

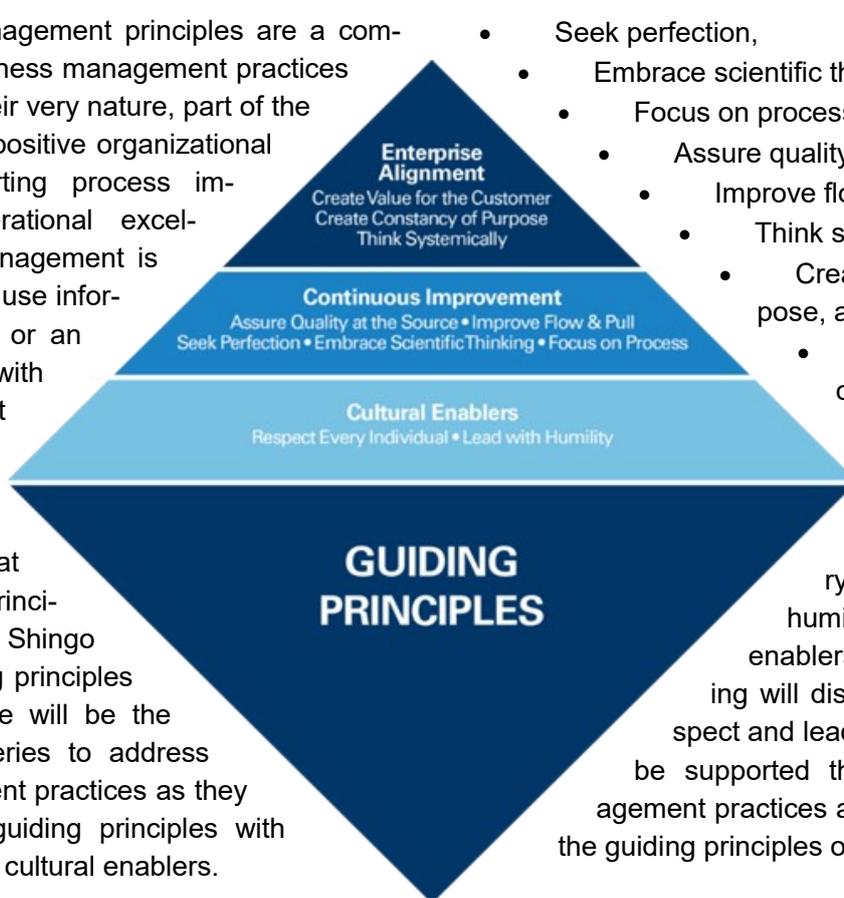
KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND THE SHINGO GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PART 1: CULTURAL ENABLERS



by Cynthia J. Young | CJ Young Consulting, LLC

Knowledge management principles are a component of business management practices that are, by their very nature, part of the method of building a positive organizational culture while supporting process improvement and operational excellence. Knowledge management is about knowing how to use information that a person or an organization has, with many processes that include sharing, transferring, coordinating, capturing, and accessing that knowledge. These principles are part of the Shingo Model and the guiding principles of Shingo. This article will be the first of three in a series to address knowledge management practices as they support the Shingo guiding principles with this article focusing on cultural enablers.



- Seek perfection,
- Embrace scientific thinking,
- Focus on process,
- Assure quality at the source,
- Improve flow and pull,
- Think systemically,
- Create constancy of purpose, and
- Create value for the customer (Shingo Institute, 2020).

Of the ten guiding principles, respect every individual and lead with humility reside in the cultural enablers subsection. The following will discuss the concepts of respect and leadership and how they can be supported through knowledge management practices and, ultimately, to support the guiding principles of the Shingo Model.

Introduction to the Shingo Guiding Principles

The Shingo Guiding Principles (Figure 1) are "the basis for building a sustainable culture of organizational excellence" categorized into three subsections of cultural enablers, continuous improvement, and enterprise alignment (Shingo Institute, 2020).

Per the Shingo Model, there are ten guiding principles:

- Respect every individual,
- Lead with humility,

Shingo Guiding Principle: Respect Every Individual

Respect every individual is defined as: *Respect must become something that is deeply felt for and by every person in an organization. Respect for every individual naturally includes respect for customers, suppliers, the community and society in general. Individuals are energized when this type of respect is demonstrated. Most associates will say that to be respected is the most important thing they want from their employment.*

(continues next page)



When people feel respected, they give far more than their hands—they give their minds and hearts as well." (Shingo Institute, 2020)

Melhem and Al Qudah (2019) collected data from 181 respondents and found a positive relationship between respect from management, trust, and work engagement. If there is no mutual respect, collective knowledge sharing and transferring the knowledge will not flow throughout the organization (Dalkir, 2005). When there is a lack of trust or respect, knowledge sharing will not occur.

As a Lean principle, respect for people includes involving all people with various backgrounds, skills, and experiences in accessing knowledge (Gong & Blijleven, 2017). Knowledge sharing increases the trust between organizational members and respect. It creates a corporate culture where being social and socially sharing knowledge increases respect and benefits the organization (Dalkir, 2005). In turn, this supports the Shingo Guiding Principle of respect every individual through in-



Respect for individuals and lead with humility are not options for a healthy business.

Lead with Humility

Lead with humility is defined as: *One common trait among leading practitioners of enterprise excellence is a sense of humility. Humility is an enabling principle that precedes learning and improvement. A leader's willingness to seek input, listen carefully and continuously learn creates an environment where associates feel respected and energized and give freely of their creative abilities. Improvement is only possible when people are willing to acknowledge their vulnerability and abandon bias and prejudice in their pursuit of a better way.* (Shingo Institute, 2020).

Leadership is about taking care of people who work for you or who look up to you. Leadership is also a fundamental part of dynamic knowledge creation (Nonaka, Toyama, & Konno,

leader deserves better than the people they are leading because of their knowledge.

Leaders may hold knowledge of processes or procedures. Still, part of leadership is knowing how to mentor others to pass down their tacit knowledge or knowledge gained through their experiences. The tacit expertise shared should include both successes and failures.

Conclusion

A knowledge management system must include integration with the organizational culture to respect the employees and the employees' knowledge of the business and the need for the humility of those who lead their teams to meet its objectives. Respect for individuals and lead with humility are not options for a healthy business. A business cannot succeed in plans alone. It

clusion and recognition of everyone's contributions and capabilities to knowledge management.

2000). Humility is doing things without being arrogant or thinking you are better than others. Concerning knowledge management, lead with humility can mean leading people without feeling a sense of entitlement or feeling that the

must include thought and knowledge with a strong workforce behind both for success. Knowledge management practices support the Shingo Model because they are already part of the Shingo Guiding Principles. ■



Shingo Guiding Principle: