**Select Theories Relevant to KM**

The theories listed below are examples used within our KM work. However, this is not to say these are the only theories that can be applied. As you begin to use systematic KM in your work, add the theories you apply to this list!

| **Theory** | **Focus** | **Key Concepts** | **Application in KM** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Bloom’s taxonomy of learning5 | Promoting concepts, processes, and procedures in education, rather than just rote learning | Learning centers around three domains:   * Cognitive (knowledge) * Affective (attitude) * Psychomotor (skills)   The level of expertise in each domain can be expressed using a multi-tiered scale; for example, the knowledge domain consists of six levels of expertise: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. | Recognizing the different domains of learning can help KM activities address not only knowledge but also skills and attitudes. For example, a KM activity can help improve physicians’ knowledge about LARCs as well as their skills in inserting LARC methods and their attitudes about providing these methods. Identifying the level of expertise desired in each domain will also help determine specific approaches to use as well as techniques to assess effectiveness. |
| Diffusion of innovations6 | How new ideas, products, and practices spread within a system over time | There are five types of adopters to consider when promoting a new product or idea:   * Innovators (want to be the first to try the innovation) * Early adopters (comfortable with adopting the innovation; tend to be opinion leaders who influence others’ decisions) * Early majority (adopt new ideas before the average person; typically need to see evidence first that the innovation works) * Late majority (skeptical of change and will adopt an innovation only after the majority has tried it) * Laggards (very skeptical; hardest group to persuade) | By identifying who the five types of adopters are among your KM intervention’s intended audience, you can then apply different strategies for reaching each segment. For example, your intervention may focus on recruiting opinion leaders to persuade the “early majority” to adopt your KM intervention. |
| Ideation7 | Diffusion of new ways of thinking or new behaviors through communication and social interaction | The likelihood of adopting a new behavior is higher when someone:   * Has gained sufficient knowledge and skills about it * Has developed a positive attitude toward it * Thinks others support and practice it * Has talked to others about it * Feels good about doing it   Programs can select which communication strategies to emphasize based on which factors are the strongest predictors of behavior in their given context. | When designing your KM intervention, consider which factors prevent or facilitate your audiences’ adoption of the behavior you want to promote. For example, are they lacking up-to-date knowledge and could thus benefit from on-the-job training or regular workshops? Or perhaps they have the necessary knowledge but think their supervisors are unsupportive of the behavior? Having a solid understanding of these issues can help you select the most appropriate KM activities. |
| Stages of change8 | Individual motivation or readiness to change behavior | People move through five stages when adopting new behaviors:   * Precontemplation (unaware of the problem) * Contemplation (aware) * Decision (intends to take action) * Action (practices the desired behavior) * Maintenance (works to sustain the behavior change)   People can benefit from different interventions, matched to their stage of change, to make the desired behavior change. | Identifying your audience’s current stage of behavior can help you select appropriate KM tools to move the audience from its current stage to the next—for example, a job aid to help providers in the “decision” stage move to the “action” stage. Knowing your audience’s current stage can also help you set realistic objectives—for instance, it is unrealistic to expect an audience who has never heard of the problem to make changes immediately. |