

Self-assessment questions for session 4

The following are the self-assessment questions for the fourth session of the course. They are for private study and are not part of a formal assessment.

You should attempt to answer all of the questions. There are no right and wrong answers; the objective is to get you to think about the issues rather than to provide a definitive solution.

1 New categories of Information System

The classic view of IS was created in the 1980s as a framework to look at IS in the context of business organizations. How has the environment in which business operates changed since then?

Look at the three types of enterprise level systems we have identified and return to your answers for session 2. In what ways do these systems differ from the 'classic' view of information systems? Does the intra-organizational view of information systems still make sense in today's world?

2 Business Process Re-engineering

Look at the Mahindra and Mahindra case study and answer the three questions on page 9.

To what extent do you think that M&M is typical of companies that decide to implement BPR? What risks do companies run when they re-engineer their legacy systems?

3 Knowledge Management

Look at the Knowledge Management @ Xerox case study and answer the three questions on page 9.

To what extent do you think the approach pioneered by Xerox can be applied to knowledge sharing in other companies? What are the problems with expanding a system that started by 'telling stories around the water cooler' to systems that allow reps to 'share tips globally'?

4 Compare and Contrast the Case Studies

The success of both of the case studies rested on what is sometimes termed "buy-in" by the workforce; however, the approach taken by the two companies to obtain this "buy-in" differed radically.

Look back at the 'frameworks for change' that were introduced in session 2 and the section on IS and organizational change from session 3. From a strategic viewpoint, what did M&M and Xerox see as the key driver of change in their organizations?