Information Taxonomy & Knowledge Mapping

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Discussion Questions

• Is there any consistency in information classification across the organization?
  – How would such consistency be defined?
  • defined?
  • beneficial?
Structure within a mess

• Hierarchical organization of information
  – Categories – like original Yahoo directory

• Networked information
  – Cross-referenced links – like web surfing
  – Within & between silos of information

• Searchable mess of information
  – Embedded similarity – like Google search
  – Requires knowledge of search boundary
Taxonomy of information

• Taxonomy is the organization of information
  – Context not found by search alone
    • Hierarchical relationships
    • Cross-relationships

• Driven by usability
  – Makes intuitive sense
    • Terminology & common sense linkages
  – Uses both technical & common language
  – Allows multiple pathways to information for
    • Classifying new content
    • Locating existing content
  – Known & available to those who need to know
    • Yet with adequate security controls
Requirements

• Goal is not to have a perfect taxonomy, but one that is adequate and can be improved
• Multiple approaches to classification
• All information should be classifiable
• Each category should be distinct
• Category depth within reason
  – Add sub-categories (sub-folders) as necessary as folders get too large
• Easy to classify & maintain information
Information Organization

• Does not require a central database
  – Silos are not a problem with sufficient linkages from other entry points
  – Local control with global availability

• Origin of Information identifiers
  – Primary – title or name of document
  – Meta – information about the information
  – Detail – the content itself
Presentation of Taxonomy

• Alphabetical list

• Hierarchical relationships
  – Organizational source
  – Functional use
  – Knowledge form
    • Best practice, lessons learned, behavioral, business, individual, collective, customer, etc.

• Linked in context with other information

• Searchable mess
  – Content alone
  – Meta data
Knowledge Mapping

• Visual information relationships
  – Can use multiple approaches to taxonomy
    • Document centric
    • User or expertise centric
      – How users think about their work
  – Scaleable both upward & downward
    • Hierarchical levels of detail (summarize/blow-up)
    • Across knowledge silos (cross linked)
    • Expert & novice levels (multiple entry points)
  – Can be expanded to business process mapping
K-mapping Action Plan

• Agree upon knowledge mapping as needed
• Understand the domain of each search engine
• Identify opportunities
  – What is difficult to find or access?
• Identify & map
  – Taxonomy in use for each knowledge base
    • Only down to the level of detail needed
    • Identify missing navigation & voids
  – Linkages between knowledge elements
    • Use existing structure wherever possible
  – How to interpret & use the information
    • Link to expertise (document or person)
  – Meta information (often not used, unfortunately)