
Improving Military Competitiveness by Enabling Successful Communities of Practice: Lessons Learned Over 10 Years With Air Force Knowledge Now

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Defense Strategy (2008), the Quadrennial Defense Review (2006), and the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (2005;2009) specifically highlight a newer focus by the Department of Defense (DoD) on knowledge in operations as opposed to traditional weapons platforms. As such, the military services have put into place knowledge management (KM) programs to varying degrees. The U.S. Air Force KM strategy focuses on communities of practice (CoPs). These CoPs are hosted on Air Force Knowledge Now (AFKN)—a knowledge management system (KMS). Using a case study approach, this paper offers key lessons learned for organizations trying to use KMSs to unleash the potential of CoPs.

Keywords: Communities of practice, Knowledge management, Collaboration, U.S. Air Force, Air Force Knowledge Now, Competitiveness