

HARD QUESTIONS



What are the hard questions you need to ask to really get your organisation thinking about how well it's managing its Information Assets and what those practices mean for the business?

WHY ASK HARD QUESTIONS?

Conventional wisdom or lack thereof about how to manage an organisation's vital Information Assets has been ingrained into the global business psyche for over 30 years. For over 30 years we have given the job to IT.

Unfortunately IT is profoundly incapable of managing an organisation's Information Assets and it is patently unfair to ask them to do so. Why have we given the responsibility for managing this vital business asset to a part of the organisation that is inherently but blamelessly incompetent?

We need to overturn 30 years of ingrained business wisdom. And to do that we need to ask hard questions



THE HARD QUESTIONS

1. What precisely does your organisation do and where is that clearly and concisely documented i.e. on 1 page?
2. What assets / resources are required to run your organisation and to deliver its services? Which of those assets are critical? Where is that documented?
3. If the most successful organisations are those that deliver the greatest value to their clients whilst consuming the fewest resources, how well does your organisation deploy its scarce and valuable assets in comparison with its peers? How is that measured?
4. Information Assets are required for every business activity, every business process and every business decision. What are the key data, information and knowledge assets required to run your organisation and to deliver its services?
5. How are your organisation's Information Assets managed? Who is responsible? Who is accountable?
6. Does IT know as much about running the organisation as the business does? Does IT know as much about what information is required to run the organisation as the business does? Is IT as interested in the quality of

the information as the business is? Is it fair to make IT responsible for managing something they don't understand?

7. What frameworks, instruments, delegation and accountability are in place to manage your organisation's Information Assets? If your organisation were to manage its money the same way as it manages its information, what would it look like?
8. Given that every single person manages information e.g. decides what to do with that email and its attachment, how much does it cost to manage your organisation's Information Assets? How is that cost calculated?
9. What is the (book) value of your organisation's information? To whom?
10. What are the benefits to your organisation of managing its Information Assets well? How are these benefits measured? How are they articulated?
11. If your organisation is not managing its Information as per its other vital assets, does that represent a conscious decision to manage the organisation sub-optimally? If so, is that negligent?
12. If your Chief Information Officer was made responsible and genuinely accountable (i.e. rewarded for success and sacked for failure) for the accuracy, relevance and timeliness of your organisation's information provision, what would he or she demand?
13. If your organisation's Information Assets are not managed as well as they could or should be, what are the reasons for that?

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