

Passing the Baton: Sharing Business Knowledge with the new generation

As baby boomers reach the age of retirement, not only will we find ourselves with a shortage in the workforce, we will also lose the wealth of tacit knowledge that these people possess. To prevent the knowledge and experience from following them out the door, organizations need to strategically plan for the large waves of retirement that will take place over the next 5-10 years.

Most of us know that with time and experience comes a certain “savoir-faire” that is not easily transmitted to another person. How do I show you, tell you what I seem to know intuitively? Being in an age of knowledge workers, it is essential to understand the process of cross-organizational learning and transfer of knowledge, which keeps most organizations on the cutting edge and ahead of the competition.

A company whose people can learn together can in effect build together and create a much stronger market presence.

Certain tools can be used to help effectively pass information from one “generation” to the next or from one person to another. In order to build strong “learning organizations” learning circles, action learning sets, and the more traditional mentoring models can be used to capitalize on the rich talent that exists within the organization.

Learning circles are set up to allow for the proper transfer of information and enable individuals to learn and build upon each other’s strengths. Meeting on a regular basis the group who either come from different parts of the organization or within a single department benefit greatly from the “know how” and experience of others.

In this process an experienced facilitator works with the team to establish objectives, norms and timelines. Not only does this process allow for maximum sharing between colleagues, it allows more junior people to benefit from the knowledge of seasoned professionals. As such, when the baby boomers begin to leave the workforce, they will have imparted their knowledge to the next generation.

The mission of New Horizons Organizational Effectiveness Consultants is to help organizations of all sizes maximize on the talent and strengths that exists within teams and organizations as a whole. For more information on its services please visit www.nhorizons.ca.