

## Working across silos

KM Asia 25Nov09

“ While tacit knowledge can be possessed by itself, explicit knowledge must rely on being tacitly understood and applied. Hence all knowledge is either tacit or rooted in tacit knowledge. A wholly explicit knowledge is unthinkable. ”

**Michael Polanyi “Knowing and Being”**

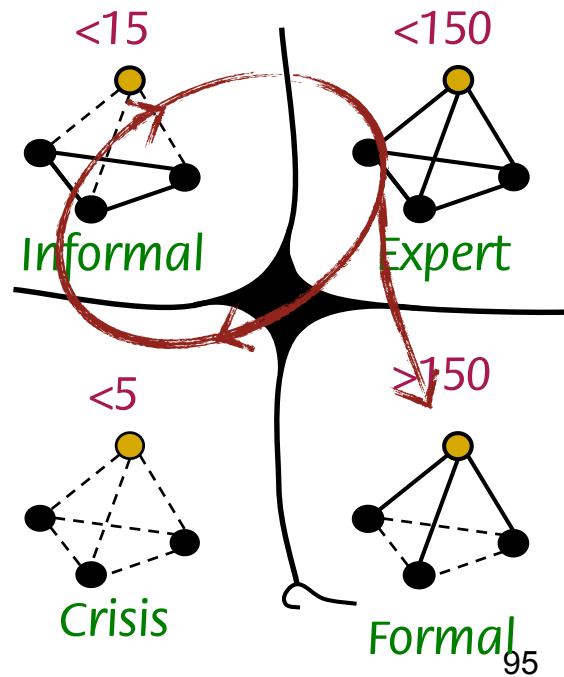
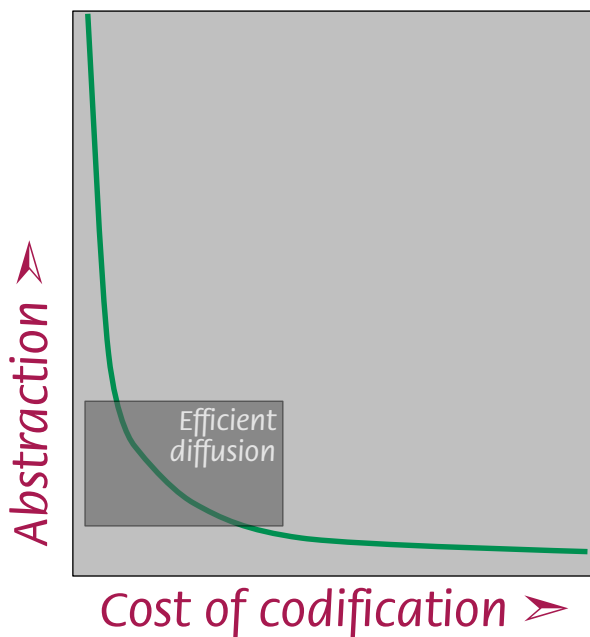
## The tacit dimension

- In the context of real need few people will refuse to share their knowledge, but very few will share knowledge in anticipation of need
- Human knowledge is contextual, its only when you are asked a question that you *know what you know*
- Apprentice models do not transfer the knowledge, they develop the field of practice by *adaptation* and critically *exaptation*
- There are natural limits on *effective* team size: 5 for a crisis, 15 for trust & 150 for *acquaints*

“Nor do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will spill out, and the skins will be ruined. Instead, they pour new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.”

**Mark 9:17**

## Dynamics of knowledge flow

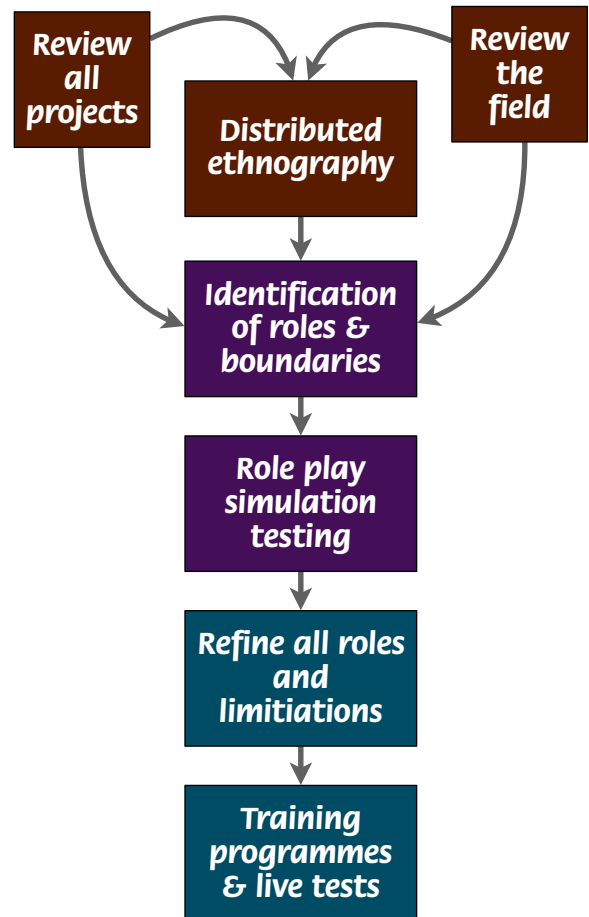


## New wine, new wineskins

- The shift from communities of practice to emergence *patterns of coherence*
- Blog storms & wikis
  - mentored use of blogs by key individuals
  - RSS links and extensions to the wider community
  - [[WP:OWN]] the use of technical writers
  - Identify patterns of linkages and co-dependencies
- Innovation mashups, using linked metadata sets
- Sharing metadata, enabling connections & the criticality of *true* privacy
- New organisational forms, beyond the matrix

## Crews

- Key concepts of *on tour* and *on watch*.
- People are trained in role and expectation of role
- Delegation of authority without loss of status
- Rapid assembly of *teams* without team formation
- Work across silos and boundaries within & without the organisation



## Ethical & related issues

- Abuse and misuse of others knowledge
- SNA and related issues of power and control
- The essential quality of privacy, enabling and enhancing **gifts**
- Avoiding the temptation of order  
*enhancing and embracing the creativity of mess*
- Limits of text based interpretative tools  
*the need for human/machine symbiosis*
- Ethics is a two way street; loyalty & obligation  
*the dehumanizing tyranny of process*

**“** The greatest loss of time is delay and expectation, which depend upon the future. We let go the present, which we have in our power, and look forward to that which depends upon chance, and so relinquish a certainty for an uncertainty **”**

Seneca