

Hidden seams: Auditing Knowledge, Information and Communication

Information Innovation @ UTS & ISKO Singapore

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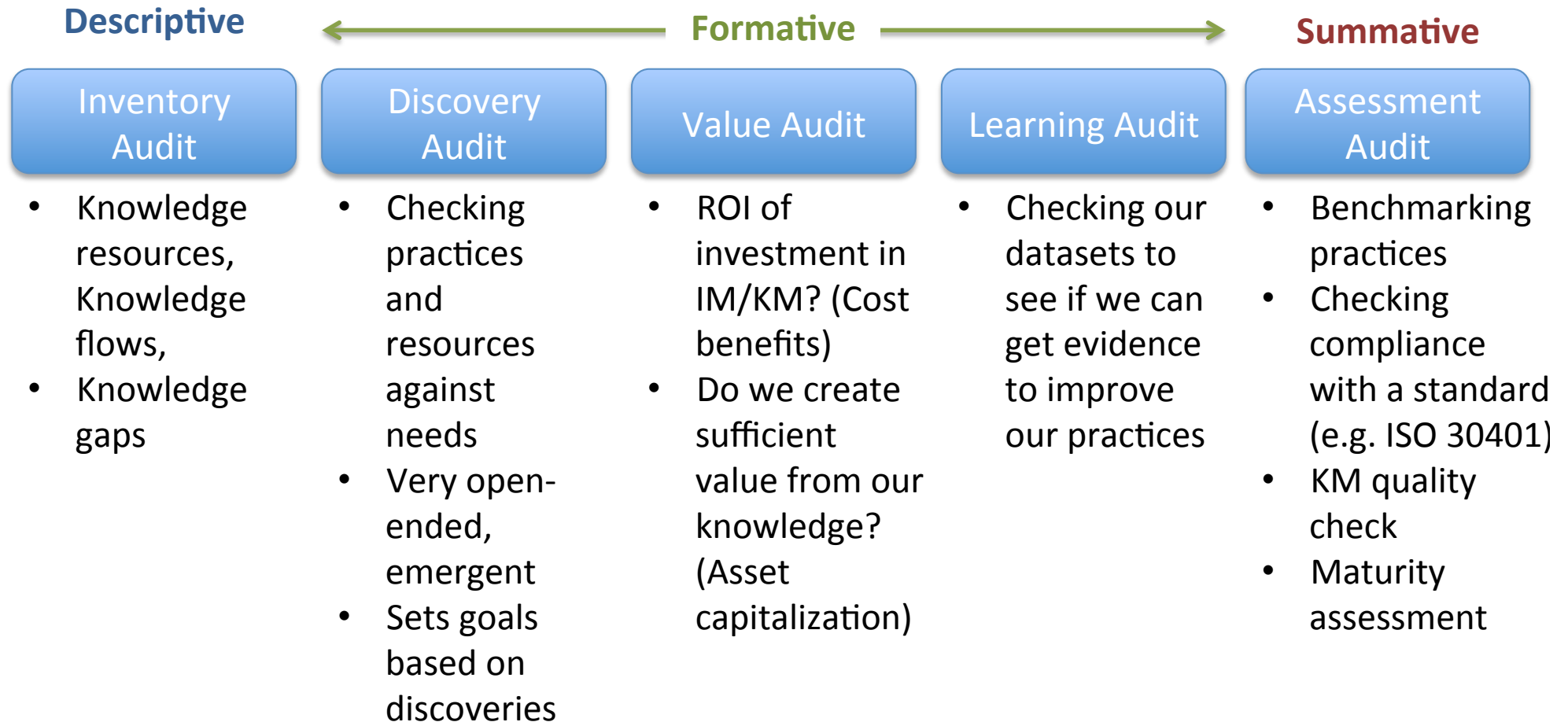
Patrick Lambe

Straits Knowledge

Agenda

- What do we mean by “audit”?
- The curious history of KIC audits
- What can we learn from each other?

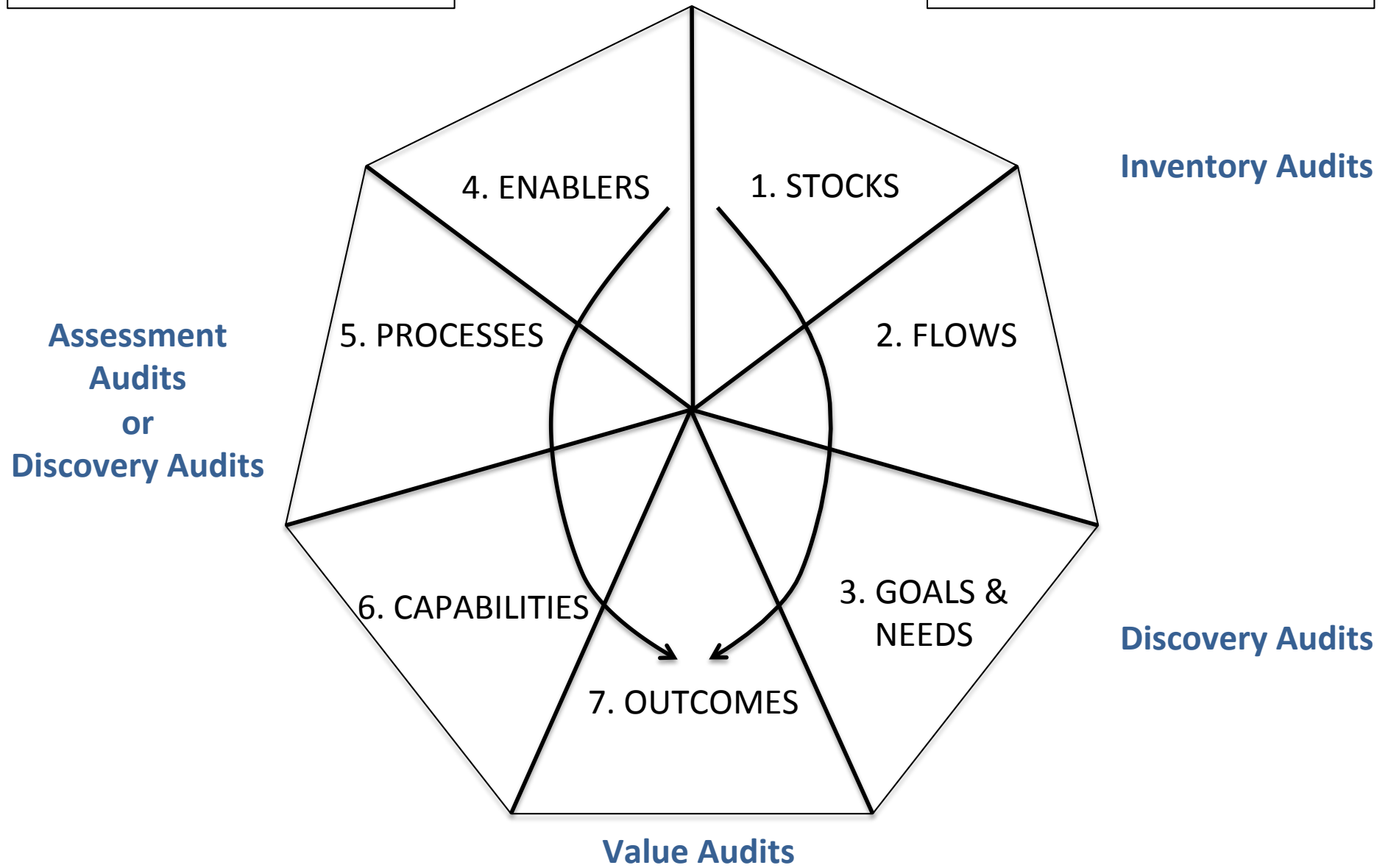
Types of Audit



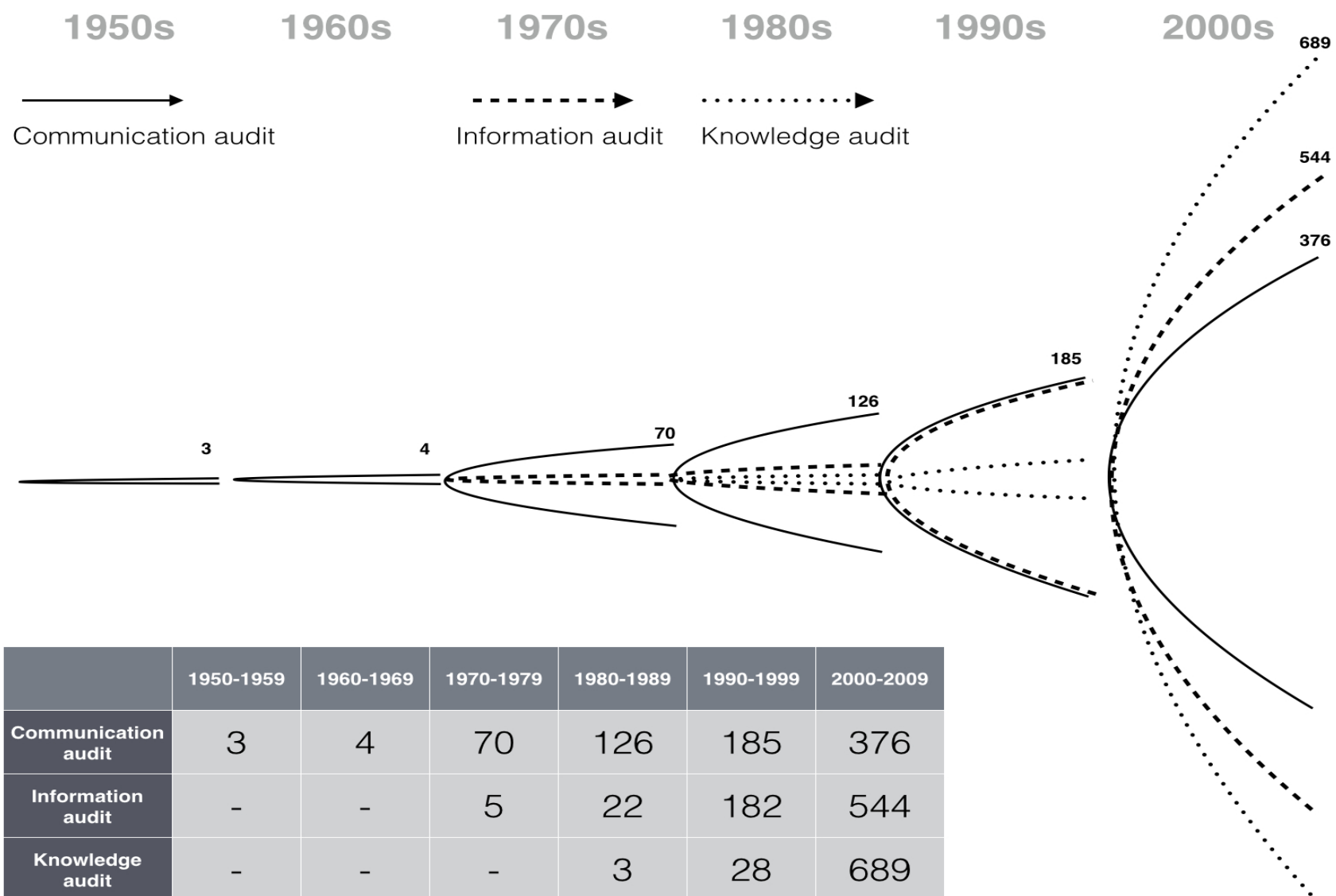
Global Survey 2017: 150 respondents - http://www.greenchameleon.com/gc/blog_detail/knowledge_audits_in_practice_report_on_global_survey/

INDIRECT AUDITS

DIRECT AUDITS



The Strange History of KIC Audits



In summary...

We've forgotten our history

- *Records audits (1920s onwards)*
- *Communication audits (1960s onwards)*
- *Information audits (1970s onwards)*
- *Knowledge audits (1990s onwards)*



We all mean different things by “k-audit”

- *We focus on different things (assets, resources, flows, processes, capabilities)*
- *We have different goals*
- *We speak at cross-purposes – it's hard to compare data and learn*

Picture credit: http://tobendlight.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/tumblr_kw9zs5SCyK1qzmn5wo1_400.jpg

Communication Audits

- Very wide variety of applications
 - Public relations, communications effectiveness, information flows to stakeholders, perceptions, change management, organisation development
- Very rich portfolio of methods
 - Content analysis, social network analysis, observation, climate surveys, ethnological techniques, action research, focus groups, influence mapping, soft systems approaches, narrative methods

Information Audits

- Narrow applications
 - Cost benefit analysis of information resources and services, inventories for improved management control, compliance and risk management, strategic use of information
- Relatively narrow portfolio of methods
 - Surveys, interviews, documented evidence, standards-based assessment instruments

Knowledge Audits

- Wide variety of applications
 - Inventories of knowledge and knowledge flows for improved management control, evaluations of knowledge needs, KM enablers, KM processes, value creation from knowledge – relatively sceptical about formal compliance assessments
- Relatively narrow portfolio of methods
 - Surveys, interviews, some generalised assessment instruments (e.g. maturity models), beginning to explore use of ISO 30401

Comparison

| | Communication Audits | Information Audits | Knowledge Audits |
|---------------------|--|--|---|
| Applications | Wide range | Narrow range | Wide range |
| Methods | Wide variety | Narrow variety | Narrow variety |
| Shortcomings | Field appears fragmented, ICA attempt at a comprehensive and systematic audit instrument in the 1970s failed (probably overly complex/ onerous to implement) | Very focused, but can lose sense of human context of information use | Unfocused, literature and practice appear confused, range of methods insufficiently diverse for the range of applications |

Richness

Rigour

Formative

Discussion

What can communication, information and knowledge audits learn from each other?

Thank You!

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If you would like to know more about knowledge audits, we have a workshop in January 2022. For more information visit

www.straitsknowledge.com