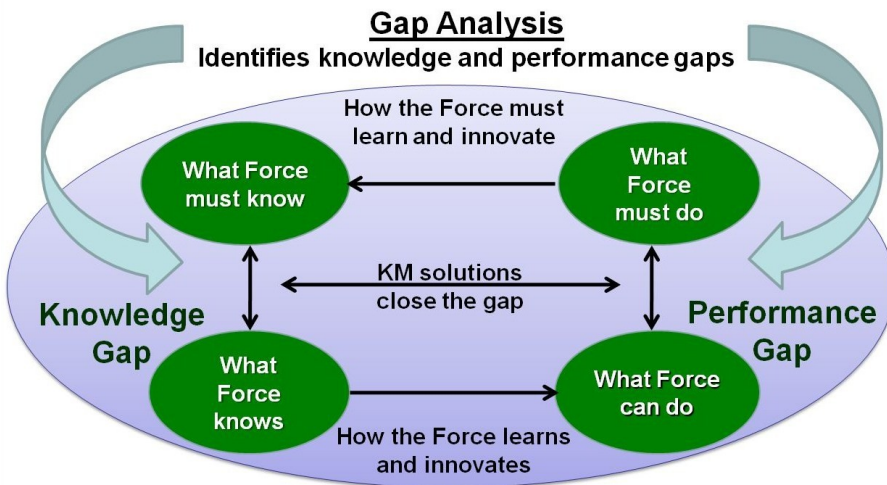


ARMY OPERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

KM GAP ANALYSIS

The overarching goal of any Army knowledge management program is to improve operational adaptability, integration, and synchronization. KM does this by creating, organizing, applying, and transferring knowledge in order to facilitate shared understanding and decision-making. But, how does the KM section know where to focus their efforts to assure that they lead to actual improvements in a unit's performance rather than merely changes to their operations?

A gap analysis is one technique that can help answer this question. A gap analysis compares actual, current performance against potential or required performance. The differences between current and potential performance lead to the identification of gaps that can be targeted in a strategy to improve overall unit effectiveness.



A gap analysis begins with a realistic assessment of an organization's current state. Most military units have access to self assessment tools and checklists that lay out a framework for assessing current capabilities. These tools can be augmented by KM-specific techniques such as interviews, knowledge maps, and knowledge audits.

Next, the organization identifies and describes its desired or potential state. Much of this will be defined by doctrine and institutional requirements.

But other elements may be tied to a Commander's vision or other unit-specific requirements. Either way, the goal of this phase is to fully answer the question "what must our organization do that it cannot currently do?" The answers to this question are the performance gaps that must be addressed to reach the unit's desired end state.

Throughout the gap analysis, the KM team approaches the process from its own perspective, starting with an assessment of how knowledge is being used to enable current performance. Then, after performance gaps are identified, the KM team determines how improvements in an organization's existing knowledge environment can help close specific performance gaps. The KM team incorporates these potential improvements into an overall knowledge strategy, aligning efforts across the four components of knowledge management—people, processes, organization, and tools.

Knowledge management is never done solely for KM's sake—it must contribute to the accomplishment of the organization's overall mission. Through the proper use of gap analysis, the KM team can assure their efforts serve the needs of the commander and the unit as a whole.

To learn more about Army Knowledge Management, visit the AOKM web page:

<http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/AOKM/>