UNDERSTANDING
Tacit & Explicit Knowledge

To get started with knowledge management (KM), you need to understand the difference between the **two main types of knowledge**.

EXPLICIT KNOWLEDGE

is information that has been written down, recorded, or otherwise documented. It's easy to share and apply, and it helps people be more efficient.

- Policies
- Processes
- Tools
- Templates
- FAQs
- Product information
- Standard operating procedures
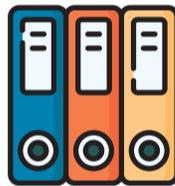- Reports

TACIT KNOWLEDGE

is information that lives inside people's heads. It's hard to articulate and share, but it's key to building the competencies of employees and the competitive advantage of the organization.

- Decision making pathways
- Subject matter expertise
- Innovation
- Problem solving
- Leadership
- Business acumen
- Skills
- Organizational culture
- Experiential learning

Organizations need to proactively manage both kinds of knowledge to grow and thrive. For example...

A new salesperson joins the company

The company's explicit knowledge can help her follow the right processes and avoid common mistakes

But, she needs access to tacit knowledge about clients, colleagues, and more to become a *great* salesperson

KM Approaches for Capturing and Transferring Knowledge

EXPLICIT KNOWLEDGE

Content management to ensure critical documentation is trustworthy and accessible

Search and discovery tools to deliver useful content in the flow of work

On-demand trainings and how-to videos to walk employees through tasks and processes

Wikis, team sites, group chats, and other digital workplace tools that allow employees to quickly capture and share information with each other

TACIT KNOWLEDGE

Expert interviews and other structured knowledge transfer approaches to document what people know and turn it into reusable content

Expertise location to connect those who need guidance and answers with knowledgeable colleagues

Mentoring to provide time and space for experiential learning and relationship building

Communities of practice to engage employees in ongoing knowledge sharing around a topic or discipline