

A graphic of a water splash, with droplets and a central point of impact, rendered in shades of blue and white. It is positioned behind the 'TRANS' part of the title.

**KMSG18**  
**TRANS** *formation*

Microsoft Operations, 1 Marina Boulevard  
29th to 31st August 2018

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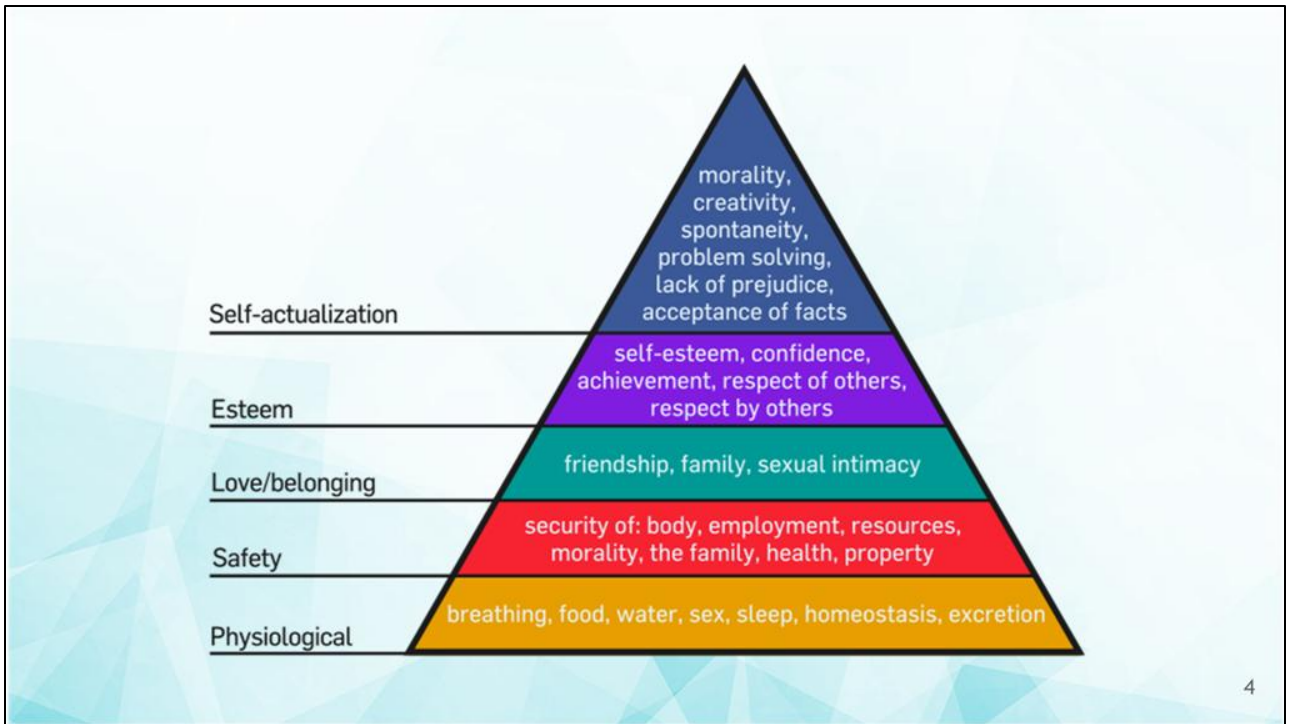
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# KM transformation must consider “how” we do things, and not just “what” we do

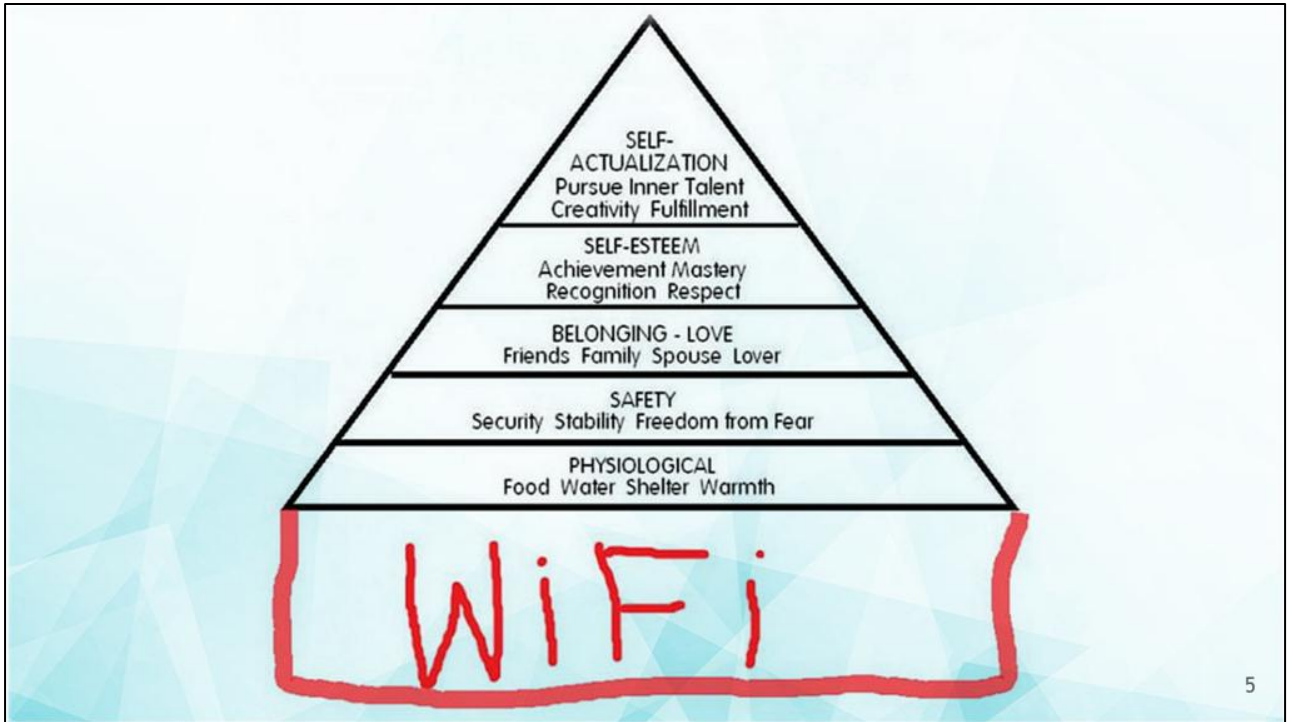
Bruce Boyes, Editor and Lead Writer, RealKM Magazine  
[www.bruceboyes.info](http://www.bruceboyes.info) [www.realkm.com](http://www.realkm.com)



- Welcome to my keynote presentation.
- References and image credits for all of the materials used in this presentation can be found at the end of the presentation.



- Do you know what this is?
- Yes, it's the well-known Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.



- Or maybe you can more readily relate to this updated version ☺.
- Indeed, “What’s the Wi-Fi password?” is one of the first questions I need to ask when arriving at a conference, rather than “Where’s the food?”.

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CHAPTER

2

# Management and Motivation

Nancy H. Shanks

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- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is widely taught as a theory of motivation in management studies.

## THEORIES OF MOTIVATION

Psychologists have studied human motivation extensively and have derived a variety of theories about what motivates people. This section briefly highlights the motivational theories that are regularly discussed in management textbooks. These include theories that focus on motivation being a function of 1) employee needs of various types, 2) extrinsic factors, and 3) intrinsic factors. Each set of theories will be discussed below.

### *Needs-Based Theories of Motivation*

- **Maslow's Hierarchy of Need**—Maslow (1954) postulated a hierarchy of needs that progresses from the lowest, subsistence-level needs to the highest level of self-awareness and actualization. Once each level has been met, the theory is that an individual will be motivated by and strive to progress to satisfy the next higher level of need. The five levels in Maslow's hierarchy are
  - **Physiological needs**—including food, water, sexual drive, and other subsistence-related needs;
  - **Safety needs**—including shelter, a safe home environment, employment, a healthy and safe work environment, access to health care, money, and other basic necessities;

- For example, as shown in this excerpt from a management studies textbook.



## Maine Republic Email Alert

"...That I should bear witness to the truth." – John 18:37 // David E. Robinson, Publisher



[Home](#) [About](#)

— Obama's Trilateral Commission Team

Bad News From Obama For American Truckers —

### Obama signs Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide!!!

Posted on August 22, 2016

WASHINGTON, D.C. (AP) — Early this morning, [President Obama](#) made what could very well prove to be the most controversial move of his presidency with the signing of [Executive Order 13738](#), which revokes the federal government's official recognition of [the Pledge of Allegiance](#).

Under the new order, it is now illegal for any federally funded agency to display the pledge or for any federal employee to recite, or encourage others to recite, the pledge while on duty. This law also applies to federal contractors

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#### August 2016

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14

- We'll leave Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs for the moment, and come back to it a little later.
- Let's now look at this blog post.
- The post was published in August 2016, in the lead up to the December 2016 United States presidential election.
- We have a name for this type of news post – what is it?



## Maine Republic Email Alert

"...That I should bear witness to the truth." - John 18:37 // David E. Robinson, Publisher



Home About

### Obama signs Executive Order Repealing Pledge of Allegiance In Schools

Posted on August 22, 2016

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Early this morning, [President Obama](#) made what could very well prove to be the most controversial move of his presidency with the signing of [Executive Order 13738](#), which revokes the federal government's official recognition of [the Pledge of Allegiance](#).

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August 2016

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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- Yes, we call it "fake news".

## **5 Top Fake Political News Stories On Facebook**

“Obama Signs Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide” [ABCNews.com.co](http://ABCNews.com.co)

**2,177,000** Facebook shares, comments, and reactions

- That particular fake news item was also one of the top fake news stories on Facebook in 2016, with over 2 million shares, comments, and reactions.

4. Defendants, posing as U.S. persons and creating false U.S. personas, operated social media pages and groups designed to attract U.S. audiences. These groups and pages, which addressed divisive U.S. political and social issues, falsely claimed to be controlled by U.S. activists when, in fact, they were controlled by Defendants. Defendants also used the stolen identities of real U.S. persons to post on ORGANIZATION-controlled social media accounts. Over time, these social media accounts became Defendants' means to reach significant numbers of Americans for purposes of interfering with the U.S. political system, including the presidential election of 2016.

On 16 February 2018, the United States Department of Justice announced that a grand jury had returned an indictment charging thirteen Russian nationals and three Russian companies “for committing federal crimes while seeking to interfere in the United States political system, including the 2016 Presidential election.”

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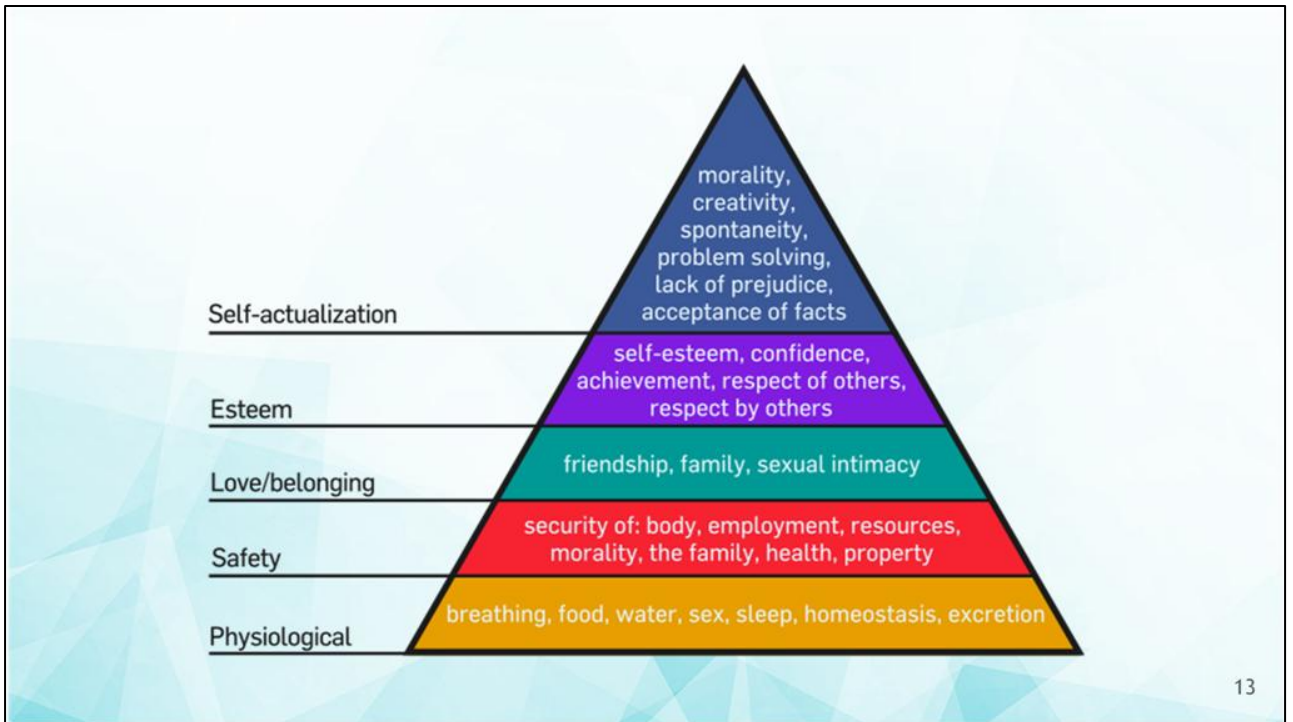
- Investigations have revealed that much of the fake news that was distributed in the lead up to the December 2016 United States presidential was deliberately spread with the intention of interfering in the United States political system. (For further information on this issue, see the RealKM Magazine article “US indicts Russians for fake news “information warfare”: can knowledge management help the fight?”, <https://realkm.com/2018/02/23/us-indicts-russians-for-fake-news-information-warfare-can-knowledge-management-help-the-fight/>).
- However, large numbers of people liked, shared, and commented on this fake news without pausing to check if it was true.

### Executive Order 13673

Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces

- Signed: July 31, 2014
- Federal Register page and date: 79 FR 45309, August 5, 2014
- See: EO 11246, September 24, 1965; EO 13658, February 12, 2014; EO 13683, December 11, 2014; EO 13738, August 23, 2016

- For example, if people had taken the time to investigate the “Obama signs Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide!!!” story, they would have found within just a few minutes that it was fake news.
- The story contains a link to Executive Order 13738, which supposedly introduces the ban. However, just following this link reveals that Executive Order 13738 is an amendment to Executive Order 13673, which deals with fair pay and safe workplaces.
- The truth can also be readily found by searching fact-checking websites such as Snopes (<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/pledge-of-allegiance-ban/>).



- Let's now return to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.





## Who Built Maslow's Pyramid? A History of the Creation of Management Studies' Most Famous Symbol and Its Implications for Management Education

Todd Bridgman ✉ Stephen Cummings; John A Ballard

Published Online: 13 Apr 2018 | <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2017.0351>

### Abstract

Abraham Maslow's theory of motivation, the idea that human needs exist in a hierarchy that people strive progressively to satisfy, is regarded as a fundamental approach to understanding and motivating people at work. It is one of the first and most remembered models encountered by students of management. Despite gaining little support in empirical studies and being criticized for promoting an elitist, individualistic view of management, Maslow's theory remains popular, its popularity underpinned by its widely-recognized pyramid form. However, Maslow never created a pyramid to represent the hierarchy of needs. We investigated how it came to be and draw on this analysis to call for a rethink of how Maslow is represented in management studies. We also challenge management educators to reflect critically on what are taken to be the historical foundations of management studies and the forms in which those foundations are taught to students.

- An investigative research paper published in April 2018 reveals that “Despite gaining little support in empirical studies and being criticized for promoting an elitist, individualistic view of management, Maslow's theory remains popular, its popularity underpinned by its widely-recognized pyramid form. However, Maslow never created a pyramid to represent the hierarchy of needs.”
- Just as people have widely circulated fake news without checking if it's true, people have widely circulated Maslow's theory without checking if it's true.



## How Maslow's theory became a management meme

- Maslow originally proposed a “ladder of human needs”, a psychology theory that addressed human potential. Others took this theory, generalized it, turned it into a management theory, and then turned it into a hierarchical pyramid.
- The hierarchy of needs pyramid suggests that people are motivated to only satisfy one need at a time, with each level needing to be satisfied before ascending to the next level. **But Maslow did not endorse this view.** Rather, he acknowledged the complexity of human behaviour.

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- Contrary to the popular belief, Maslow did not endorse the hierarchical needs view. Concerned by what the management field had done to his theory, Maslow had been working on an alternate theory, but unfortunately passed away before it was completed.

## What's the evidence for these practices?

- Banning social media use at work
- Net Promoter Score (NPS)
- Unconscious Bias Training (UBT)
- Implicit Association Test (IAT)
- Nudge management
- Predictive algorithms
- Fining parents for student absence
- Student evaluation of teaching ratings

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- But Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is not the only popular practice that is not supported by the evidence.
- If you search RealKM Magazine for the first six of these practices, you'll see how a review of the evidence presents a different picture to the common belief (the last two practices will be covered in future articles).

## What about knowledge management?

- Critical analysis, for example by Stephen Bounds (RealKM founder) and Patrick Lambe (Straits Knowledge), reveals that KM has a **mixed track record** in regard to evidence-based practice.
- This means that KM is now falling behind the overall field of management and also other management disciplines such as HR.

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- Unfortunately, knowledge management (KM) also has a mixed track record in regard to evidence-based practice.



Trust me, 20 years of  
management experience

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- I've heard this concerning view expressed by a number of knowledge managers. It means that they are very likely making opinion-based decisions rather than the evidence-based decisions that they should be making.
- This image comes from the Center for Evidence-Based Management (CEBMA), which I'll discuss on the following slide.



## Welcome to the Center for Evidence-Based Management

The Center for Evidence-Based Management (CEBMa) is the leading authority on evidence-based practice in the field of management and leadership. We are an independent non-profit foundation that provides support and resources to managers, leaders, consultants, teachers, academics and others interested in learning more about evidence-based practice and decision-making.



ABOUT CEBMa



WHAT IS EVIDENCE-BASED MANAGEMENT?



RESOURCES

presentations, articles, tools



WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU

training, support



FREQUENTLY ASKED  
QUESTIONS

- The Center for Evidence-Based Management (CEBMa) is playing a leading role in educating the management community about evidence-based practice.
- CEBMa offers a wide range of resources that can be readily used and reused as they are published under a Creative Commons licence.

DECEMBER 2017 / JANUARY 2018

## Make Better Decisions with Evidence-Based HR

Gather good data to make better decisions.

By Shonna Waters  
November 29, 2017

**I**magine walking into your doctor's office and being handed a prescription for mercury, the chemical element found in old-school thermometers that has long been known to be poisonous and even deadly when contacted directly. Sounds crazy, right? But if



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- SHRM is one of the HR organisations that is playing a leading role in encouraging evidence-based practice in HR.
- For further information, see the RealKM Magazine article “Moving towards better evidence-based decisions in HR” (<https://realkm.com/2017/12/08/moving-towards-better-evidence-based-decisions-in-hr/>).



6 Dec 2016

# In search of the best available evidence

Investigates why evidence-based practice is so important, the principles that underpin it, how it can be followed and how challenges in doing so can be overcome

Many of us naturally gravitate to people management practices that appear cutting-edge, but there is a danger that we are following passing fads. Others tend to stick to established traditions without ever questioning their relevance. In both cases, important decisions suffer from not being grounded in a firm evidence base.

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- Another is CIPD.
- Think about the statements CIPD makes on this slide in the context of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and the other practices I list on slide 17.
- What is the evidence base for the practices that you use?



# Evidence-based KM

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- The following slides are a summary of key aspects of evidence-based KM.

## Core knowledge

- Evidence-based practice and evidence-based management
- The four sources of evidence
- The six steps in evidence-based practice
- Information literacy
- Evidence from practitioners and stakeholders
  - Open, inclusive, participatory processes
- The scientific literature
  - Systematic reviews
  - The uneven global knowledge base

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- The terms “evidence-based practice” and “evidence-based management” are used interchangeably. They essentially mean the same thing - evidence-based management is just evidence-based practice in a management setting.
- For more detailed information, see the following RealKM Magazine articles:
  - “The disastrous effects of opinion-based decisions, and how knowledge management can be better evidence-based” (<https://realkm.com/2018/02/16/the-disastrous-effects-of-opinion-based-decisions-and-how-knowledge-management-can-be-better-evidence-based/>).
  - “Using narrative reviews, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses in evidence-based knowledge management (KM)” (<https://realkm.com/2018/05/18/narrative-reviews-systematic-reviews-meta-analyses/>).
  - “Information literacy and evidence-based knowledge management” (<https://realkm.com/2018/08/24/information-literacy-and-evidence-based-knowledge-management/>).



- This infographic shows the four sources of evidence and the six steps in evidence-based practice.
- It's a great basic guide to circulate to colleagues and staff. It can be downloaded from the RealKM magazine website ([https://realkm.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Evidence-based\\_practice.jpg](https://realkm.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Evidence-based_practice.jpg)).



- Now let's look at the four sources of evidence.

## The four sources of evidence

- ***The scientific literature.*** The first source of evidence is scientific research published in academic journals. To be able to include up-to-date evidence from the scientific literature in your decision-making, it is essential to know how to search for studies and to be able to judge their trustworthiness and relevance.
- ***Evidence from the organisation.*** A second source of evidence is the organisation itself. Organisational evidence comes in many forms, for example financial data, operational data, or client and employee feedback.

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- Many knowledge managers don't sufficiently consider the scientific literature in their decision-making and practice, and when research findings are used in KM, it's evident that the quality and relevance of studies is often not being adequately appraised.

## The four sources of evidence

- *Evidence from practitioners.* A third source of evidence is the professional experience and judgement of managers, consultants, business leaders, and other practitioners. Professional experience is not intuition, opinion, or belief. Rather, it is the specialized knowledge acquired through repeated experience and reflection over time.
- *Evidence from stakeholders.* A fourth source of evidence is stakeholder values and concerns. Stakeholders are any individuals or groups who may be affected by an organisation's decisions and their consequences. They can be internal or external to the organisation.

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- Some opinion-based decision-making occurs in KM. Also evident is a tendency for people working in KM to rely heavily on their professional expertise, to the exclusion of other sources of evidence, in particular research findings. Confirmation bias plays a role in this.

## The six steps and information literacy

1. Asking: translating a practical issue or problem into an answerable question
2. Acquiring: systematically searching for and retrieving the evidence
3. Appraising: critically judging the trustworthiness and relevance of the evidence
4. Aggregating: weighing and pulling together the evidence
5. Applying: incorporating the evidence into the decision-making process
6. Assessing: evaluating the outcome of the decision taken

### Information literacy:

- Develops skills in asking, acquiring, and appraising

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- For more detailed information, see the following RealKM Magazine articles:
  - “The disastrous effects of opinion-based decisions, and how knowledge management can be better evidence-based” (<https://realkm.com/2018/02/16/the-disastrous-effects-of-opinion-based-decisions-and-how-knowledge-management-can-be-better-evidence-based/>).
  - “Information literacy and evidence-based knowledge management” (<https://realkm.com/2018/08/24/information-literacy-and-evidence-based-knowledge-management/>).



## Evidence from practitioners and stakeholders

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- I'll now discuss some important issues for KM in regard to two of the four sources of evidence in evidence-based practice: evidence from practitioners and evidence from stakeholders.

DECEMBER 18, 2017 BY DAVIDK3

## Knowledge Management ISO 30401 (something rotten in the state of Denmark)



Ron Young, one of the experts involved in developing the Knowledge Management ISO 30401 draft, has posted a [blog](#) that sets out the contributors and processes involved in the development of the draft standards, which are published under the auspices of Human Resource Management. Unfortunately, as I will explain, Ron's post demonstrates that there is something rotten in the state of Denmark.

In response, I am bitterly disappointed that so called Knowledge Management experts can so flagrantly constrain the future of the field by ignoring fundamental challenges facing the future of organisations.

Furthermore, the whole ISO Knowledge Management process stinks of jobs for the boys (and girls), who, I argue, are more interested in protecting their consultancy practice than developing standards that anticipate the future of people, organisations and wider society in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (workplace 4.0).

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- The draft of the new international KM standard, ISO 30401 Knowledge management systems – Requirements, was released for public review and comment in November 2017.
- Soon after the release of the draft, David Griffiths, the founder of UK-based knowledge management consulting company K3-Cubed, wrote this blog post criticizing the draft standard and its development process.

“If KM is a complex phenomenon, which I challenge anyone to contest, and, if this ISO is to be taken seriously, in terms of anticipating/influencing the future direction of the phenomenon, where are the credible *international* experts (i.e. active **practitioners** from across the globe – this, after all, being *international* standards) from the fields of AI, Machine Learning, complexity, strategy, HR, L&D Talent Management etc.”

“Ignoring the fact that the committee has obviously run out of ideas for KM, how can anyone possibly claim to take a holistic view when the committee has constrained the view by failing to involve the spectrum of Knowledge Management **stakeholders** required to develop such a view”

David Griffiths, December 2017 [emphasis added]

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- While I disagree with David’s criticism of a number of the KM professionals involved in the development process, the concerns he expresses in regard to the development process are entirely appropriate.
- He raises concerns in regard to a lack of both practitioner and stakeholder involvement in the draft standard development process.

## Evidence from practitioners and stakeholders

- **Practitioners:** Professional experience and judgement of managers, consultants, business leaders, and other practitioners. Professional experience is not intuition, opinion, or belief. Rather, it is the specialized knowledge acquired through repeated experience and reflection over time.
- **Stakeholders:** Stakeholder values and concerns. Stakeholders are any individuals or groups who may be affected by an organisation's decisions and their consequences. They can be internal or external to the organisation.

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- As we have seen, evidence from practitioners and evidence from stakeholders are two of the four sources of evidence in evidence-based practice.
- The failure of the KM standard development process to adequately consider these sources of evidence means that the process has been seriously deficient.
- Not adequately considering all four sources of evidence is likely to have affected the quality of the standard, as well as the extent to which members of the KM community feel they have ownership over it. If people feel excluded from the KM standard development process then they will be less motivated to use and promote the standard.



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- Unfortunately processes that exclude practitioner and stakeholder evidence are all too common, and the reaction from excluded practitioners and/or stakeholders is typically very similar to David Griffiths' reaction to the draft KM standard.
- Another example is Australia's Murray-Darling Basin Plan development process. These men are angrily burning copies of the 2010 guide to the Plan because they felt that the development process for the Plan excluded them.





- The Murray-Darling Basin covers a significant part of the Australian landscape, and is home to half of Australia's irrigated agriculture.
- As well as its agricultural significance, the Basin has high conservation and indigenous cultural heritage values. It also spans three states and the Australian Capital Territory. These factors give rise to a high degree of complexity.

Tuesday 2 March 2010

PR/036/10

## **Water plan process flawed**

The NSW Farmers' Association says farmers and regional communities appear to have been effectively shut out of the discussion about the Murray Darling Basin Plan, with potentially devastating results.

NSW Farmers' Association President Charles Armstrong says the rush to complete a draft plan to the Government's deadline means critical input from the farm sector is missing.

"Yes, they've done some preliminary consultation, but there has been no opportunity for detailed technical analysis of social, economic and structural factors.

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- A range of research shows that practitioner and stakeholder evidence is critical in decision-making processes for issues where there is a high degree of complexity.
- However, there was inadequate consideration of both practitioner and stakeholder evidence, as this media release from a major farming organisation shows.



## Cry me a river: Mismanagement and corruption have left the Darling dry

By Helen Vivian  
9 March 2018 – 4:07pm

“Where is the water? The Darling River has 22 tributaries. We have a buyback program for environmental flow. We spend billions. Where’s the water?”

- Ever since the confronting images of people burning the guide to the Basin Plan were splashed across the media in 2010, the Basin Plan process has struggled to gain acceptance. In the absence of an agreed plan, stakeholders have just acted in their own interests. Most recently, there have been allegations of corruption and inaction on water theft, the Darling River has run dry, and two key Basin states have threatened to quit the Plan in response to a highly divisive water recovery proposal.

## Murray-Darling Basin

# Murray-Darling basin plan fails environment and wastes money - experts

Scientists and economists condemn squandering of \$4bn on projects that have failed to improve the river's health

Anne Davies

@annedavies

Sun 4 Feb 2018 17:00 GMT

1,997 81

This article is over 6 months old



- It's an appalling disaster.



- I can say this because at the time of the release of the 2010 guide to the Basin Plan, I was managing a major \$77.4 million recovery program for another nationally significant river system. This is the Hawkesbury-Nepean River system, which provides most of the water supply for Sydney, Australia's largest city.
- The Hawkesbury-Nepean River system has the same level of complexity as the Murray-Darling Basin.

# HNRRP e-news

## Welcome

After just over two years of very intensive activity, the Hawkesbury-Nepean River Recovery Program (HNRRP) is coming to an end, having successfully delivered its intended outcomes on time and under budget.

In this final edition of HNRRP e-news we take the opportunity to reflect on some of the major achievements from the seven HNRRP projects and celebrate the great work that has been done to improve the health of the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment.

Congratulations to the project managers and their teams on their outstanding efforts, and thank-you to the many people who have supported and assisted the HNRRP.

Thank-you to the Australian Government for making the HNRRP a reality through its very significant investment in the future of one of Australia's most important and iconic rivers systems.

Bruce Boyes  
Program Manager

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- Unlike the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, the Hawkesbury-Nepean River Recovery Program (HNRRP) established a successful partnership with the widest possible range of practitioners and stakeholders. Contributing to this were the initial arrangements (developed by others before I was engaged), the program management approach I used, and the highly effective relationship building activities of the participating agencies.
- As a result, the program was uncontroversial, was completed on time and under budget, and won two major awards.
- For further information, see the RealKM Magazine article “KM standard controversy: lessons from the environment sector in regard to open, inclusive, participatory processes” (<https://realkm.com/2018/03/23/km-standard-controversy-lessons-from-the-environment-sector-in-regard-to-open-inclusive-participatory-processes/>).

# The scientific literature

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- I'll now discuss some important issues for KM in regard to another of the four sources of evidence in evidence-based practice: the scientific literature.

## The scientific literature

- The first source of evidence is scientific research published in academic journals.
- To be able to include up-to-date evidence from the scientific literature in your decision-making, it is essential to know how to search for studies and to be able to judge their trustworthiness and relevance.

### The reality:

- Unfortunately there's an abundance of poor science and hyped science.

- It's vitally important to use scientific literature in KM decision-making, but in doing so it's essential to be able to judge the trustworthiness and relevance of studies.





## About Brian Wansink



Brian Wansink (Ph.D. Stanford 1990) is the [John Dyson Endowed Chair](#) in the Applied Economics and Management Department at Cornell University, where he directs the [Cornell Food and Brand Lab](#). He is the lead author of over 100 academic articles and books on eating behavior, including the best-selling *Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think* (2006) along with *Marketing Nutrition* (2005), *Asking Questions* (2004), and *Consumer Panels* (2002).

From 2007-2009 Wansink was granted a leave-of-absence from Cornell to accept a Presidential appointment as Executive Director of USDA's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, the Federal agency in charge of developing 2010 Dietary Guidelines and promoting the Food Guide Pyramid ([MyPyramid.gov](#)). While there, web hits to Dietary Guidelines increased 44% to 5.4 million/day, and he was named ABC World News Person of the Week.

Wansink's award-winning academic research on changing eating behaviors has been published in the world's top marketing, medical, nutrition and obesity journals. It contributed to the introduction of smaller "100 calorie" packages (*to prevent overeating*), the use of taller glasses in some bars (*to prevent the overpouring of alcohol*), and the use of elaborate names and mouth-watering descriptions on some chain restaurant menus (*to improve enjoyment of the food*). His results have been presented, translated, reported, and featured in television documentaries on every continent but Antarctica.

An Iowa native, he lives with his wife and three daughters in Ithaca, NY, where he's a mediocre saxophone player in a rock-and-roll band and where he regularly enjoys both French food and french fries.

Textbooks  
from Brian  
Wansink



- To highlight the importance of being able to effectively judge the trustworthiness of studies, I'll use the case study of Brian Wansink from Cornell University.
- Wansink's key hypothesis is that by eating mindfully, for example by reducing portion size, people can lose weight and live a healthier life.
- He has published widely on this hypothesis and related issues, and as a result has appeared in television documentaries and been invited to take up significant positions.



## Obesity, Complexity, and the Role of the Health System

[Sarah Froot](#), [Lee M. Johnston](#), [Carrie L. Matteson](#), and [Diane T. Finegood](#)<sup>✉</sup>

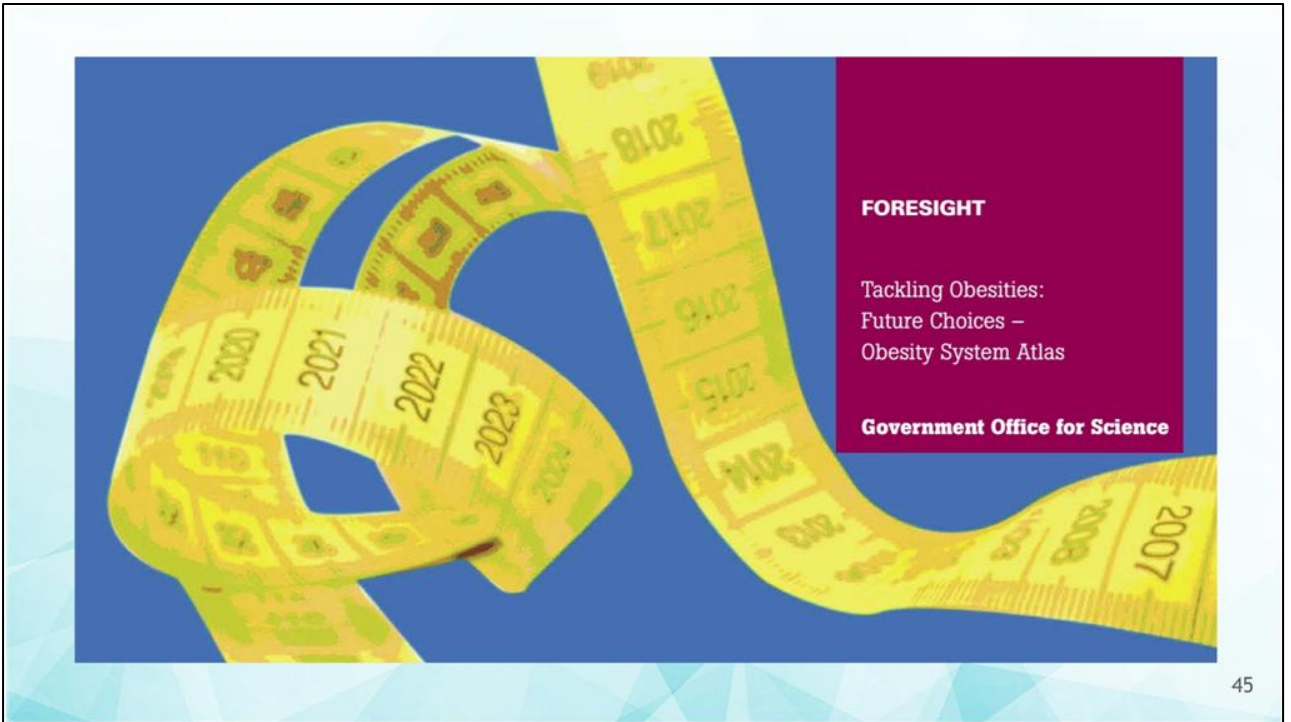
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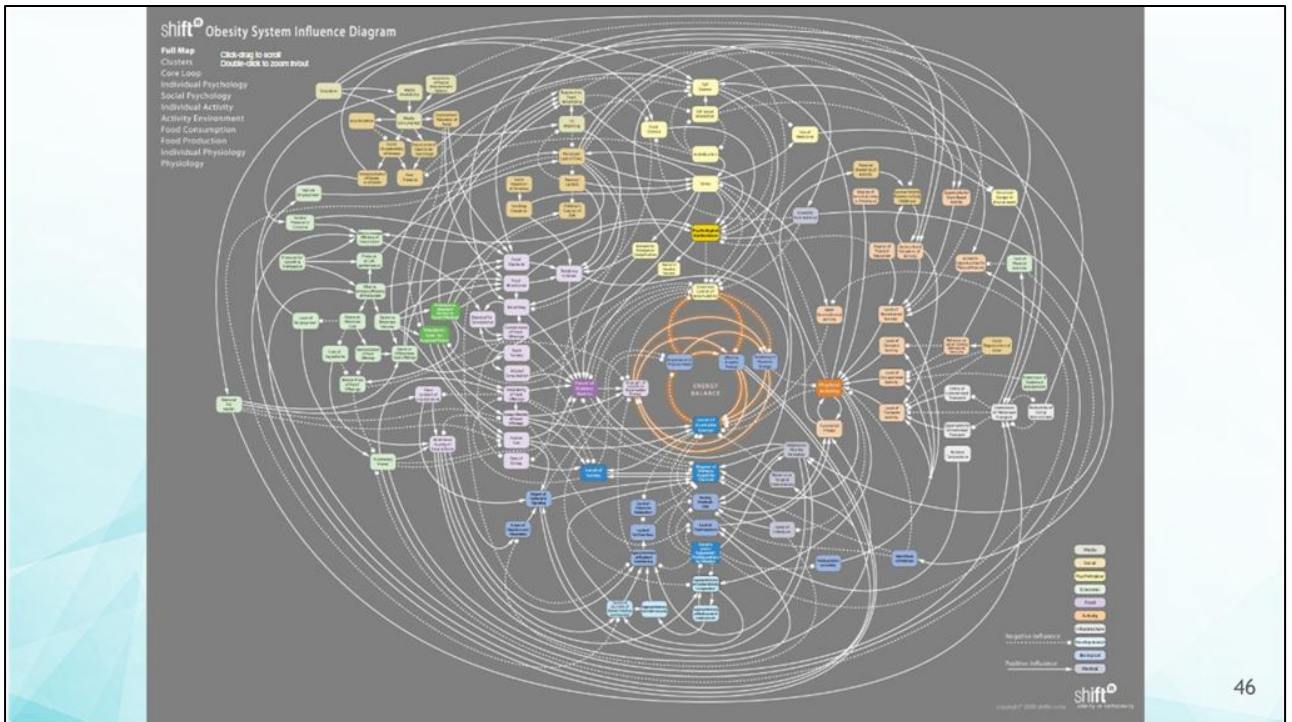
### Abstract

As obesity continues to increase throughout the world, there is still no well-defined solution to the issue. Reducing obesity poses a significant challenge for the health care system because it is a complex problem with numerous interconnections and elements. The complexity of obesity challenges traditional primary care practices that have been structured to address simple or less complicated conditions. Systems thinking provides a way forward for clinicians that are discouraged or overwhelmed by the complexity of obesity. At any given level, individuals matter and system functioning is optimized when our capacity is well matched to the complexity of our tasks. Shifting paradigms around the causes of obesity is essential for creating a health care system that promotes innovative and collaborative practice for healthcare practitioners and individuals dealing with obesity.

- However, a search of Google Scholar reveals a range of research concluding that obesity is a complex problem that can't be effectively addressed with simple solutions.



- The United Kingdom Office for Science has studied this complexity for its Foresight report “Tackling Obesity: Future Choices – Obesity System Atlas”.



- This is the highly complex Obesity System Influence Diagram that is reproduced in the report. An interactive version of the map can be viewed online (<http://www.shiftn.com/obesity/Full-Map.html>).
- Wansink's hypothesis considers only a small part of this complexity, which calls his hypothesis into question.

SCIENCE

## Here's How Cornell Scientist Brian Wansink Turned Shoddy Data Into Viral Studies About How We Eat

Brian Wansink won fame, funding, and influence for his science-backed advice on healthy eating. Now, emails show how the Cornell professor and his colleagues have hacked and massaged low-quality data into headline-friendly studies to "go virally big time."



**Stephanie M. Lee**  
BuzzFeed News Reporter

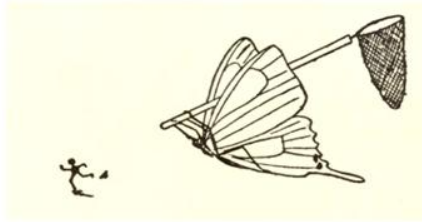
Posted on February 25, 2018, at 8:45 p.m. ET

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- From the work of Dave Snowden (Cynefin Framework), the KM community should be well aware that simple solutions don't work for complex issues. In this context, the only way that Wansink could get his simple solution to appear to be working is through massaging data to fit his hypothesis.

## Caught Our Notice: Retraction eight as errors in Wansink paper are “too voluminous” for a correction

Title: *Shifts in  
the Enjoyment  
of Healthy and  
Unhealthy Be-  
haviors Affect  
Short- and  
Long-Term  
Postbariatric  
Weight Loss*



**What Caught Our Attention:** Cornell food marketing researcher Brian Wansink, the one-time media darling who has been dogged by mounting criticism of his findings, has lost another paper to retraction. As we've noted in the past, corrections for Wansink's work tend to be long. This time, “the number of errors is too voluminous to be executed by issuing a correction statement,” according to the retraction notice for a paper about behaviors following weight loss surgery.

- Wansink has now had eight academic journal papers retracted.

May 8, 2018

## Expression of Concern: Wansink B, Cheney MM. Super Bowls: Serving Bowl Size and Food Consumption. *JAMA*. 2005;293(14):1727-1728.

Howard Bauchner, MD<sup>1</sup>

» [Author Affiliations](#) | [Article Information](#)

*JAMA*. 2018;319(18):1869. doi:10.1001/jama.2018.4908

**W**e are issuing a Notice of Expression of Concern for this article<sup>1</sup> and all articles published in *JAMA* and the *JAMA* Network specialty journals<sup>2-6</sup> that include Brian Wansink, PhD, as an author. These Notices of Expression of Concern are to alert the scientific community to the ongoing concerns about the validity of these publications. We have communicated with Cornell University and Dr Wansink, and we have requested that Cornell University conduct an independent evaluation of the articles to determine whether the results are valid or not.

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- Further, journal *JAMA* has issued an expression of concern in regard to all of the papers published in its journal where Wansink is an author.



## Avoiding low-quality research

- Be cautious of hyped or heavily marketed research.
- Carefully examine any single studies you are thinking of using.
- Be aware of predatory journals.
- A better alternative to single studies is to use **systematic reviews**.
- Systematic reviews “can help address managerial problems by producing a reliable knowledge base through accumulating findings from a range of studies.”
- As much as possible, I used systematic reviews as the basis for my RealKM Magazine articles.

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- For further information on hyped and heavily marketed research, and on predatory journals, see the RealKM Magazine article series “Quality of science and science communication” (<https://realkm.com/quality-of-science-and-science-communication/>).
- For further information on systematic reviews, see the RealKM Magazine article “Using narrative reviews, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses in evidence-based knowledge management (KM)” (<https://realkm.com/2018/05/18/narrative-reviews-systematic-reviews-meta-analyses/>).

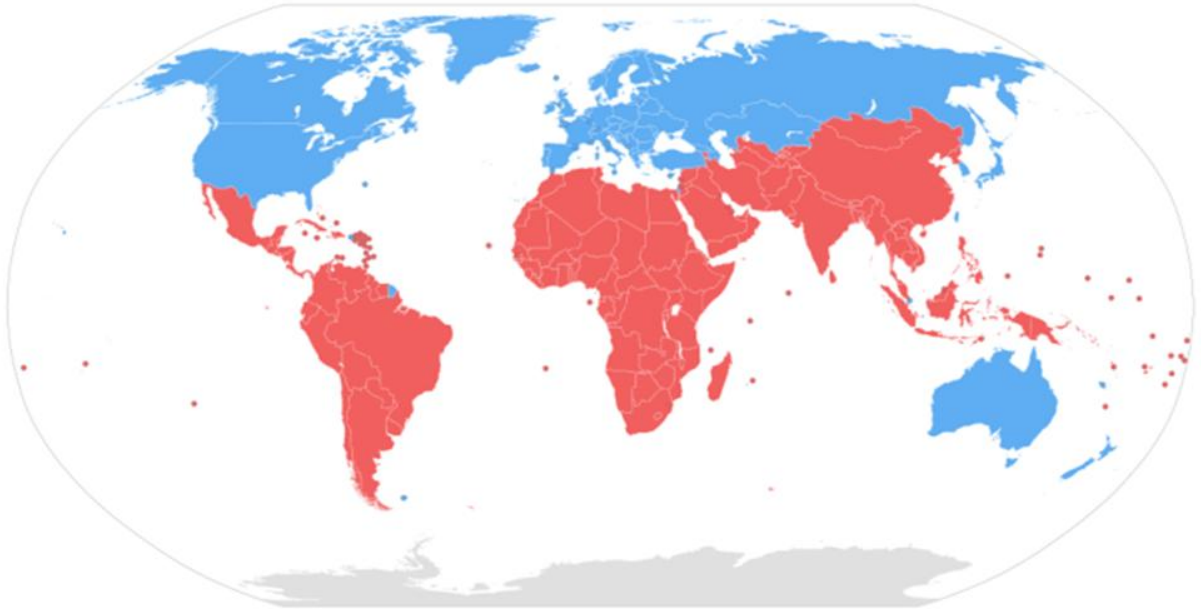


## A note about meta-analyses

- A common misconception is that systematic reviews and meta-analyses are the same thing, and the terms are often used interchangeably.
- However, they are different but related activities:
  - A **systematic review** is a detailed, systematic and transparent means of gathering, appraising and synthesising evidence to answer a well-defined question.
  - A **meta-analysis** is a statistical procedure for combining numerical data from multiple separate studies. A meta-analysis should only ever be conducted in the context of a systematic review.

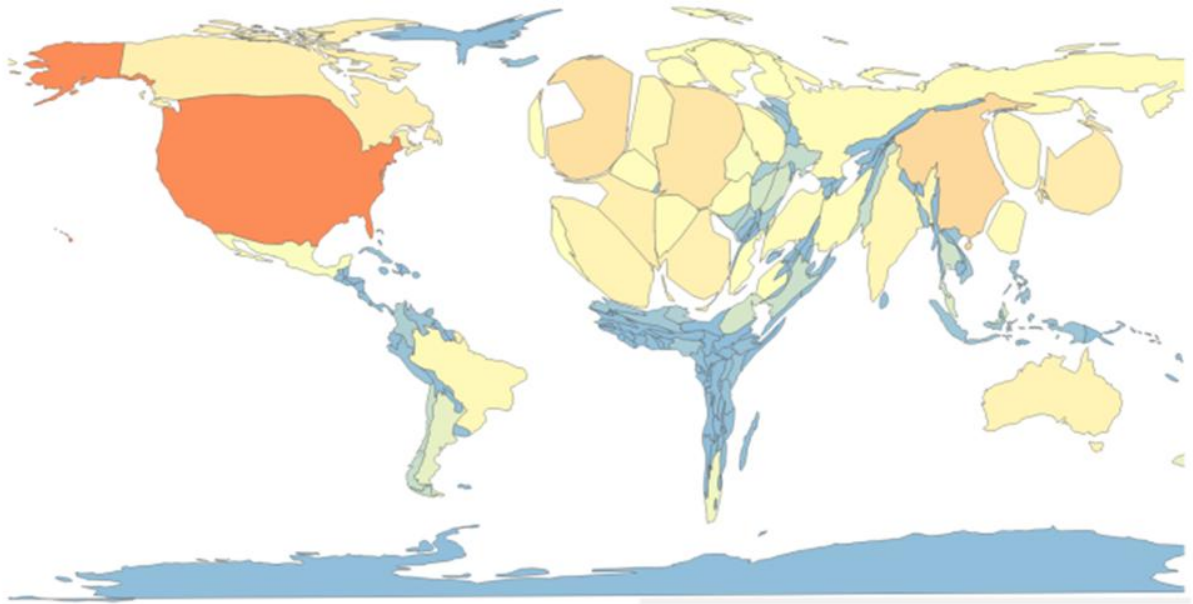
51

- For further information, see the RealKM Magazine article “Using narrative reviews, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses in evidence-based knowledge management (KM)” (<https://realkm.com/2018/05/18/narrative-reviews-systematic-reviews-meta-analyses/>).



Countries of the global North (coloured blue) and global South (coloured red)

- Another issue that needs to be considered in regard to the scientific literature is the significant global North bias in the literature.



World scaled by number of documents in Web of Science by authors living there, 2011

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- If the world is mapped according to how many scientific research papers each country has produced (across all fields of research), it takes on a rather bizarre, uneven appearance.
- The global North – in particular the United States and Europe – balloons beyond recognition.
- The global south, including Africa, effectively melts off the map.



## RealKM Magazine: evidence-based, practical results

- RealKM Magazine [www.realkm.com](http://www.realkm.com) was established three years ago with the aim of encouraging and assisting evidence-based KM. Sign up for the **Weekly Wrap e-newsletter**, or follow on **social media**.
- We've now published over 800 articles on a wide range of KM and related topics, including evidence summaries (mostly from systematic reviews) and longer feature articles with in-depth analysis.
- I would like to thank Stephen Bounds and Dr Arthur Shelley (RealKM Platinum Patrons), Patrick Lambe (RealKM Gold Patron), Aprill Allen and Stuart French (RealKM Silver Patrons), and all of our other greatly valued patrons for making RealKM Magazine and its continued growth possible.

# Recommended websites and further reading

## Websites:

- RealKM Magazine [www.realkm.com](http://www.realkm.com)
- Center for Evidence-Based Management (CEBMA) [www.cebma.org](http://www.cebma.org)

## Articles:

- The disastrous effects of opinion-based decisions, and how knowledge management can be better evidence-based [www.realkm.com/2018/02/16/the-disastrous-effects-of-opinion-based-decisions-and-how-knowledge-management-can-be-better-evidence-based](http://www.realkm.com/2018/02/16/the-disastrous-effects-of-opinion-based-decisions-and-how-knowledge-management-can-be-better-evidence-based)
- Using narrative reviews, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses in evidence-based knowledge management (KM) [www.realkm.com/2018/05/18/narrative-reviews-systematic-reviews-meta-analyses](http://www.realkm.com/2018/05/18/narrative-reviews-systematic-reviews-meta-analyses)
- Information literacy and evidence-based knowledge management [www.realkm.com/2018/08/24/information-literacy-and-evidence-based-knowledge-management](http://www.realkm.com/2018/08/24/information-literacy-and-evidence-based-knowledge-management)
- KM standard controversy: lessons from the environment sector in regard to open, inclusive, participatory processes [www.realkm.com/2018/03/23/km-standard-controversy-lessons-from-the-environment-sector-in-regard-to-open-inclusive-participatory-processes](http://www.realkm.com/2018/03/23/km-standard-controversy-lessons-from-the-environment-sector-in-regard-to-open-inclusive-participatory-processes)



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- Trust me, 20 years of management experience: <https://www.cebma.org/teaching-materials/>
- Center for Evidence-Based Management (CEBMA): [www.cebma.org](http://www.cebma.org)
- Make Better Decisions with Evidence-Based HR: <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/1217/pages/make-better-decisions-with-evidence-based-hr.aspx>
- In search of the best available evidence: <https://www.cipd.asia/knowledge/reports/evidence-based-practice>
- 4 sources of evidence, 6 steps of evidence-based practice: <http://www2.cipd.co.uk/community/discussion-forum/evidence-based-hr/f/240/t/65043>
- Knowledge Management ISO 30401 (something rotten in the state of Denmark): <https://www.k3nextgensolutions.com/>
- Men burn copies of the Murray-Darling draft plan in the NSW town of Griffith: <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/murray-darling-guide-fails-to-sufficiently-consider-human-cost-says-simon-crean/news-story/86dbba366865e06f6641771b695f096d?sv=acf245527c81ec44e0e75f73983261fc>



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