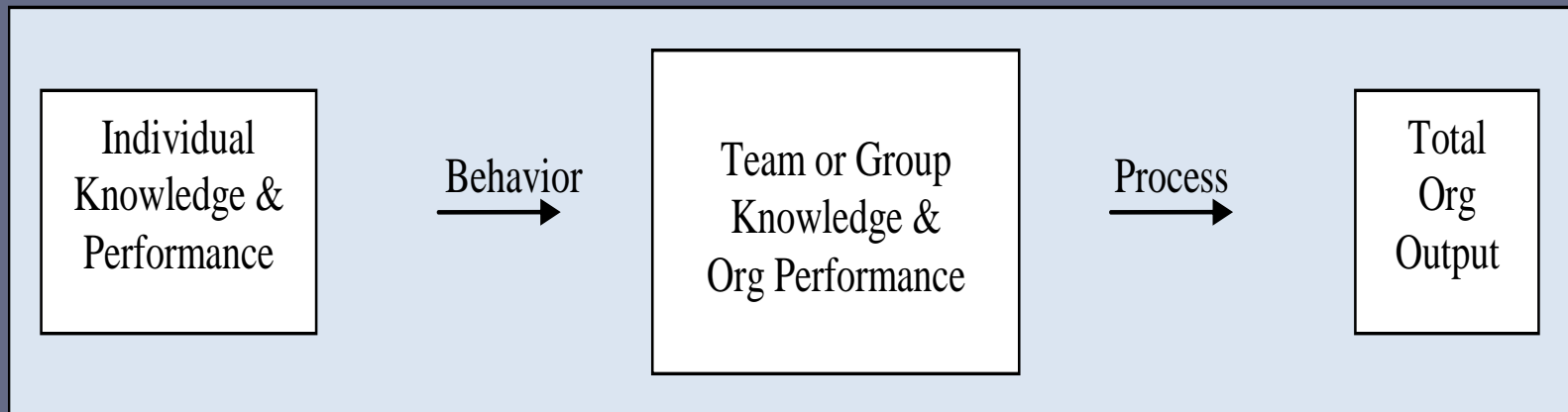
- ▣ Individual knowledge and organizational effectiveness
- ▣ What is Knowledge Management?
- ▣ The role of leadership
- ▣ What style of leadership meets the needs of Knowledge Management?
- ▣ Where is the future for knowledge and Knowledge Management?
- ▣ Questions and Discussion

Individual Performance

- ▣ Organizations don't create knowledge – individuals use tacit knowledge and skills to bring organizational knowledge into being.
- ▣ Groups of individual knowledge must be woven together to form a functional organization

Individual Performance

Individual performance transference to organizational output

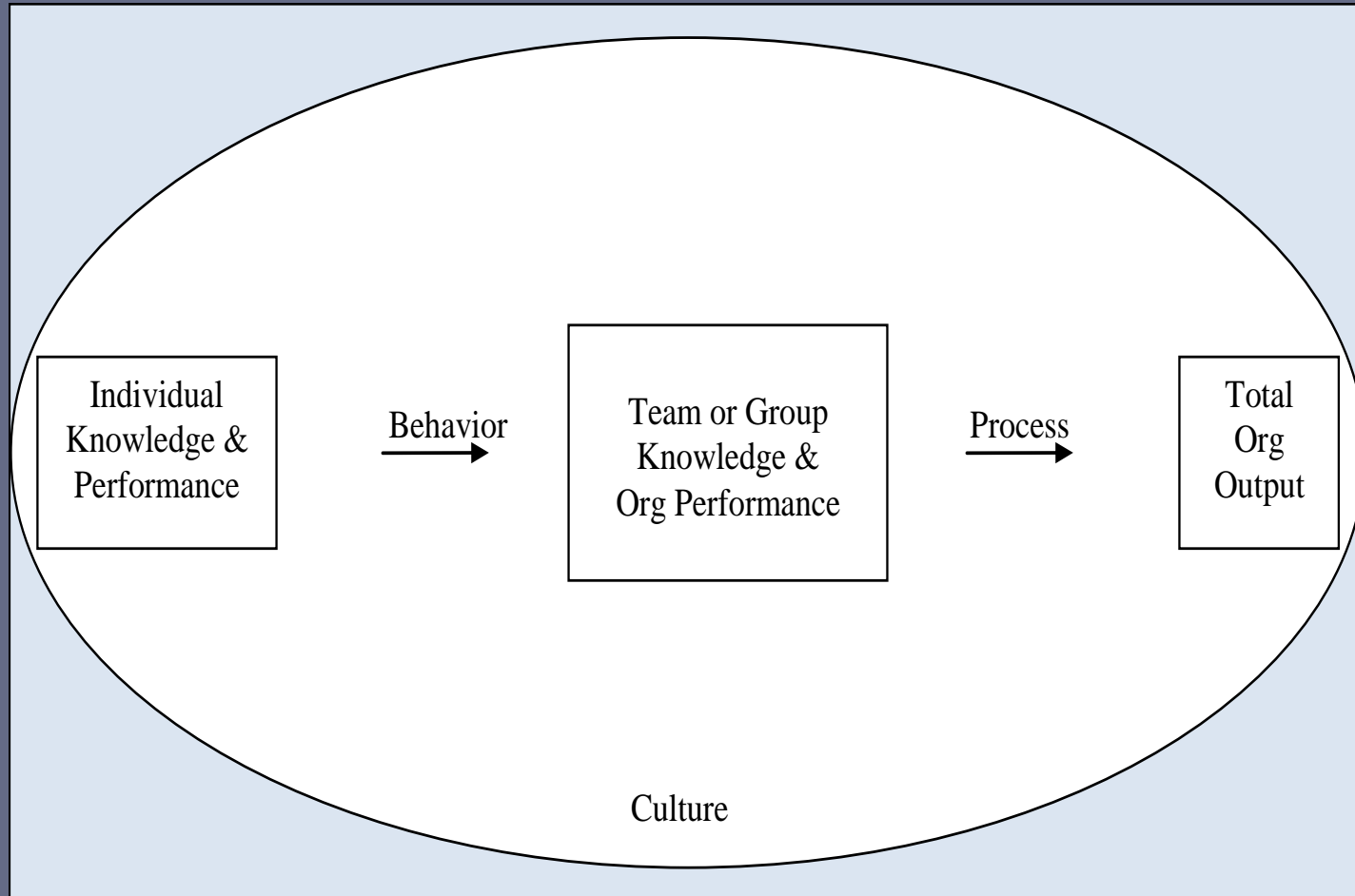


Corporate Culture

- ▣ Organizations are not an entity unto themselves but are a holonic body with individual contributors coming together to make up the whole
- ▣ The culture of an organization will dictate the willingness of individuals to share knowledge and the organizational ability to derive the greatest value from the knowledge

Corporate Culture

Individual performance modified by corporate culture



Culture and Change

- ▣ Pritchett (2002) and Wheatley (1999) suggest that forces external to the organization may greatly affect the activities internal to the company.
- ▣ The “butterfly effect” is defined by Pritchett as “how complex adaptive systems – like companies, ..., stock markets, etc. – can be powerfully affected by very small, remote influences” (p. 12).

Culture and Change

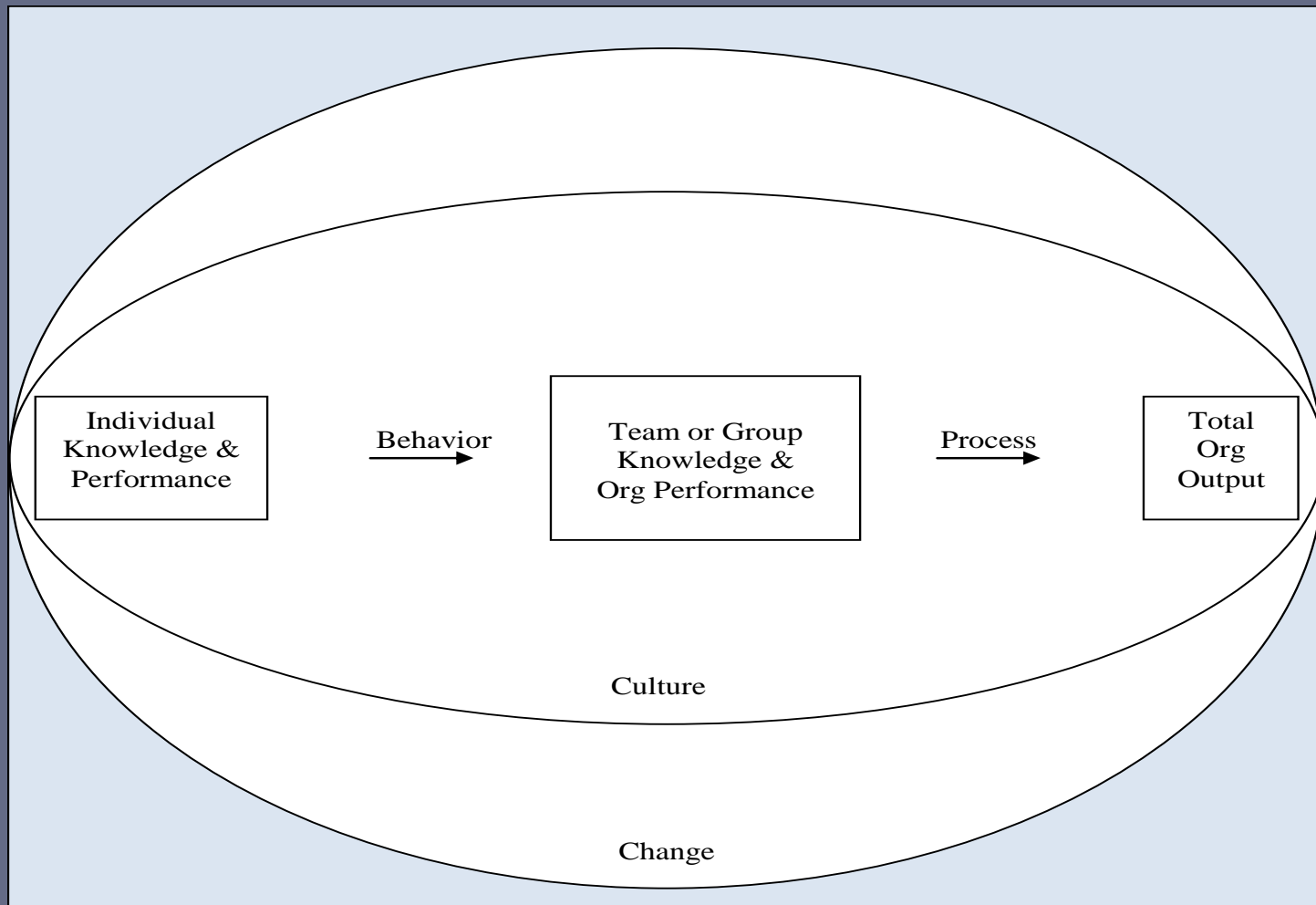
- ▣ Considering Prichett's writings, we begin to understand how an individual's conversion and application of information to knowledge may produce magnified and unexpected consequences [chaos] within the a corporate body.
- ▣ Care must be taken, not to limit the level of uncertainty [chaos] in our organization, we may stifle the company's ability to create and grow.

Culture and Change

- ▣ Wheatley believes abstract principals of quantum physics may react not only in a scientific world but also within a corporation.
- ▣ The Heisenberg theory states that when we attempt to measure the rate of movement or the position of an object, we find that the more accurate the need to view one variable, the more it limits our ability to know about the other.
- ▣ Applied to organizations we find that in an attempt to measure the amount of information one individual is creating, we may disrupt the creative process (Wheatley, 1999, pp. 115 - 170).

Culture and Change

Culture and change as over-arching organizational moderators



What is Knowledge Management

- ▣ Much can be made of definitions for the phrase “Knowledge Management,” including arguments that:
 - Knowledge cannot be managed
 - Knowledge, being a derivative of information, exists in multi-levels. Choo (2000) and Davenport & Prusak (2000).

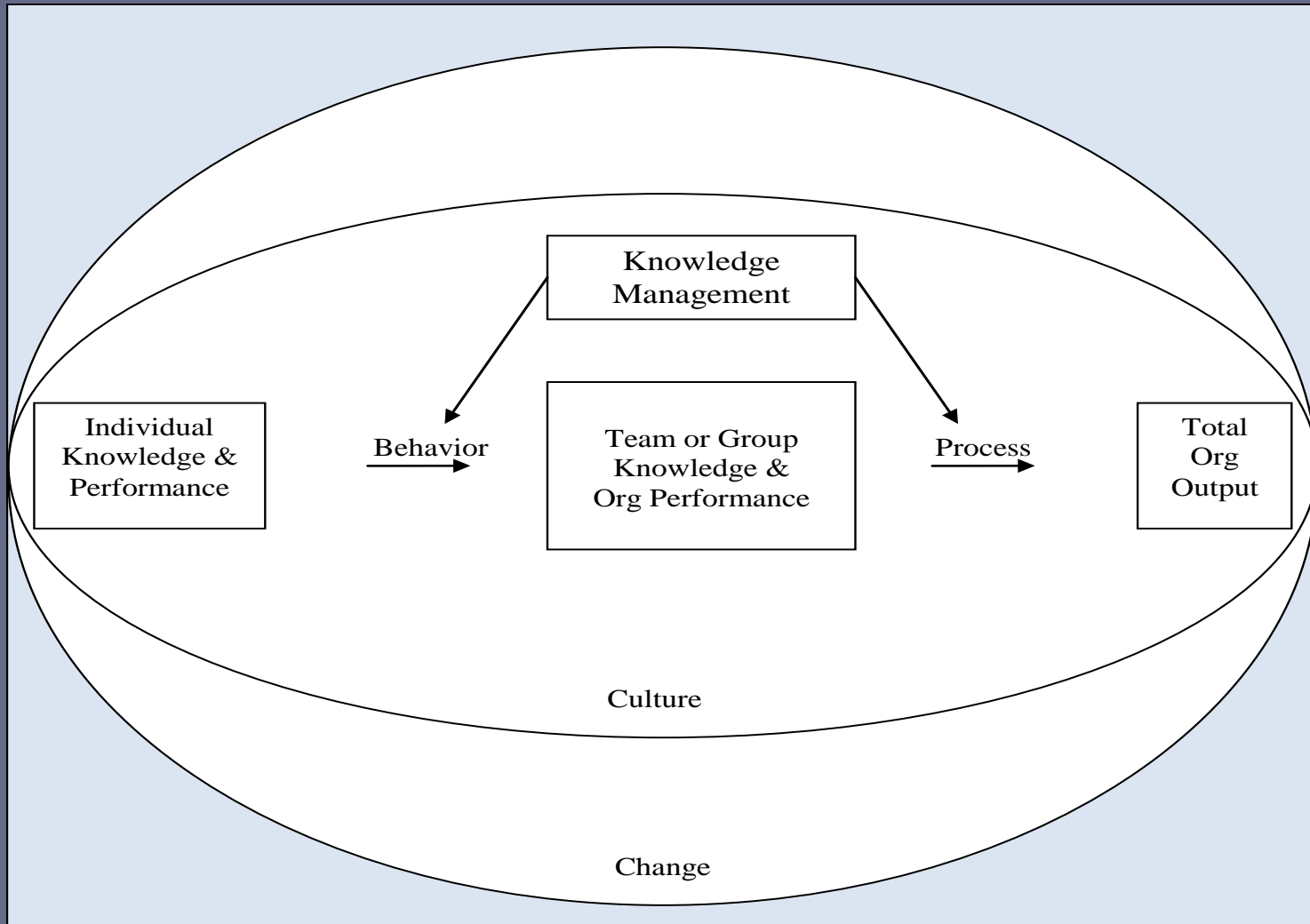
- ▣ A useful working definition states:
 - Knowledge Management “is taken as the tools, techniques, and strategies to retain, analyze, organize, improve, and share business expertise” (Groff & Jones, 2003, p. 2).

Organizational Leveraging

- ▣ Knowledge Management has been successfully implemented on both a large and small scale.
- ▣ A good visual is to think of the implementation being “smeared” across a group rather than being forced onto the workforce.
- ▣ The application of Knowledge Management is most correctly thought of as a moderator on both the individual to team and team to total organization output.

Organizational Leveraging

Knowledge Management organizational leverage points



The Role of Leadership

- ▣ Harnessing the power of the workforce – the power of applying Knowledge Management across an organization
 - Capture supporting techniques to retain information and carry process forward
 - Identify experts and communication paths to correctly staff and structure the organization
 - Support learning in the organization

The Role of Leadership

- ▣ Disciplines that learning organizations follow:
 - Mental models must be changed so that old ways of thinking disappear
 - Personal mastery must open individuals to sharing with one another
 - Systems thinking must be universal so that each individual understands how the company works
 - Shared vision of where the company is going must be held by all
 - Team learning must guide the individuals to work together for the common vision (Senge 1990)

The Role of Leadership

- ▣ Cors (2003) echoes several of Senge's ideas and believes learning organizations facilitate :
 - Vision
 - Leadership
 - Culture
 - Structure
 - Change management
 - Communications
 - Performance management
 - Technology

What Style of Leadership Meets the Needs of Knowledge Management?

- ▣ Management is doing things right, Leadership is doing the right thing (Peter Drucker)

- ▣ Leadership is largely situational reaction
 - Guide whenever possible
 - Watch for and make use of “teachable” moments
 - Be prepared to correct
 - Be prepared to dictate

- ▣ Servant Leadership forms a solid platform to operate from

What are the Characteristics of Servant Leadership?

- ▣ Stand beside those who would look to us and help them learn to accomplish all that they can.
- ▣ Move ahead to clear a path and identify obstacles so that they can be overcome.
- ▣ Serve by giving our all on behalf of those under our leadership.

Where is the Future of Knowledge Management?

- ▣ The future of knowledge management is not unlike the two sides of a coin
- ▣ . . . I can give you perfect information, I can give you perfect knowledge, and it won't change your behavior one iota. People choose not to change their behavior because the culture and the imperatives of the organization make it too difficult to act upon the knowledge. Knowledge is not the power. Power is power. The ability to act on knowledge is power. Most people in most organizations do not have the ability to act on the knowledge they possess. End of story. (Schrage 2007)

Where is the Future of Knowledge Management?

- ▣ “an individual's competitiveness in the job market, as well as the competitiveness of enterprises and industries, will depend more and more on the acquisition and application of knowledge” (Drucker, 1993, p. 176).

Where is the Future of Knowledge Management?

- ▣ It seems our coin will land on its edge with each side calling for the application of personal and corporate knowledge and the implementation of knowledge management to propel business into the future.



Questions and Discussion



What is your role in Knowledge Management?

How will you begin preparing to fill that role?

Resources

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