Knowledge Transfer: Make it Happen

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• 22 years of JD Edwards experience
• Founder of JDEtips Journal and JDEtips University
• Over 6,000 clients have attended public and onsite JDEtips University classes.
• Published over 20,000 pages of JDEtips articles & manuals
Steve Phillips, ERP Practitioner

- Over 25 years of ERP implementation experience as an industry practitioner or a consultant
- ERP Roles: Management education, project management, process redesign, application consulting, software development and training
- Over 10 years of IT Management experience. Currently IT Director at a JD Edwards client.
- Five years in manufacturing management positions
- Leadership, training, and analyst roles on “pure” business re-engineering initiatives
- Author: “Control Your ERP Destiny” (available on Amazon by May 2012)
Knowledge Transfer
Learning Points

- What are the risks of not having a Knowledge Transfer strategy?
- Does Knowledge Transfer yield real benefits?
- At what points in the implementation is Knowledge Transfer a key deliverable?
- What is the role of formal versus informal training in an JDE project?
- What steps can we take to ensure that Knowledge Transfer occurs?
- Upgrades—is formal training required?
- How do we onboard new employees, post go-live?
Knowledge Transfer costs money, so what is the Return On Investment?

Or is it just “fluff”?
REFRAME THE QUESTION:

What are the implications if we do not transfer JDE knowledge within the organization?
Inadequate Knowledge Transfer contributes to the usual ERP nemeses...

• Takes too long
• Costs too much
• Business disruption at go-live
• Benefits never realized
ERP Knowledge Gaps

- The team has little, if any, knowledge of industry accepted business practices.
- The team is not aware of the full capabilities of JD Edwards.
- The team does not know where to find the configuration settings, let alone understand what they do.
- Long after go-live, end users continue to struggle with performing their daily jobs.
- Employee turnover erodes knowledge of the system and how to use it.

What happened to the promise of Knowledge Transfer?
Tendency to “reinvent” the solutions wheel… the team may not understand the proper application of the tools.

Consultants do everything… even tasks the client should be doing.

Sub-optimized Business Processes… the team is not fully engaged – lacks the knowledge needed to be proactive.

Software is not adequately tested… the team does not know how to test it.
Many believe consultants are a substitute for learning the software.

We then end up with a false sense of security…

- There are many inexperienced consultants.
- Even the best consultants are not all knowing and do not know all the right questions to ask.
- The consultants will walk out the door one day.
- Consulting costs – “budget wildcard”
  - Can soar up to 60% or more of the total project expenditures.
  - More software knowledge can substantially reduce consulting cost or at least mitigate the downside risk.

Goal: More Self-Reliance
Need for “In-House” software knowledge does not end after go-live

Most organizations run their JD Edwards software for 8-15 years

- Who will support the users and the system?
- Software vendor support (via maintenance fees) will not fill the knowledge gaps.
- Lack of software configuration knowledge substantially increases TCO.
- Leveraging your expensive investment in JDE becomes difficult.
- Calls to replace the current package when it does not need replacement.
- Software is modified when the system supports the need “right-out-of-the-box”.

Post Go-Live Issues

Between a Rock and a Hard Place!

**CONSULTANTS MUST...**

• Hold the hands of untrained users for months (or years) after go-live
• Make simple configuration changes required by the business
• Implement additional features, modules or new releases

**OR...** Software remains static while business needs change
   (consultants cost too much)

*Failure to leverage your software investment*
Knowledge Transfer Disconnects

KT viewed as an **event**

“Send the team off to training to become *instant* software experts!!”

or....

KT is something that **just happens**

A big consulting budget does not mean knowledge will be transferred.
Knowledge Transfer During Implementation

For example, most “Training Strategies” address the beginning of knowledge transfer (team training) and the end (user training)…

…with no mention of what should happen in between.

KT requires planned “cycles of learning”
Knowledge Transfer Deliverables By Project Phase

...all the primary responsibilities of the organization (client)

Planning
- Best Employees on Team
- Insure Availability for KT
- Hire Experienced “Coaches”
- Establish KT Expectations
- Internal “Application Experts”
- Plan Education and Training

Discovery
- Industry Practices Education
- Formal Project Team Training
- “How to” Configure “White Papers”
- Sandbox – Training Follow-up
- Initial Prototype Software Set Up
- Model Business Processes

Design
- Begin KT Status Meetings
- Perform Software Demos
- Lead Design Reviews
- Begin Power User Training

Construction
- Baseline Software Configuration
- Begin Set Up Documentation

Test
- Write Test Cases / Scenarios
- Perform CRP/ICRP testing
- Lead Limited Parallel Pilot
- Lead End User Acceptance testing

Cutover
- Write Work Procedures/SOP
- Develop End User Training
- Train End Users

Post Go-Live
- First Level of Go-Live Support
- Conduct Follow-up Training
- Training New Users
- New Functionality Training (upgrades)
Knowledge Transfer
By Phase

1. Assign the best employees to the project team
2. Team must be available for KT
3. Application Consultants need the right experience and a “coaching” personality
4. Set the Right Expectations with the Team—raise the bar

- Organization’s responsibility to learn the software
- Each team needs an in-house application expert
- Plan early exit for outside consulting—transition to “as required”
Knowledge Transfer
By Phase

Discovery – Project Team Training

Do “formal” project team software training (up-front)

DEFINED AS:

• Classroom (or virtual) environment
• Pre-defined lesson plans
• Pre-loaded training data
• Training scripts
• Detailed Training manuals (for the current release)
• Experienced trainers

Typically, best provided by a reliable third-party provider or the software vendor.
Most consulting firms are not equipped to deliver this level and consistency of training.
The risks of relying on informal training alone or doing it on “the fly” during the project …
Knowledge Transfer
By Phase

The time and cost for consultants to reinvent the training wheel is usually under-estimated:

Takes the focus away from learning

• Some consultants are way too accommodating (overly customized content).

• Training is not a demo, or design, or testing session.

• The focus at this stage should be on learning the software capabilities (hands-on).

• Greater probability of software glitches during class (developed from scratch).

• Consulting firms may do not have access to the ‘real’ or up-to-date training manuals.
Knowledge Transfer
By Phase

Discovery – Project Team Training

Get results for your training dollars

• Do not send a “cast of thousands” to team training (immediate need to know).
• Do not train the team too early (use it or lose it).
• Do not take all courses consecutively (like trying to drink from a fire hose).
• Consider large, virtual courses for the basic or common foundation topics.
• Take the configuration classes—either public or onsite classes (this is big!)
• “Sandbox” environment available after project team training.
Knowledge Transfer
By Phase

- Do not skip or shortcut prototype (important cycle of learning).
  When it comes to KT, rapid deployment projects can work against you.
- Most of the JDE configuration setup is performed by the team.
  (with support and coaching from the consultant)
- Start Knowledge Transfer status meetings (“get well” plans).
Knowledge Transfer
By Phase

- Establish a library of “White Papers” (how to enable software capabilities).
- The team demos the software to key stakeholders/users (consultants play support role in these meetings).
- Start the software setup documentation (with quality reviews by the consultants).
- Team begins training “Power Users” (the first time they are trainers!)
Knowledge Transfer
By Phase

- Client team performs the majority of CRP testing…there is no better way to learn the software when it does not function as expected.

- Write the Detailed Work Procedures…you need them – plus if you can’t prepare these procedures, you do not know to use the software.

- Client team Leads and becomes the “In-House” application experts during User Acceptance Testing.

KT Reality Checks
Knowledge Transfer
By Phase

Cutover – End User Training

- **Client Team Prepares all Training Materials and trains all End Users Prior to Go-Live**

- **End User Training Tips**
  - Beware of the “Train-the-Trainer” pitfalls – Functional Analysts are the best choice.
  - Test the training scripts and all hardware prior to training.
  - Train on new policies and procedures – not just transactions.
  - Limit class size (8-12 max).
  - Training should be hands-on.
  - Senior management should communicate training schedule (well in advance).

- **Soon after Cutover, regroup and do Follow-up Training**
Knowledge Transfer By Phase

- **Problem:** Upgrades do not lend themselves to formal net change training.
  - From/To release combination
  - Current utilization of the software
  - Current modifications
  - Business requirements
Knowledge Transfer By Phase

• Solution:
  • Read about the new features—overview then drill down to details.
  • Decide which ones sound “interesting”.
  • Consultants can help you assess the new release, do spot training, eliminate unnecessary modifications.
  • 3 - 5 days onsite per suite: Financials, Distribution, Manufacturing, HR/Payroll.
  • Upgrades are an opportunity to get it right—to catch up on knowledge transfer.

Where to start? A modest suggestion – the JDEtips Upgrade Center.
Knowledge Transfer
By Phase

In a post go-live environment, where do you start?

• Business Analysts / Developers.
• What do they need to learn to be productive?
• How will they learn it?
Knowledge Transfer
By Phase

Developers – Assign a senior mentor/guide
1. Familiarize them with the business and business processes. “Follow power users around.”
2. “Poke around” basic JDE apps such as Address Book, Sales Order Entry, etc. Run scripts in PY.
3. Attend a beginning developer course.
4. Assign small projects – form customizations, simple reports, etc.
5. Continue 1, 2, 3.
6. Attend an advanced developer course.
7. Conduct internal training/share resources on: Security, OMW, Promotion, Pathcodes, OCM mappings, your system configuration, etc.
8. Assign more advanced development projects.
Knowledge Transfer
By Phase

Post Go-Live—Onboarding New Employees

Business Analysts – Assign a senior mentor/guide

1. Familiarize them with the business and business processes. “Follow power users around.”
2. Self Study - JDE Overview / JDE for Dummies.
3. Conduct internal training/share resources.
4. Attend a beginning course at the suite level - Financials, Distribution, Manufacturing, etc.
5. Assign small projects - train new end users, handle support desk calls, develop simple report specs, etc.
6. Continue 1, 2, 3.
7. Attend module specific courses; e.g., Inventory, Sales Order, Advanced Pricing.
8. Assign more advanced BA projects - develop requirements documents, search for, learn, and implement existing functionality, write report specs, etc.
Budget Allocated to Training

How much of your total IT budget (or JDE implementation budget) is allocated to training?

- Less than 3%
- 3-6%
- 7-10%
- Over 10%
- No idea

Projects allocating more than 6% of the project budget to training were significantly more successful than projects where 3% or less of the budget went to training.

Source: Cushing Anderson, IDC Vice President, Project Based Services - Consulting, HR and Learning
Budget Allocated to Training

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Post Go-Live Issues

Skill wanes

- People move
- Processes change
- Technology changes
- New hires know “less”

Impact is dramatic …

- Between 10–30% capability per year
Conclusions

- **You Need a Knowledge Transfer Strategy**
  - Do not count on it just happening (as promised by the consultants)

- **Knowledge Transfer is not an “Event”**
  - It is a process with both hard and soft deliverables

- **An Organization that takes more ownership in learning the software**
  - **will:**
    - Reduce software consulting cost
    - Develop better solutions for the business
    - Continue to leverage the software investment well into the future
• **Learn JDE**

• **JDE Training – Public Classes** (virtual or on-premise)

• **JDE Training – Onsite Classes** (virtual or on-premise)

• **JDEtips Training Manuals**

• **JDEtips Journal / Library**

Booth 927
“Control Your ERP Destiny”
By Steve Phillips

Book Overview (to follow)

Street Smart ERP
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