

KM and OWL

Three definitions:

Knowledge is the capacity for effective action.

The systematic process of identifying, capturing, and transferring knowledge people can use to improve.

With good knowledge, people can make better decisions faster and take more intelligent action.

What is Knowledge Management (KM)?

KM is a way to gather relevant information, ideas and wisdom from staff throughout the camp season and between camp seasons. If the information is not recorded when people leave camp, they take all their knowledge and wisdom with them. KM is a way of recording that useful knowledge so it can be kept within the organization and grow over time. Why reinvent the wheel time and time again?

When KM is shared with others or with new staff, the idea isn't "here is the one right way" but rather "here are some ways that have worked/not worked before." Because something has been KM'd in the past, doesn't mean you can't add or modify the KM to include a different way of doing things that you found helpful. KM is an investment into the future of camp programs, staff and campers.

What do we KM?

EVERYTHING!! KM anything you think has serious potential to be helpful to someone else in the future or to improve processes at camp by making them more efficient, provide higher quality programming or make things easier for future staff or campers. The idea is, if someone is having a problem or needs an idea or suggestion they can look back and see what other people have done in a similar scenario. It is all the most exciting ideas from previous years' staff that you have at your fingertips! KM is also part of the process that has created the Camp Augusta program that you are a part of today. The structure of the daily and weekly schedule, the staff manuals and website documents, the info needed to order program materials, the logistics behind evening programs, playstation and the CIRCLE program, the kitchen menu...all of these were gathered at some point as KM points put into process. We also KM mistakes, so that we don't repeat them. Otherwise, an otherwise bright idea turned wrong can also happen again.

Spontaneity/Creativity - What is the relationship between that and KM?

Recall that documented KM is not a way of referencing "the way things are" therefore although there are tons of collected ideas gathered over the years, there is always room for something new. In fact, in order to inspire wish, wonder and surprise in campers, new and exciting aspects of camp are a requirement.

How is spontaneity/creativity fed through KM/OWL?

Perhaps one PS idea from last year sparks another or sparks a station for an EP. By looking at a list of off-the-wall yet successful evening embers or cabin activities, another counselor might feel more sure of the notion that "the sky is the limit" at Augusta.

In addition to the inspiration that can come from other people's ideas, not needing to create all processes from the ground up each year or each session allows us to build upon the past rather than dealing with the basics of functioning. In the kitchen, KM on quantities of pizza for a certain size group might allow the kitchen staff to be inspired to create a new topping combination since they aren't worried they will create too much or too little pizza as a whole.

How is it hindered by it?

As with using KM for inspiration, this is a choice. If you choose to simply repeat things the exact same each year or each session, the processes that are KM'd will become "the way things are" rather than inspire future creativity. Which do you choose?

How do we KM?

By writing/typing, videotaping, taking photographs or speaking with other people that will be doing these things later that day. Both what worked well, and what did not work well is recorded. KM can be quick... perhaps a brief conversation with your VL or a couple of notes jotted on a piece of paper and dropped into the suggestion box. It can also take some time, sometimes more than you have on your hour off or evening. If you would like some time off of programming for the purpose of KMing, please talk to the PDs who can help arrange this. Jotting down a few notes to remind yourself of what you wanted to document might be helpful. The "notes" sections in your staff manuals are useful places to do this.

KM does not need to just come from staff. In the past, campers have chosen to participate as a cabin in a nightly KM meeting. They will often tell you their impression of a clinic or evening program...this is important feedback

to note in addition to their weekly eval feedback. Some campers like to be involved in the brainstorming of new clinics, t-shirt ideas or playstations even when camp is not in session, so they email us with their ideas. They are invested in camp just as much as we are! Can you think of other ways to get campers involved? If so, suggest it to your campers and see if it flies.

Giving Effective KM

KM meetings are not a time to sit and complain about things that didn't go perfect in the day/week although sometimes with a few criticisms in a row, it can feel that way. Choose the attitude you wish to approach the situation and you'd be surprised what an impact it can have. While giving feedback please remember that each program is someone's creation and a lot of work has been put into them. The creators of the programs or other area mentioned for improvement are also invested in KM as they understand that KM assists them towards improvement. If you feel something could be modified, constructive criticism is the key to effective change.

As a community, we may help one of our members using NVC to reframe the discussion by rephrasing their statement to something like "What I hear you saying is that you felt (feeling) when (event/action) occurred. You would prefer that (tomorrow/next session) when we do this again that perhaps we..." This can be a helpful reminder and assist in redirecting the conversation where it meets everyone's needs for peace and contribution. J

Example:

Constructive Feedback	Destructive Feedback
Counselor to MF&G: Would it be possible to send out the program assignments to staff a couple days before the program is run? When they are sent the same day, I don't always have time to have any questions clarified. Perhaps the assignments could be emailed out on Saturdays or Sundays? What do you think? (Note that a solution is also offered here)	Counselor to MF&G: I hate how unprepared I am for my station when I receive my assignment in the afternoon! It makes me feel rushed. If you sent them out earlier, everyone wouldn't be so frustrated.

When contributing a note to written KM or KM meetings, look toward the bigger picture. Will this influence process? Does it make a difference to the outcome if it is done this way or that? If it won't, it need not be said or noted.

Method	When is this method used?
Night time KM meeting	Held after evening program is cleaned up; a time to reflect on the day. Stop-Start-Continue is often used to structure the discussion as we look at the day as a whole and individual parts of the day. All staff members are welcome to attend. Since this is during evening embers time for counseling staff, if you would like to attend a KM meeting, please speak to your VL, the PDs or ADs to help arrange this. You can also express your thoughts to one of the above or a HERO and they can relay the information for you.
KM computer folder	Type your thoughts on the computer and email the completed KM to one of the following: PDs - Program related. MF&G - evening program & playstation, VLs - counselor/camper, ADs - kitchen, nurses, risk management and everything else. The KM will be sorted into the appropriate folder on the server and made available to all staff.
Drop boxes/envelopes	KM sheets and an envelope to return them in are on the cork board in the staff house and outside the office. Fill this out while you're hanging out in the staff house during your hour or night off. This can be anonymous if you prefer.
Notices in cubbies	You may get KM surveys and requests in your cubby. Please fill these out as completely as you can and return to the person/people requesting your thoughts.
Anonymous email drop	www.gmail.com - campaugusta is the username, community is the password. Use this to send an anonymous email to the ADs and/or Randy.
Notices posted in cubby room	There may be info posted regarding KM here. Please feel free to add to what is written as well.
Surveys	Used to gather confidential feedback from campers and staff. May be handed out at meals, the counselor acts as scribe for the campers. Camper and parent evals are also a form of gathering KM.

What happens next?

The next step of KM is implementing knowledge gained into processes. There are few things more frustrating than spending an hour collecting KM only to have the exact same problem occur the next week because the information never arrived at someone who could make a change. You can help with this process by assisting delivery. Email your KM, place it in the appropriate person's cubby, give it to them in written form directly or ask them to set aside some time to chat. The PDs, ADs, VLs and MF&G will likely not deal directly with implementing all of the KM they receive but they will ensure it arrives at the person best able to put it into practice. Depending on your desired involvement, you may work together to implement your ideas.

KM to Process - the most important step in the chain!!

How does a given KM note get turned into something that will just become the current state of wisdom?

- All relevant clinic leaders informed and given opportunity to contribute to discussion
- Lesson plans, PS documents or EP documents are updated
- Being included in staff training / staff manual
- Divide KM into High / Medium / Low priority; always do the high priority, do the medium when possible, and get the low priority KM when time allows. Also look into the "Randy Pausch" time management method (see YouTube or Education Drive).

K M v s . O W L

As a KM note becomes part of current and future practice it is documented in a more organized fashion with other related process notes...this is known as OWL (Organized Wisdom and Learning). For example, at the night time KM meeting someone mentions that they figured out a great way to teach kids how to do back flips without them hurting themselves! This is noted in the KM gathering document and is shared with all relevant staff members who try it out for themselves, but is not considered to be OWL until it is added to the appropriate lesson plan (and maybe videotaped as well!). When someone goes to teach this clinic, they won't be looking through the KM from a particular session, they will look in the lesson plan folder expecting to find this type of wisdom.

Another way to look at the difference between the two is think of KM as the collection and direct implementation of knowledge whereas OWL is a collection of the best practices and wisdom.

How have I or will I benefit from KM & OWL?

Before you even came to camp, you went through a selection process that has been designed to help us find good fits for Augusta and ensure that Augusta is a good fit for you. By knowing that you are in a place that is a good place for you, you are already benefiting from the OWL collected. All info on the website that is available to staff and/or parents is KM of some sort with an attempt to keep people fully informed of what Camp Augusta is all about. The careful planning of staff training each year, the clinic lesson plans and development processes for evening programs, the lists of embers and cabin activity ideas to inspire you, and the manual you are reading are all part of this collected wisdom (massively evolving every year!) that is being passed onto you and campers as well as Augustans of the future. The next time you arrive at storytelling campfire and realize that the hot chocolate is already poured or is in the process of being poured so that your campers don't need to wait and get distracted before the first tale, remember that at one point someone realized that it would be more efficient to do it this way and would provide less unengaged time for campers...you benefit from this because it provides less opportunity for campers to misbehave while they are unengaged and all you feel is the flow of an evening designed to meet the needs of campers and counselors alike!

How do we inspire contributions to KM and OWL

- Pre-and post-season OWL work (and a budget to support it) so that efforts are not as squished into the summer
- We hire more people so that KM/OWL is possible. If you took that out, we could run camp with 2-4 less people in the summer, and one less year round
- Have dedicated OWL time that is not a normal hour off
- Create awareness before staff arrive and during staff training about KM and OWL
- Accessibility and user-friendliness of the OWL (always a work in progress...any suggestions? Talk to Melissa!)

Is this the best use of our time? - OWL vs. normal camp operations/balance

There are many considerations for time not spent directly in the clinic hours. The PDs have a rubric for prioritizing time spent not doing clinics and would be happy to share this with you if you are curious. Examples of other requests for time away from clinics include PL/Wookiee hour, evening program prep, work projects, new program creation, etc. Sometimes it can also work to have some folks off for evening program if the request cannot be met during clinic times

and the quality of programming will not be affected too much. There is a balance we must seek with KM/OWL gathering influencing campers now for the benefit of campers later.

FYI

- Ø Companies that score high on KM measures have MORE new products than those with lower scores. They are also more profitable with similar resources.
- Ø IBM, which used to sell products like computers, sold their laptop and computer business (now called Lenovo and bought by the Chinese), because they found out that the KM business was far more lucrative, and now that's how they make most of their money.
- Ø Accenture is another company like that, perhaps the largest, and they have influenced so many companies with KM practices that you likely touch one of them every day of your life.