

# **“What is Knowledge Management, Anyway?”**

## **An Introduction**

EXT: LIBRARY

Street sounds. Opening TITLES and MUSIC.

INT: LIBRARY READING ROOM

It's a quiet, hushed environment. People read at large tables. PAN across books.

SETH EARLEY (VO)

“Knowledge management.” Pretty weighty term, huh? What does it mean? Maybe it sounds to you like just another business “flavor of the month.” But there's actually more to it than that.

Pan to SETH EARLEY. He's at a table, holding a book.

SETH

Hi, I'm Seth Earley. Now, to get beyond the hype and get a handle on what knowledge management really is, we need to take a step back and look at some of our assumptions about knowledge itself. You might assume, for example, that you'd look for knowledge in places like this library.

He closes the book.

Well, sometimes yes, but often not. For instance, you probably know how to ride a bicycle. Most people do.

VARIOUS: B-ROLL

Kid learning to ride a bike.

SETH (VO)

And you didn't learn how by reading an instructional manual first. You learned by doing. You probably fell a few times. Once you gained that crucial experience, you knew. But it wasn't written down anywhere.

INT: LIBRARY READING ROOM

SETH

Business knowledge can be the same kind of thing. It's not "just the facts." It includes the experience of the person digesting those facts and the context they're in, as well.

He looks around the room.

So even if you wanted to read all the books in the library, in the end, what you'd be getting would be just "information." Not knowledge.

Person doing data entry on computer.

There's a lot of information -- a whole lot of it, as you know -- stored in reference libraries and company databases. Like, say, the capital of Ghana. Or last year's revenues. In and of itself it really has no value.

Stock market floor.

It's what you do with that information that makes it knowledge, and in turn, it's how your company handles knowledge that turns it into a business advantage. That's the basic premise of knowledge management.

INT: LARRY PRUSAK'S OFFICE

Larry and Seth talk with book in background.

SETH (VO)

We talked to Larry Prusak, the co-author of Working Knowledge, and IBM's resident knowledge management expert.

PRUSAK

As the economy changes, knowledge itself is becoming a currency, a resource that's every bit as important as labor and capital. In that environment, a firm's only sustainable edge is its ability to leverage and utilize its knowledge.