

Chapter 10

Knowledge Perspective in Indian Public Sector Undertakings

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the Public Sector Undertakings or PSUs of India are taken for discussion with specific intention. This is because of their shifting paradigm towards outsourcing, partial privatization and divestment since last few years. The Indian PSUs are going for all these strategic steps with main objective of incorporation of knowledge management into them. Knowledge Management process is the activity or initiative that any organization puts in place to enable and facilitate creation, sharing and use of knowledge for organizational benefit. The Indian PSUs are now much worried about the benefit or profitability aspect. They now will have to go strictly for Returns on Investments approach; and apart from all other investments, huge investment in knowledge sources is key requirement for them.

INTRODUCTION

Now days every organization must focus on achieving desired measurable results from its functions. For this, it is essential that organization gather relevant information, organize it and convert that information into measurable results which it is expecting for. Such a skill of converting information into productive outcome is somewhat knowledge. Here the, information is input, knowledge is a process and productive result is output. The organizations shall incorporate the knowledge management tools and techniques in their functional areas. The strategy in organization cannot be formulated without adequate knowledge. The competitive strategy requires relevant information about market, competitor and profit areas. Organization should not gather only relevant information, but also make proper documentation, preservation and application of that information for achieving target goals. It is a process of knowledge management. Knowledge process is the activity or initiative that any organization puts in place to enable and facilitate creation, sharing and use of knowledge for organizational benefit.

Today's knowledge management is not free from various challenges. The organizations must have to consider main challenges of ever changing technology and the measurement of knowledge. The later

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one, i.e measurement of knowledge is perhaps the most challenging aspect because such a measurement is complex and difficult to measure in quantity terms. Another challenge in front of organizations is to hire and to retain knowledge sources i.e people or employees. Today, organizations may consider providing knowledge opportunity as the strong tool of employee motivation.

This chapter is all about the Public Sector Undertakings in India. These types of undertakings have very large, continuous and wide spread business activities. For them, knowledge and its systematic approach is essential mainly for implementation of strategies (task of managers). The top level management i.e the government, as the founder or owner, has to plan various strategies. These strategies are planned out mainly for,

1. Expansion Strategy.
2. Growth Strategy
3. Business Excellence Strategy.

Out of the above, the Business Excellence Strategy is perhaps the most important one. To achieve expected results of business excellence, the knowledge management is essential in the Indian PSUs. However, while going for knowledge perspective, one should not ignore the age factor of manpower presently working in the PSUs. While talking about the labour productivity, age factor of labour could be the main deciding factor. The Public Sector Undertakings or PSUs in India are considered for discussion with specific intention. This is because of their shifting paradigm towards outsourcing, partial privatisation and divestment since last few years. The Indian PSUs are going for all these strategic steps with main objective of incorporation of knowledge management into them. The Indian PSUs are now much worried about the benefit or profitability aspect. They now will have to go strictly for Returns on Investments approach; and apart from all other investments, huge investment in knowledge sources is key requirement for them. The public sector undertakings are owned and managed by the governments (Central and State) of the country with main endeavour of providing development and welfare products/services at affordable prices to all people. So needless to say that inclusiveness is the main goal of the PSUs. In India, recent major observation about these undertakings is the underutilization of their resources and capacity. In fact very few, specific sectors are fully owned by the Indian government and not allowed for the privatisation. These sectors are railways, atomic energy and explosive material. The other public sector undertakings like banks, financial markets, electricity, transport, communication, port trusts, media, education etc. are now needed to be much competitive because of presence of large number of private players around them. Due to this the chapter focuses on knowledge management for the selected types of organizations mainly from quantifiable basis, in spite of the fact that knowledge management is multi dimensional concept and knowledge output could not be possibly measured in quantity terms often. But its evaluation is must; as now days efforts are made to convert implicit knowledge into explicit knowledge.

BACKGROUND

The chapter focuses on studying knowledge management concept mainly from financial or quantifiable perspective. The Indian Public Sector Undertakings are intentionally selected because of their present performance, growth strategy and excellence in managing businesses.

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