

Knowledge Management Mobilization in the Social Sciences and Humanities- Book Review

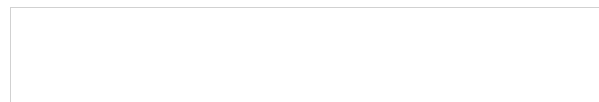


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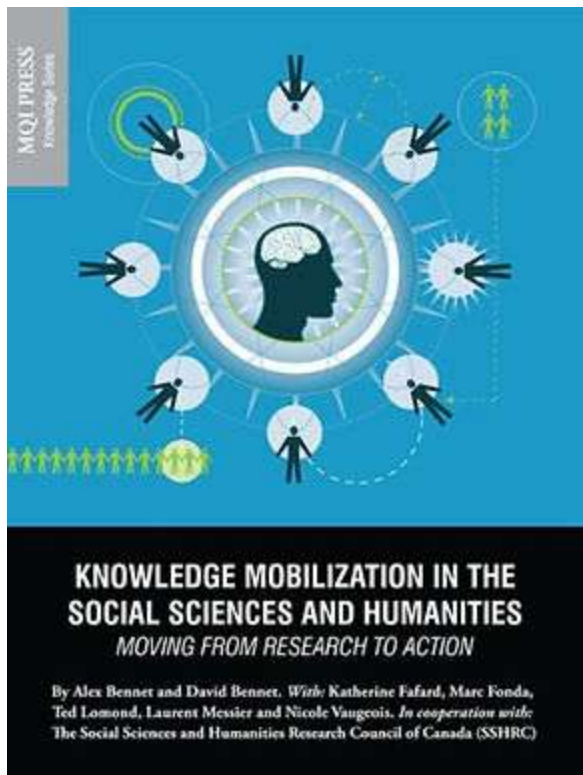
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Knowledge Management Mobilization in the Social Sciences and Humanities by Alex Bennet and David Bennet presents a structured approach to bridging the gap between research and practice. By engaging stakeholders, enabling knowledge flow, and applying iterative learning processes, it helps transform academic insights into actionable

outcomes that create real societal and organizational value.



Introduction

The book "**Knowledge Management Mobilization in the Social Sciences and Humanities: Moving from Research to Action**" is a book written in 2007 by **Alex & David Bennet**, complementing and continuing a series of books by the couple, some of which we have already reviewed in this summary repository (such as "[Inside Innovation](#)," "[Innovative Creativity](#)"). The issue this book addresses and the reason it was written is, in my opinion, exciting and relates in one way or another to a challenge that concerns us all: the disconnect between research and practice. The background: The Canadian government realized that research was being conducted, but the knowledge remained in academia and was not sufficiently transferred to the field, specifically in the social sciences and humanities. The book's purpose is to propose a methodology for mobilizing this knowledge.

Main topic

- Theoretical background
- Knowledge mobilization plan
- Integrating stakeholders in the process
- Products, results, and success evaluation

At the end of the book, two case studies are presented, one between academia and community, and the other demonstrating how, within an organization, the same methodology can be used with slight modifications to facilitate knowledge transfer between the older and younger generations. Hence, not only is the knowledge offered in the book relevant to every society, but parts of it can apply to any organization.

Theoretical Background

Knowledge Mobilization: Terms

- **Knowledge Mobilization:** The process of creating value from focused knowledge resulting from the development, implementation, leveraging, sharing, and application of knowledge in a defined community.
- **Knowledge Creation:** The outcome of a process where people think, feel, learn, and converse (interact).
- **Knowledge Development:** The directed creation of knowledge through research, experimentation, or analysis of a specific field to expand human understanding.
- **Knowledge:** The ability (potential or practical) to perform effective action. [Knowledge without action is waste, while action without knowledge is dangerous]. [Information in the hands of people becomes knowledge and action. Action that maximizes value creates additional activities and,

through feedback, returns to people to develop new knowledge and action].

- **Wisdom:** The ability to apply knowledge to benefit the individual, community, and humanity.
- **Knowledge Management:** A systematic approach to optimizing human capital to advance objectives. [Knowledge management is a broad field aimed at improving organizations through creating, sharing, leveraging, and applying knowledge.]

Knowledge Mobilization: Organizing Principles

- The essence of knowledge mobilization is supporting the process of learning and sharing knowledge through the conscious development of connections, human relationships, and knowledge flow among all stakeholders.
- Knowledge itself is a source of energy and empowerment for guiding performance improvement.
- A comprehensive knowledge mobilization plan leads to continuous value creation.
- Knowledge mobilization is a process of collaborative value creation for the community's knowledge needs using Pull and Push tools.
- In knowledge mobilization, attention must be given to bringing knowledge to different participants and what participants can do with the acquired knowledge.
- The knowledge mobilization process requires flexibility from stakeholders regarding the knowledge they already possess; it allows them to create a shared, new, transparent, and objective understanding of the situation while creating a shared knowledge community among them.
- To succeed in the knowledge mobilization process and avoid incorrect knowledge resulting from a "broken telephone" in the process, it is

appropriate to incorporate second-order learning processes (feedback, learning about learning, critical thinking).

- For the knowledge mobilization process to succeed, various people are required; diversity is a source of friction, learning, and creativity. However, "orchestration" and proactive activity are needed to achieve suitable and enriching diversity.
- The knowledge mobilization plan must reflect the types of change that the community seeks to achieve for it to be effective.
- The benefits of knowledge mobilization are not always apparent in the immediate term.

Knowledge Characteristics

Knowledge of the mobilization process can vary from case to case and be of varying complexity.

Seven levels of possible knowledge taxonomy (context-dependent):

1. **KMETA:** Meta-knowledge. Knowledge about knowledge, its creation, characteristics, flow, and integration.
2. **KRESEARCH:** Theoretical and evidence-based knowledge regarding theories, laws, and principles explaining phenomena.
3. **KPRAXIS:** Practical knowledge concerning laws, heuristics, change management, and explanations of how systems work.
4. **KACTION:** Knowledge in action. Often tacit. Local knowledge guides us in routine operations.
5. **KDESCRIPTION:** Knowledge consisting of descriptive information - who, what, where, and when
6. **KSTRATEGIC:** Strategic knowledge about action, activity, or task; long-term impact on the community.
7. **KLEARN:** Knowledge related to the knowledge mobilization team's personal, group, or organizational learning methods.

Knowledge is always context-dependent, and people create meaning and understanding based on context. The more shared context patterns between knowledge providers (academia) and recipients (field), the deeper the shared experience can be.

There are eight different perspectives for understanding context:

1. **Content:** Focus on the content itself.
2. **Setting:** Environment; framework
3. **Silent Attention / Presence:** Context that is acknowledged but not expressed
4. **Associated Information Signals:** Non-verbal communication patterns
5. **Shared Context:** Shared information patterns in the given system
6. **Personal Context:** Personal context. Based on beliefs, opinions, experiences, and feelings
7. **The Unconscious:** Subconscious context
8. **Pattern Context:** High levels of related patterns are produced during the thinking process.

Complementary approaches to knowledge mobilization:

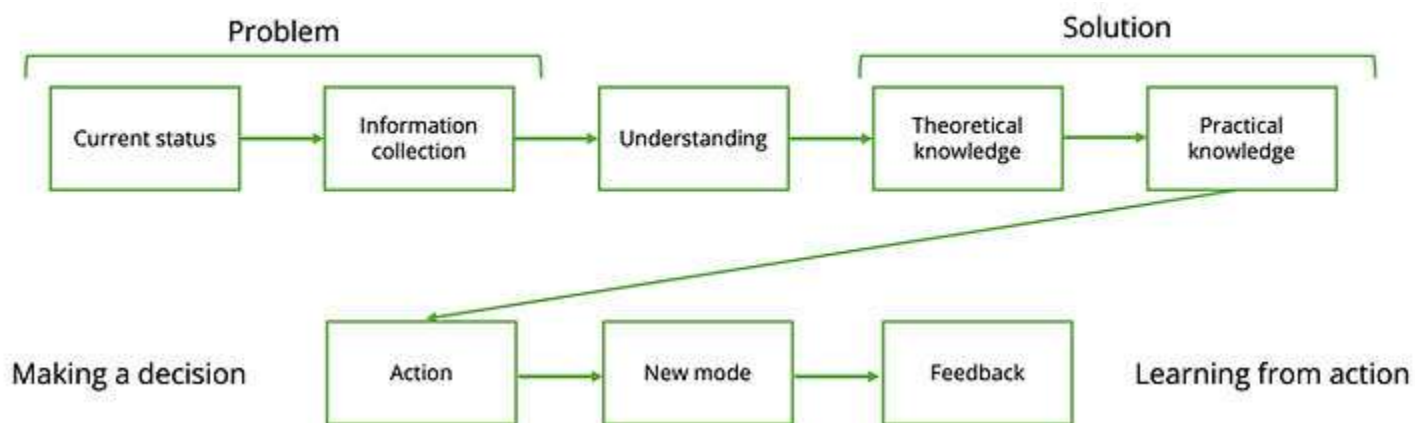
- **Action Learning:** Organizational learning based on demonstrating case descriptions and results
- **Action Research:** In this context, research based on a solid field understanding of its needs and related knowledge
- **Appreciative Inquiry:** Discovering appreciation of the best in people as a way of thinking and promoting change
- **Community Service Learning:** Integrating academic learning with field service experience during learning

- **Social Marketing:** Influencing people's behaviors in the community based on accepted marketing concepts.

Knowledge Mobilization Plan

Stages of Knowledge Mobilization

A knowledge mobilization plan includes the following eight stages:



Notes:

- A knowledge mobilization plan can be applied to address a problem and realize an opportunity.
- This is a spiral plan; feedback leads to a new situation and understanding, and the continuation is derived. Although it's not the goal of the process, knowledge continues to grow as a result.
- Understanding influences theoretical, practical, and action knowledge and is influenced by the new situation and feedback.
- The plan's success depends on choosing appropriate activities and the way and depth of connecting partners.
- Information flow, understanding, meaning, and implementation must be supported throughout the process until the desired value is created.

- It should be taken into account that the knowledge mobilization process has challenges, mainly communication, knowledge transfer, turning knowledge into action, change management, and the need for learning by knowledge recipients.

The typical possible actions for knowledge mobilization are detailed in the following chapter.

Connecting partners - in the chapters that follow.

Key Success Factors for the Plan:

1. User-friendly format
2. Commitment and enthusiasm of stakeholders
3. Appropriate resources
4. Guidance and handover strategies
5. Time, energy, and attention
6. Alignment between researched knowledge and the needs of field practitioners
7. Ability to have shared discourse about findings
8. Knowledge sharing and collaboration between role-holders
9. Ongoing dialogue
10. Shared insights
11. Selection of diverse activities
12. Reaching out and focused outreach beyond traditional circles (academia and field)
13. Experimental approach to implementation as well
14. Willingness to try new directions; openness to listening and learning
15. Action-orientation (not just process-oriented)
16. Dedicated opportunity to discover and share research
17. Professionals working together in development and boundary expansion

18.Appreciative feedback approach

19.Learning from action

Research literacy, information literacy, communication channel literacy, knowledge mobilization literacy, and systems thinking literacy are also required to succeed in knowledge mobilization.

The plan itself will be managed as a project—from the initiation and planning stages through launch, expansion, growth, maintenance, and long-term sustainability to the formal closure of the program while ensuring evaluation, documentation, lesson learning, and celebration of the conclusion.

Knowledge Mobilization Actions

Knowledge mobilization will include a variety of integrated actions.

These can include one-time and long-term actions, accompanied by tools that allow for repetition, scaling up, and accelerating the process.

Details:

Knowledge Transfer Events

Explanation: Meetings between stakeholders.

Goal: Creating interaction between stakeholders to enhance knowledge transfer in its various stages.

Examples: Advisory committee, launch, colloquium, community meeting, conference, competition, exhibition, festival, focus group, and more.

Knowledge Transfer Infrastructures

Explanation: Basic tools and processes in the context of knowledge mobilization.
Goal: Supporting and facilitating the feasibility of knowledge mobilization.
Examples: Consulting services, translation, presentation preparation, and media channels.

Knowledge Maintenance

Explanation: Tools and processes that enable long-term use of knowledge.
Goal: Ensuring the sustainability of transferred knowledge.
Examples: Portal, document repository, social media channel, and even a "meme" image database.

Stakeholder Integration

Key Roles

The main partners in a knowledge mobilization program include:

- Academic researchers: Studying and understanding theories, concepts, relationships, and relevant real-world aspects of the field.
- Participants: Understanding researchers' knowledge and transferring it to the community.
- Community leader: Leading the community (and themselves) to change and action based on the learned knowledge.
- Influential stakeholders: Figures in industry, politics, education, and business interested in the learned knowledge. Their role is to support and enable knowledge reception and subsequent change.
- Community members are knowledge contributors who influence the research from the outset and knowledge recipients who are affected and changed by it.

It should be considered that different role holders have different perspectives and need to understand and act simultaneously, each in their own way.

Stakeholders will take part in learning processes and knowledge mobilization processes, as detailed:

Learning

Stakeholder integration should begin with joint learning long before there are knowledge products to mobilize.

1. **Social learning is valuable.** It can occur when individuals with experience and knowledge share their understanding through conversations, storytelling, or dialogue.
2. **Personal learning:** Don't skip. Learn where each individual can access their tacit knowledge to share with others. Accessing tacit knowledge can be done using various techniques such as meditation, self-questioning, daydreaming, synchronizing the right and left brain hemispheres and reflective questioning. Sharing discovered tacit knowledge is not always straightforward, and possible tools for its implementation include small communities, context-aware learning (mindful thinking), and more.
3. **Collaborative learning:** One of the more effective ways to create a learning environment and generate shared understanding among stakeholders.
4. **Formal learning:** Learning within an academic framework of a university or research institute while exchanging knowledge with the field. In formal education, involving students in learning and knowledge mobilization processes and children and youth in schools is essential. In the new world, they possess complementary knowledge and are even experts in social media and its content.

Knowledge Mobilization

Integrating stakeholders in the knowledge mobilization process can be challenging. The shared role of stakeholders is to enable optimal knowledge flow between theoretical knowledge (the what), practical wisdom (the how), and knowledge in motion (implementation)

The community and its leader play a central role in the mobilization process. To integrate stakeholders, consideration should be given to possible frameworks that will engage them and advance knowledge mobilization:

1. **Knowledge networks** - communities of interest, learning communities, research communities, communities of practice.
2. **Governance mechanisms** - advisory committee, steering committee, project team, evaluation team.
3. **Change management programs** - integrating change leaders responsible, each in their area, to serve as agents for knowledge mobilization.

Naturally, the project manager has a vital role in integrating stakeholders through their actions and conduct, which can be a crucial factor for success. This includes creating and demonstrating a respectful, fair, equitable environment focused on efficiency and effectiveness and leveraging knowledge whenever possible.

Products, Results, and Success Evaluation

The desired outcome of a knowledge mobilization process is straightforward: influencing people and society, following the essence of the learned knowledge.

The products are stored and managed using tools and processes that enable long-term use of knowledge (see the Knowledge Maintenance section in the Activities chapter above).

Evaluating success is essential. The prevailing perception in organizations today is that what is measured receives attention, so the measurement itself is already valuable, and it is naturally suggested to conduct it:

- As an evaluation rather than an examination.
- As a collaborative and participatory evaluation (not by an external third party)

The evaluation occurs at different stages:

1. Input measures (including input, system, and process metrics) throughout the program to ensure progress. Examples: Participation, feedback, system logins, and information requests.
2. Outcome measures - to assess whether research goals were achieved. Examples: Vary according to research objectives.
3. Output measures - to assess the impact on people and the environment. Examples: Cultural changes, policy changes, and additional funding for similar processes.
4. Sustainability measures - to assess long-term impact. Examples: Ensuring the above measures over time.

Summary

That's it. We've summarized how knowledge can and should be mobilized from academia to the field.

A question that (incredibly) intrigued me concerns the practical application of this methodology. Well, the answer is positive. Following the development of this methodology, the Research Authority in Canada declared that all research funding from SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada) involves a cross-section of stakeholder participation (from the community) as part of the budget contract. It's insufficient to conduct the research and write an academic paper... the research must be implemented. If only we all had such funding.