

Preface

In 2000, Jeffrey Pfeffer and Robert Sutton¹ argued that the gap between knowing and doing is greater than that between ignorance and knowing. To translate great ideas into everyday actions, organizations must close the knowing–doing gap, which arises when talk substitutes for action, memory replaces thinking, fear prevents acting on knowledge, measurement obstructs good judgment, and internal competition turns friends into enemies. These *Knowledge Solutions* offer organizations tools, methods, and approaches with which to bridge the gap.

If core insights are about “know why”, the powerful motivator one must assume organizations have else they will not endure, core competencies are about “know-how”, the processes that will take them there and generate results. Competence is the state or quality of being adequately or well qualified to deliver a specific action, function, or task successfully; it is also what knowledge, skills, or behaviors improve performance. In organizations, core competencies are deep proficiencies that open access to markets and create and deliver unique value to clients, audiences, and partners there; the litmus test is that they differentiate an organization and are difficult to copy or imitate. Organizational and operational effectiveness derives from strenuous efforts to identify, cultivate, and exploit an organization’s core competencies, the tangible fruits of which are composite packages of products, services, processes, and methods of delivery—or other elements of business models such as policy and strategy or system interaction—that anticipate and meet demand.

To improve people’s lives, the Asian Development Bank partners with a myriad of stakeholders: they are government bodies, international organizations, multilateral development banks, humanitarian aid organizations, bilateral donors, the private sector, foundations, civil society, nongovernment organizations, community-based organizations, research institutes and think tanks, academia, and youth. Not to forget, ADB itself is both a source of knowledge and an audience

¹Jeffrey Pfeffer and Robert Sutton. 2000. *The Knowing–Doing Gap: How Smart Companies Turn Knowledge into Action*. Harvard Business School Press.

ready to listen as *ADB: Reflections and Beyond*,² its seminal exercise in storytelling, demonstrated. Across the public, private, and third sectors, then, as well as ADB itself, this compendium of *Knowledge Solutions* can build competencies in the areas of strategy development, management techniques, collaboration mechanisms, knowledge sharing and learning, and knowledge capture and storage—all of which are essential to high-performance organizations. A bonus is that about half of the *Knowledge Solutions* are also arranged in 11 recurrent themes such as corporate creativity and innovation, creating teams with an edge, leading in organizations, making partnerships work, and nurturing knowledge ecologies.

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²ADB. 2010. *ADB: Reflections and Beyond*. Manila.



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Knowledge Solutions

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