

Knowledge Management is a process of creating, sharing, using and managing the knowledge and information of an organisation. It refers to a multi-disciplinary approach to achieve organisational objectives by making the best use of the knowledge. Knowledge Management is, therefore, an enabler of organisational learning. A knowledge management dashboard shall be set up in the e-Office environment by every Section/Unit/ Desk which will provide access to aids to processing as indicated in this Chapter.

11.1. Aids to processing :

Aids to processing are tools of knowledge management used in the Ministries and Departments. Any mechanism that helps an officer to learn his/her area of work in examination and disposal of a case is an aid to processing. They are more effective if maintained electronically.

- | |
|---|
| <p>Examples of aids to processing are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note for the Successor 2. Standing Process Sheet 3. Standing Guard File 4. Standing Note 5. Precedent Book 6. Reference Folder |
|---|

11.2. Note for Successor :

- (i) Movement of officers from one post to another by way of promotions, transfers, deputation, etc. is part of functioning in any organisation. It is the responsibility of the organisation to ensure that relevant induction material is provided to the new incumbent to enable him/her to perform duties to the best of his/her abilities.
- (ii) Even though in Government organisations, all the required information is available in files, predecessors also play an important role in passing on institutional memory. Guidance provided by the predecessors needs to be documented to ensure easy and ready access.
- (iii) Note for successor from his/her predecessor is an important tool to keep the work progress in a flawless manner. Such a note should be prepared in a structured manner in incorporating all the inputs so that the successors could discharge their duties more efficiently.

(iv) The responsibilities may vary from one post to another post. The note for the successor generally has to be of uniform format across the levels. A common template for a model Note for successor is given in Appendix –11.1.

11.3. Standard Process Sheet:

(i) A Standard Process Sheet is a standardized note or template described in Para 7.14(v). It is a mechanism used in an office to arrive at a decision. The Standard Process Sheet provides various check-points to process cases of repetitive nature. The various details or the facts and figures of each case are provided by the Dealing Officer. Apart from being a performance tool for the Dealing Officer, it ensures that no important point is overlooked by the seniors when the case is submitted. For the senior officers, it also helps in saving time because relevant information needed is visible in a more conspicuous manner.

- (ii) Some of the steps to be taken to devise Standard Process Sheet are:
- a) List the cases dealt with
 - b) Check if any of them is of repetitive nature
 - c) Prepare a list of points to consider while submitting the case
 - d) Arrange those points in a logical sequence. The broad sequence to be adopted is:
 - i. Facts of the case
 - ii. Rules/regulations to be applied
 - iii. Suggested course of action
 - iv. Indicate who the competent authority is
 - v. Points on which decision is sought
 - e) Design a format
 - f) Get the draft standard process sheet cleared by Section Officer and Branch Officer
 - g) Test-run the Standard Process Sheet in a few cases
 - h) Revise, if necessary
 - i) Finalise.

(iii) A specimen Standard Process Sheet is in Appendix – 7.1.

(iv) Standard Process Sheets are to be reviewed periodically with respect to standing instructions/orders/guidelines of the Government of India in force. It will be filed on the notes portion of the file. It is to be treated exactly in the same manner as a normal note sheet is treated. In eFile, one may design and customize templates to process cases of repetitive nature like advance or withdrawal from GPF, etc.

- (v) Need to revise Standard Process Sheet may arise due to:
- a) change in the rules position or
 - b) change in the procedure itself.

For example, if the minimum notice period for resignation to be given by the employee is done away with. This would need a revision in the Standard Process Sheet to the extent that this particular checkpoint will have to be deleted.

11.4. Standing Guard File:

(i) A Standing Guard File is maintained to help in processing and taking a decision in a case because:

- (a) It gives the background of the policy and procedures of the relevant subject to new officers;
- (b) It enables quick submission and disposal of cases;
- (c) It takes the place of voluminous old files put up for reference;
- (d) It helps the office in locating the previous papers having bearing on the subject.

It is a compilation consisting of the following three parts:

- a) A running summary of the principles or policy or procedure on a subject with number and date of relevant Decisions or Orders quoted in margin.
- b) Copy of the Decisions or Orders referred to, arranged in chronological order; and
- c) Model forms of communications to be used at different stages of processing a case.

(ii) While processing a receipt, the Dealing Officer will first identify the issues and collect all information. Then consider possible course(s) of action to suggest applying the latest relevant rules and procedure. For example, a new Dealing Officer has to process a case for release of grant-in-aid to a State Government on a scheme. Standing Guard File on the subject would aid in his/her processing the case, as explained below:

- a. The running summary will assure that the rules and procedure contemplated is the same as the one to be adopted (Part – 1).
- b. Refresh knowledge and understanding of the provision of the rules including the latest amendment (Part -2)
- c. Submit draft or fair communications (Part – 3).

(iii) To create a Standing Guard File, the first step is to build Part - 2 by collecting copy of orders issued by the nodal Ministry on the subject. Look for the previous references given in these orders and get a copy. Then, arrange them in chronological order. Go through these orders and note important points. Thereafter, prepare a summary based on these points. Then put these summarised points in a logical sequence. Take previous years' files, if any, on the subject. Go through the correspondence portion of these files and take copy of the communications used at different stages of processing of the case. The finalised draft along with Standard Process sheets would form Part - 3 of Standing Guard File.

(iv) To facilitate easy retrieval, Standing Guard Files are given a number. The Section must have a list of Standing Guard Files maintained by it. A copy of this list must also be available with the Section Officer and each of the Dealing Officers. The Section Officer normally gives the task of maintaining Standing Guard Files to the Dealing Officers concerned.

(v) A Standing Guard File would gradually lose its utility if it is not updated regularly. Therefore, one of the responsibilities assigned to a Dealing Officer is to update it regularly. One of the ways to update it, is to take photocopies of Orders and other relevant communications issued on the subject by the nodal Ministry concerned, of important decisions taken within the organisation and keep them in Part - 2 of the Standing Guard File in a chronological order. Depending on the content of these Orders or Decisions, there could be a need to revise the running summary by adding suitable paragraphs or deleting paragraphs. Such revisions are to be made only after preparing a draft, getting it cleared by the Branch Officer. Similarly, as and when the forms of communication are revised or an additional one is devised, these too are to be added to Part- 3 of the Standing Guard File.

11.5. Standing Note:

Standing Note is helpful in retrieval of important files on the subject to which Standing Note pertains as it contains reference to important previous files concerning the subject. By referring to Standing Note one can easily have access to important files on the subject and locate them without any delay.

It's a continuing note explaining among other things, the history and development of the policy and procedure, designed to serve as:

- (a) A complete background material for review of the existing policy or procedure;
- (b) A brief for preparing replies to Parliament questions or notes for supplementaries thereto; and
- (c) Induction or training material.

As and when there is change in policy or procedure, the Standing Note should be brought up-to-date by incorporating relevant changes.

11.6. Precedent Book:

- (i) It is a register in a prescribed format to keep note of important rulings & decisions having a precedent value for ready reference. While taking action on receipts, the Dealing Officer examines cases with reference to the rules, regulations or guidelines on the subject. There are, however, instances when one comes across cases where the rules, the regulations or the guidelines do not provide a clear and specific answer for the issue under consideration. Precedent Book is a valuable tool for quick retrieval of past files on the subject under consideration. It is a Register designed to keep note of important rulings or decisions having a precedent value for ready reference.

(ii) If Dealing Officer and other officers in the hierarchy are unaware of precedent, they will have to seek advice from the nodal Ministry concerned. Often this sort of references result in delay in disposal of cases. Precedent Book must be maintained in all Sections that are designated as a nodal section. Format of Precedent Book is in Appendix.11.2.

(iii) A perusal of index in the Precedent Book maintained by the section will help:

- (a) to know whether there is any decision taken earlier on the issue presently under consideration;
- (b) If so, to obtain details of the old file number in which the decision was taken;
- (c) Helps in locating it and linking it with the current file.

(iv) Locate files with precedent value. It is difficult to define the term "precedent value". A rigid view on the entries in the Precedent Book should not be taken. Dealing Officer may also make entries relating to discussions on file leading to 'No Decision' also. 'No Decision' cases are those which are examined in a file for a decision but the final outcome is to keep it on hold. For example, a section receives a proposal for creation of posts. Concurrently, there is a proposal for cadre review. A view may be taken not to process the proposal for creation of posts till the cadre review is completed. If considered suitable, this 'No Decision' may be a fit case for entry in the Precedent Book. Similarly, dealing officer may examine a proposal to grant relaxation to one of the eligibility conditions provided in recruitment rules for promotion. After discussions on the file, the Department of Personnel, the nodal authority in such cases, may not agree to the proposal. The precedent value is that no relaxation was granted.

The criterion to decide whether or not a case should be entered in the Precedent Book is on the basis of whether such a file is likely to be called up for reference in the future.

Dealing Officer may consider taking photocopy of the relevant correspondence and the notes portions of the file with precedent value in a folder giving a fresh page number to the photocopied papers and keeping a record in the form of an index on the first page of the folder. He may also note the page reference in the Precedent Book. Between one set of photocopy of a precedent and another he may keep a blank colored sheet as a separator. This folder should be kept along with the Precedent Book in a file board. This kind of an institutionalised system would obviate the need to locate the old file. The Precedent Book along with the folder-containing photocopy of the relevant note/ correspondence portions should be kept in a safe place for easy retrieval. Section Officer should assign the responsibility of maintenance of Precedent Book to a functionary in the section through a specific entry in the work-allocation chart.

An ideal time to make entries in the Precedent Book, therefore, is immediately after a decision of precedent value is taken. However, in any case, the entry must be made at least at the stage of recording the file.

11.7. Reference Folder:

Reference folder is a folder maintained by individual officers. It contains such basic details as considered necessary by the officer, which are of immediate use for processing a case. Folder containing copies of various orders, rules, instructions, guideline, etc. on a specific topic, data pertaining to the subject dealt with, etc. Reference Folder is useful for the Dealing Officer or an officer during the discussions with the senior officers or while attending a meeting. For instance, it may contain details of funds released under a scheme to different State Governments during the last 3 years and also during the current financial year. It may contain details containing reasons why funds have not been released to a State Government, details like outstanding Utilisation Certificates, etc.

Depending upon the need of the Dealing Officer or an officer, the Reference Folder will be created. Thus, it would depend on the needs of the officer concerned. The Reference Folder needs to be updated regularly on every updation of data and also every amendment to the standing instructions, orders and guidelines of Government of India.

11.8. Induction Material :

Every Ministry/Department should prepare 'induction material' under the guidance of the Joint Secretary, in charge of administration for the use of not only their officers but also for the convenience of other Ministries/Departments in making inter-Departmental references. The 'induction material' should clearly spell out the functions and structure of the organization, detailed work distribution among various divisions and sections with their names, room numbers, location, officers in charge, telephone numbers, etc. The 'induction material' should be revised at periodic intervals so as to keep it up-to-date.

11.9 Master Circulars:

1. In order to improve the existing Knowledge/information Systems in Government, Ministries/Departments may review the instructions issued by them on each subject from time to time and consolidate the instructions on a given subject into a self-contained single document in the form of Master Circular. References of source instructions and amendments thereto may be listed and hyperlinked at the end of Master Circular so as to facilitate a user to see changes/updates introduced over time.
2. Whenever new instructions/orders are issued, or modification/amendment is carried out in any existing instructions on a subject, the relevant Master Circular may be updated on the above lines. Such updated Master Circular shall supersede the previous Master Circular on the subject.
3. The Master Circulars may be published on the website with well thought out content design and positioned prominently on the website within the broad framework of Guidelines for Government Websites.

- 4 Ministries/Departments may consider setting up a dedicated Cell for adoption of system of Master Circulars and for organizing, maintaining and updating information on their websites on regular basis.
5. The progress of implementation of the above measures may be reviewed by Secretary of the Ministry/Department regularly in Senior Officers Meetings.

11.10. RESPONSIBILITY MAPPING:

S No	Activity	Responsibility assigned to
1	Note for a Successor	The Officer concerned*
2	Standard Process Sheet	Branch Officer*
3	Standing Guard File	Section Officer*
4	Precedent Folder (Book)	Branch Officer*
5	Reference Folder	The Officer concerned*

* The officer may ask the Dealing Officer and other officers to help.

Box – e.11.1

In eFile, there is a provision for 'Remarks' in the electronic as well as physical file cover, which could be used to indicate the decision made using **key/catch words**. Subsequently, this could be indicated in the Precedent Folder. It is possible in **eFile to have a single folder combining the features/utilities of Standing Guard File and Precedent Folder**. These tools of Knowledge Management are essential to be developed and updated regularly.

APPENDIX – 11.1

(Para 11.2.(iv))

NOTE FOR THE SUCCESSOR

1. List of key areas and responsibilities related to key areas

Sl. No	Key performance area	Responsibility related to the key performance area
1 etc.		

2. Staff position at present

Sl. No	Nomenclature of the post	Sanctioned strength	Persons in position	Vacant posts	Date of vacancy	Remarks

3. A brief write up on the sensitive matters being dealt with in the Section, Branch, Division, Wing or Department.
4. List of documents required by the officer for handling the responsibilities are in Annexure.

5. What were the predecessor's experience of working in the Ministry/Department and what steps need to be taken to improve the situation.
6. Challenges that he/she faced and efforts made to overcome them.
7. What are the constraints under which the work had to be undertaken?
8. List of counterparts in various Ministries/Departments along with the subject matter.

Sl. No	Subject matter	Ministry concerned	Officer concerned	Office address, email and contact number

9. Pending matters like Court cases, Parliamentary Committee matters, PMO or Cabinet Secretariat, PRAGATI, eSamiksha, etc. needing urgent attention.
10. Any other issues.

LIST OF IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

1. About the Ministry
2. Second Schedule of Transaction of Business Rules, 1961.
3. Relevant portion of the Allocation of Business Rules, 1961.
4. Annual Report.
5. Organization Chart.
6. Work allocation with details of work allocated to Officers & Sections.
7. List of attached offices, subordinate offices, autonomous bodies, CPSEs.
8. Delegation of financial and other powers and Departmental instructions for decision making within the organization.
9. Citizens' Charter.
10. Parliamentary matters – A folder containing answers provided to Questions, Note for Supplementary for the last three sessions Question days of the Ministry/Department.
11. Court cases – status of court cases requiring attention:

Sl. No.	File No.	Subject of court case	Date of next hearing	Advocate handling the case with telephone No.

12. Projects/schemes completed and under process:

Sl. No	File No.	Subject of project/Schemes	Target date	Implementing Agency/Unit with contact details	Present position

13. Level of ICT prevalent in the Ministries – List of important websites, eOffice and File Tracking System.
14. Budget provision and the status of utilization of funds/budget. Action on additional budget requirement. Pending Audit paragraphs.
15. Pending RTI applications.
16. Important instructions on files from senior officers on which responses are pending.
17. EFC/SFC/Cabinet Note pending.
18. Important meetings during the next fortnight. Follow up action on previous meetings.
19. List of periodic reports that are generated by the office and that are received by the office.

LOGISTICS

The data available on the computer of the predecessor should be made available to the successor.

Format of Precedent Book

PRECEDENT BOOK	
Heading*	
Decision or ruling in brief	
Date:	File No.
Copy at page ____ in the folder.	

* Decisions with precedent value are indexed under various heads. For instance, a decision on “critical date for determination of eligibility of candidates for the post of Chairman, Central Electricity Authority” may be indexed under:

- i. Central Electricity Authority
- ii. Chairman
- iii. Critical date
- iv. Eligibility, etc.