Advancing the knowledgeable organisation
Leading the way through knowledgeable practice

Every aspect of work draws on knowledge in some way or another.
To survive, organisations should invest to keep critical knowledge up to date and secure. To thrive and stay ahead of the game, they must build the capacity to absorb knowledge and adapt continuously to what it tells them.

To seize new opportunities for growth means cultivating an enterprise that can harvest value from current knowledge and conceive new ways of operating. Leading through knowledge is a powerful strategy that allows an enterprise to create favourable competitive conditions that others can only follow.

Paying attention to knowledge as a strategic resource has a real bottom line impact:

Less wastage
The ultimate value of the organisational knowledge base will always depend on people. People leave, move on, forget and sometimes even hoard what they know for their own benefit. All of that means that something the organisation has already paid for is wasted or underutilised. Knowledge gets stuck in silos too. Even when people are willing to share what they know, the demands on their time can mean it’s hard to get their expertise to the point of need when it is required, or they don’t communicate the depth of knowledge in a way that users can understand or relate to.

Better innovation
Connections with customers, suppliers, partners and other stakeholders feed the minds of those at the sharp end of the business. This constantly generates ideas. Without good knowledge processes, those ideas get lost. Personal and enterprise networks are recognised routes for creatively combining knowledge. Smoothly and speedily converting inspiration from the networks into innovation with real returns depends on well practiced knowledge processes. Also, organisations often don’t know what they know, so they miss opportunities to get more from existing knowledge packaged in products and services in different combinations.

Sustainable results
Despite a glut of information, leaders and strategic decision-makers face more uncertainty than ever before. The more we learn, the less we know for sure. Long-term sustainability depends on having good intelligence followed by intelligent interpretation of patterns in the information to glean insights about the future. Judgement has to be followed by change, and the capacity to change depends on a well rehearsed organisational willingness to learn. Those organisations with the capacity to change the core competencies underpinning current success and keep nurturing distinctive new capabilities will be the long-term winners in a world where the foundations of our knowledge base are almost doubling overnight.

Jane McKenzie
Director, The Henley Forum

Henley Forum for Organisational Learning and Knowledge Strategies

Founded in 2000 and originally known as the Henley KM Forum, the Forum is now an internationally recognised centre of excellence for thinking associated with organisational knowledge and learning. As a membership-based community it offers a space where leading business practitioners, world-class academics and thought leaders combine experience and ideas, develop insights and provide practical guidance to help knowledge-based organisations thrive in a changing world.

Together, community members explore all aspects of leading an enterprise towards more profound knowledge-based capability. Topics we explore range from those of strategic interest such as leadership development, partnering, innovation, new organisational forms and the future of work. We also focus on improving operational activities through collaborative knowledge sharing, the impact of social technologies, cross-cultural knowledge working, how knowledge practices support project management, decision-making, better conversations, expertise retention and human capital development. Organisational membership shows a commitment to advanced practice in organisational learning and knowledge strategies. People from across the organisation can participate in and contribute to research, action learning projects, conferences and themed events. They will gain access to an expert network, a wealth of practical guidance for honing knowledge and learning strategies and the opportunity to shape the future agenda of knowledge in action.

For more information visit us online www.henley.ac.uk/henleyforum

What members say

‘Networking opportunities allow us to link with like minded KM experts in other organisations’
Stefan Carlyle, Environment Agency

‘Excellent timing and logistics. Stimulating as ever’
Andy Wall, United Utilities

‘Extremely well organised event and stimulating agenda’
Michelle King, Defra

‘Such a wonderful group of practitioners, researchers across two critical areas: KM and leadership – very important matching’
Jacqui Gallinetti, Plan International

‘Well organised and a good atmosphere. Great to get different perspectives from so many different people’
Jon Harman, Syngenta
Faculty

Professor Jane McKenzie,
Director of Funded Research,
Henley Business School

Jane McKenzie (PhD, MBA, BA, FCCA) became Director of the Forum in 2009 when it was known as the Henley KM Forum. She has actively contributed to the community since 2000, working on at least one research project per year and supporting the action learning activities. Her research interests can be characterised in two words, connections and contradictions: how to facilitate knowledge connections that foster learning and development for both individuals and organisations; how decision-makers can diffuse the tension arising from the dilemmas and contradictions in organisational life and use them as opportunities to learn and change, so that knowledge and learning activities become resources for organisational development and business value. Prior to entering academia she held financial management roles in both SMEs and large multi-nationals, and at Henley she has held various positions as Director of Studies for postgraduate qualifications. She has written three books and many papers often co-authored with Christine van Winkelen. Their partnership of shared understanding provides a foundation for the focus of Forum activities.

Dr Christine van Winkelen

Christine van Winkelen (PhD, MBA, MCIPD) has worked with the Forum since its formation in 2000 (then known as the Henley KM Forum) project managing and leading research activities and organising member events. As Co-director with Jane McKenzie she is actively involved in a number of research activities that broadly relate to organisational learning and how organisations can take a strategic approach to managing their knowledge to improve performance. Her particular interest is in forming a ‘bridge’ between academic and practitioner contributions and perspectives in developing the discipline. She regularly speaks at conferences and has published extensively in academic and practitioner journals. She co-authored Understanding the Knowledgeable Organisation: Nurturing Knowledge Competence and Knowledge Works with Professor Jane McKenzie. She teaches on MBA courses at Henley and previously worked in technology-oriented multi-national companies in a variety of roles.

Marina Hart

Marina Hart (MBA, BA) joined the Henley Forum (when it was then known as the Henley KM Forum) as its coordinator in December 2007. In her earlier career Marina worked with the former East European countries before the Iron Curtain came down and then worked within the international exhibition industry. As a linguist, speaking French, German, Spanish and Italian, she has also held a number of sales and marketing positions in both the chemical and textile industries. She now prefers to work closer to home, juggling her time between work and looking after her two sons.

Membership

Members come from a wide variety of disciplines and work in private, public and third sector organisations. Some are world-class practitioners, others are just discovering the benefits and challenges of managing knowledge and organisational learning. The focus of activities is on improving internal capability and membership is limited to around 40 organisations so that events can be genuinely interactive and networking opportunities are maximised.

Corporate membership is by annual subscription. The benefits of belonging include:

- Membership of an active community.
- Two-day strategic conference with thought leaders.
- A 1.5-day residential themed meeting including peer assist and masterclass type workshop options.
- Two one-day meetings, one for members only, one with guests.
- Social media sharing and collaboration.
- Virtual discussion area for members.
- Online resource repository with a wealth of tools, guidance documents and slides from past speakers.
- A two-day knowledge and organisational learning thought-leadership course with coaching support for an actionable project.
- Action learning groups or personal coaching.
- A research programme with options for organisation specific reports.
- Five overnight stays at Henley.
- Member hosted site visits.