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Training for Information Resource Management in Companies

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PLAN FOR INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT TRAINING IN COMPANIES

1. General view of introduction to Information Resources Management (IRM)

1.1. Introduction to IRM

1.2. Business idea of IRM

1.3. IRM and information systems in companies

2. IRM project in a company

2.1. IRM structure and project

2.2. Critical success factors

2.3. Governing rules

2.4. Benefits

2.5. Information products

2.6. IRM and business strategy

3. Training program

3.1. Goals

3.2. Contents

3.3. IRM-training in a large company/medium size../small..

3.4. Linking of information and human resources

4. Concrete proposal to arrange the training of IRM-trainers in companies at the Helsinki University of Technology

PLAN FOR INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT TRAINING IN COMPANIES

1. General view of introduction to Information Resources Management (IRM)

It is typical for all business activities today that the information economy dominates them. External information is linked to the company's internal information to create new information products which have added value to the company. Additionally information is linked to other products giving them increased value. Information is a competitive advantage of the company.

These last years we have been talking quite a lot about information resources management and any how most organizations have little idea of the rich information resources they have hidden in the company.

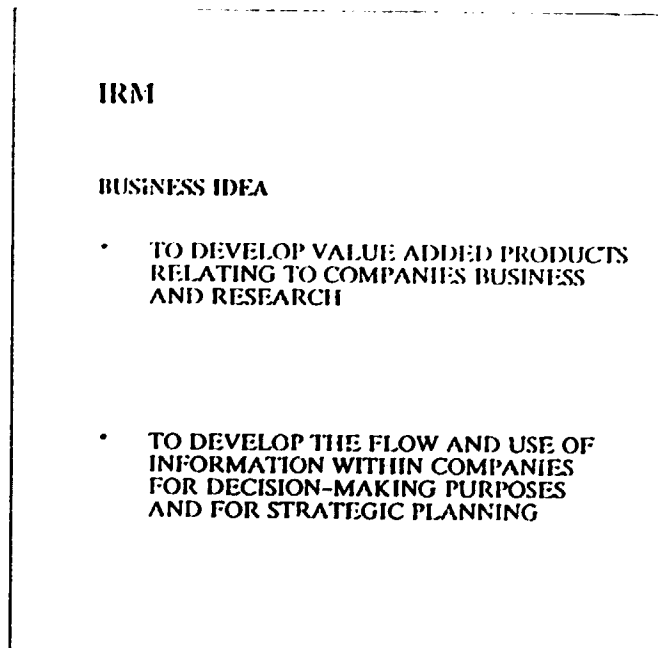
1.1. Introduction to IRM

The idea of IRM was developed by F.W. Horton. The methods he introduced include five steps. These are:

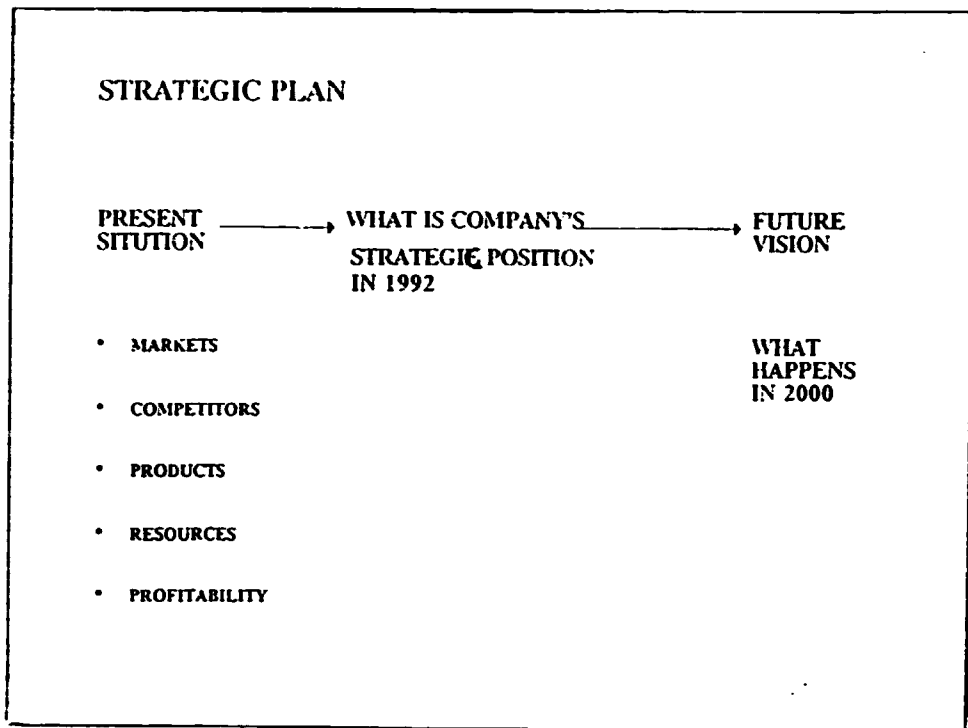
- Inventory of information resources, flows and holdings
- Cost out information sources, services and systems
- Price and value of information assets
- Analyse overlaps and gaps in relation to cost/benefits
- Synthesize restructured policies, systems and programs

1.2. Business Idea of IRM

The business idea of IRM is closely related to the company's strategic planning.

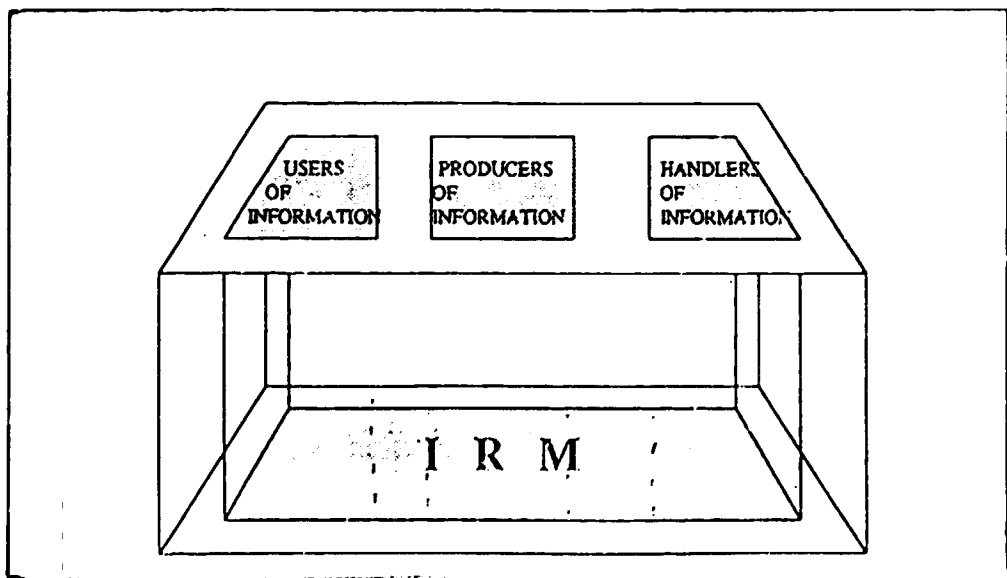


It means that all the personnel which is involved in information activities must also understand the strategic plan of their organization.

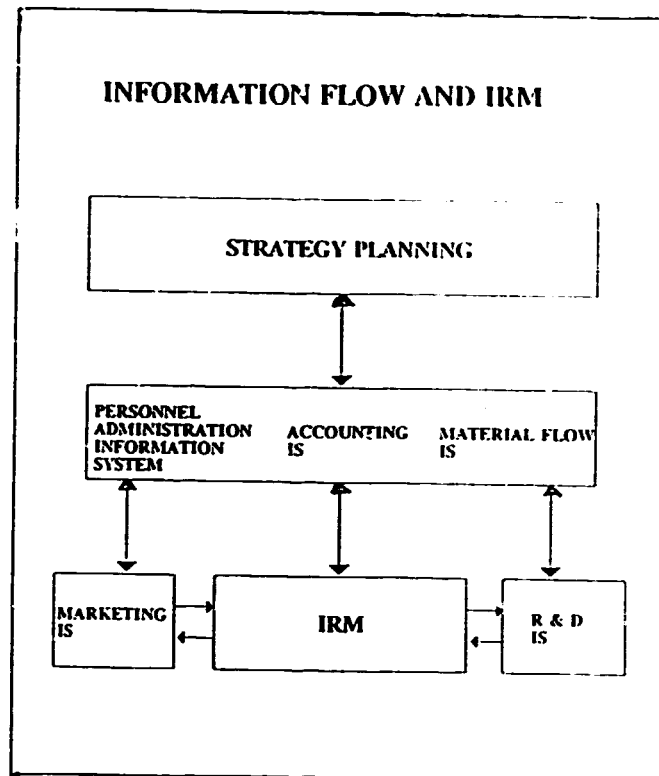


1.3. IRM and Information Systems in companies

When IRM is employed in the company the training of the personnel involved in information work is important. First there should be involved users of information, producers of information and handlers of information as can be seen in the next picture.



The training is also important to personnel who are in charge of different information systems. IRM's task is to coordinate and activate all information systems. This includes both operational information systems and others of which the strategy planning information system is the most important. All the other systems support the strategy planning information system, which we could actually regard as an enduser.

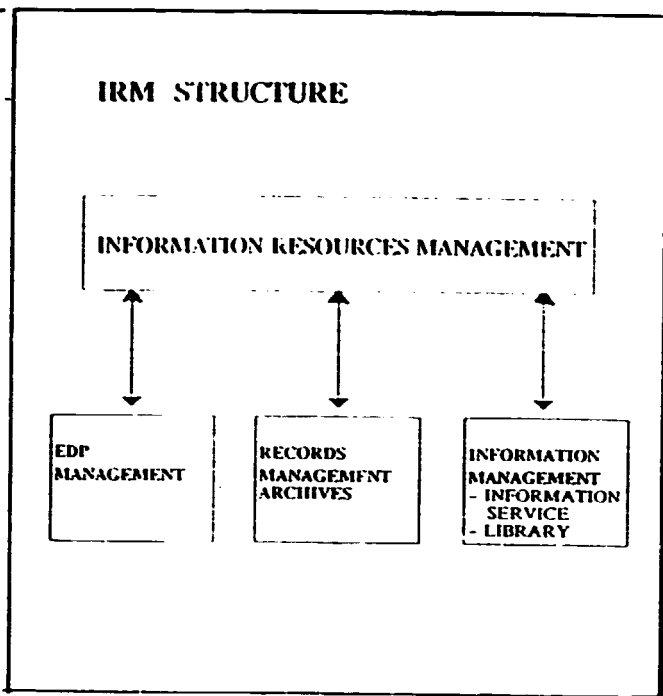


2. IRM project in a company

2.1. IRM structure and project

Understanding the value of information as a strategic weapon for a company is essential for the company's economic strength. Optimizing cost benefits is a crucial consideration for every company. Analysing the risks and opportunities in the company environment is necessary for global markets.

To gain these goals it is necessary to organize the information handling in the following way



- IRM PROJECT**
- **GOAL**
TO IMPROVE THE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT IN A COMPANY
 - **OBJECTIVE**
AN INVENTION OF THE INFORMATION NEEDED FOR COMPANY'S FUNCTIONS AND A COMPARISON TO THE PRESENT SYSTEM
 - **MEANS**
MATRICES CONSISTING OF
 - ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS
 - FUNCTIONS
 - INFORMATION RESOURCES
 - THE LINKAGES BETWEEN THESE THREE

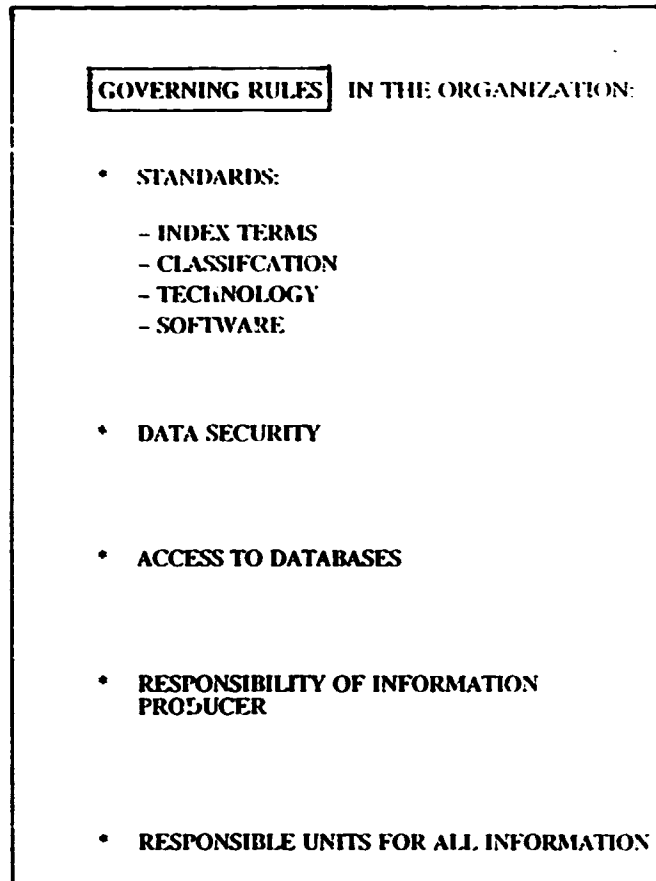
This means that the training inside the company should involve those who work in fields like data processing, systems design, records management, information service and libraries.

2.2. Critical success factors

- CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**
- INTERGRATION OF COMPANY'S INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL INFORMATION
 - PRODUCING OF RELEVANT INFORMATION PRODUCTS
 - BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT MONITORING
 - PRICE OF THE PRODUCTS

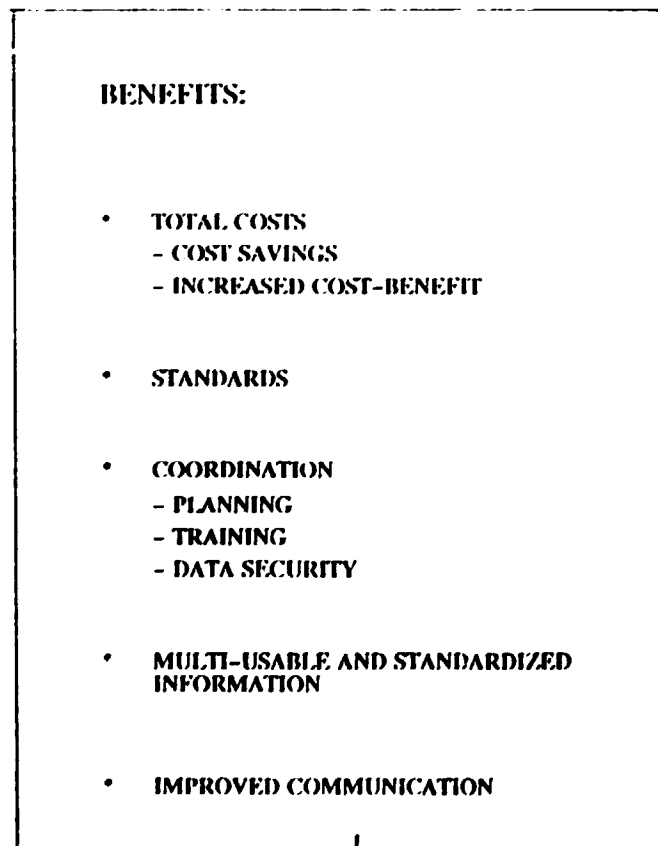
2.3. Governing rules

Rules for an IRM organization are



2.4. Benefits

When this IRM project has been worked out in the company, which means that the information issue has been emphasised by nominating an Chief Information Manager, by implementing well functioning information systems and by implementing training courses, we shall resieve the following benefits:



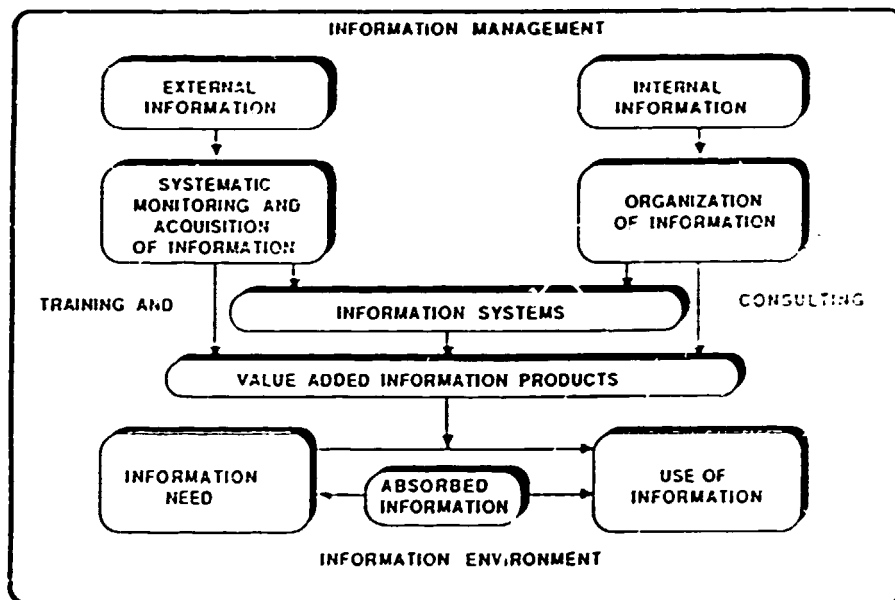
3. Training program

It is obvious that industrial companies all over the world are becoming more and more information oriented which means that they also need to start training of their personnel in IRM thinking. We have developed a training model for companies in Finland. It addresses only the issues which are common to all types of companies. The model can be adopted to suit individual corporate cultures and country characteristics.

3.1. Goals

The goals for this training are:

- information supporting business
- the company information culture
- monitoring the information environment
- effective use of external and internal information
- segments of high priority information areas



3.2. Contents

The training sections may be subdivided as follows:

Introduction

1. Information as a part of the business activities.
 - (a) Corporate information environment.
 - (b) Information flows in the company.
 - (c) Information need and production in the company.
2. Concepts, objectives and goals of IRM.
3. Inventory of information resources.
 - (a) Organizational structure.
 - (b) Types of information.
 - (c) Information activities.
 - (d) External and internal information sources.

Services and content

1. Internal information monitoring.
 - (a) Annual report.
 - (b) Public relations bulletin.
 - (c) Product development announcement.
 - (d) Accounting reports.
 - (e) Personnel profiles.
2. External information monitoring intelligence products
 - (a) Customer analysis.
 - (b) Competitor intelligence.
 - (c) Environmental scan.
 - (d) Forecasting.
 - (e) Monitoring prices (e.g., for raw material products).
 - (f) Market monitoring.
 - (g) Patent monitoring.
 - (h) Corporate profiles.
 - (i) Director profiles.
 - (j) Product development update.
3. Information sources and acquisition of information.
 - (a) Domestic and international information industry.
 - (b) Structure of information sources.
4. Integration of external and internal information.
5. Coordination of information systems and activities.
6. Added value information
 - (a) Information economy.
 - (b) Information linkage to products, services and management

- (c) Value added information products:

Information packaging (e.g., reports, bulletins).

External customer information service (e.g., direct electronic communication links to database.)

External supplier information service.

Internal consulting.

User training (training in methods of using information).

Integrated resources development.

Content applications development.

Desk research and analysis.

Intelligent management information systems.

Strategy and planning

1. Corporate IRM strategies and policies.
2. IRM organization in the corporation.
 - (a) Current situation.
 - (b) New situation.
 - (c) Cost/benefit decisions.
 - (d) Information professionals: profile.

Technology

1. Technology as a tool in IRM.
 - (a) Current decisions and potential alternatives.
 - (b) Workstations, networks, telecommunication.
 - (c) Systems and programs.
 - (d) Information architectures.
2. Information protection.
 - (a) EDP security.
 - (b) Content confidentiality.
 - (c) Barriers to cross-national information flow.
 - Cultural.
 - Political.
 - Legal.

Evaluation

1. Evaluation of IRM development.
2. Ongoing evaluation process.
 - (a) What is gained? What is lost?

3.3. IRM training in large/medium size/small companies

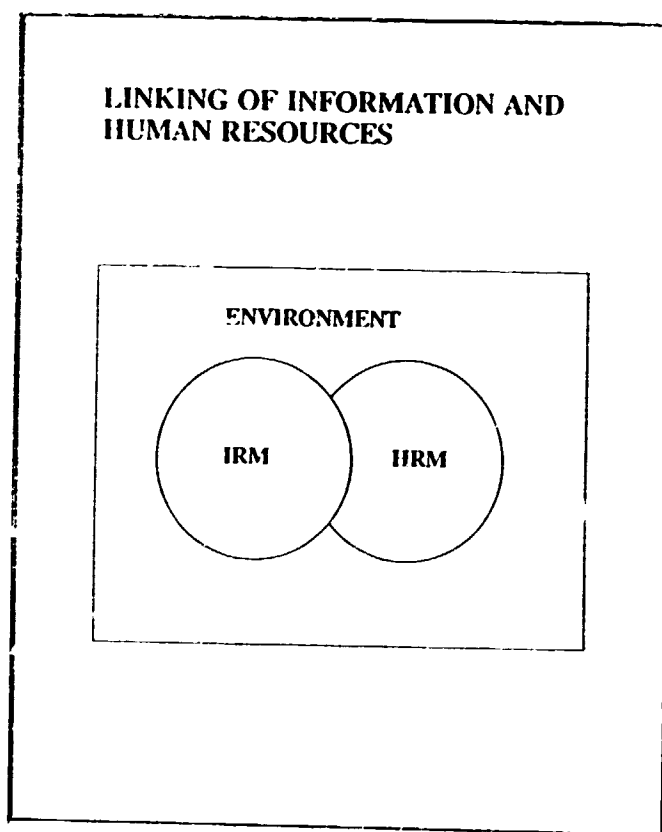
In large companies the aim is to give all of the heavy users of information and information professionals first the Basic Course in IRM and for those managers who are responsible for some sectors of information handling a comprehensive course.

In medium size companies in-house training programmes are usually supplemented, in part from programs developed outside the company.

For small companies training packages are tailored according to their joint needs.

3.4. Linking of information and human resources

The only way to accelerate the development of Information Resources management is to train the personnel in a company to think in a modern IRM way in production, combining, processing and using of information



The purpose of linking of information and human resources is to create our chain
"Information - knowledge - evolution"

4. Concrete proposal to arrange the training of IRM-trainers in companies at the Helsinki University of Technology

We like to make a concrete proposal to arrange the training for information professionals to become IRM trainers in companies. The Center for Continuing Education at the Helsinki University of Technology is ready to negotiate about the possibility to arrange the training in Finland with UNIDO.