



KNOWLEDGE ENGINEERING

Transforming Information into Knowledge

Knowledge Engineering (KE) provides comprehensive solutions to successfully leverage intellectual capital (IC) within an organization. It incorporates enterprise content management technologies and transforms information into knowledge on demand, enabling effective decision-making and information sharing. Among other things, KE incorporates Records Management (RM) compliance requirements and best practices to manage IC. This document outlines frequently asked questions (FAQs) about RM.

Records Management FAQs

1 Q: What is records management?

A: Federal records management is the planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting, and other managerial activities involved in the records life cycle – creation, maintenance and use, and disposition. Records management provides for the adequate and proper documentation of the policies and transactions of the Federal Government and effective and economical management of agency operations (44 U.S.C. 2901).

2 Q: Why is records management important?

A: Records management enables an agency to document its mission by ensuring information needed for decision making and operations is available and accessible. Among other benefits, records management may increase efficiency, reduce costs, provide continuity in the event of a disaster, provide protection and support in the event of litigation, discovery, or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, protect the agency's history and progress of information, and protect the rights and interests of the agency, its employees, and its stakeholders.

3 Q: Who is responsible for records management?

A: All federal employees and contractors are legally responsible for ensuring their agencies' records are properly managed. Basic responsibilities include creating records to document the business of the agency; storing records in a safe and efficient filing system to ensure the integrity of the documents; and disposing of records in accordance with National Archives and Records Agency (NARA)-approved records disposition schedules and other applicable legal authorities.

4 Q: What is a record?

A: A record is any book, paper, map, photograph, machine-readable material, or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, created or received by the agency under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by the agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of data in it (44 U.S.C. 3301).

5 Q: What is a records schedule?

A: A records schedule is a document that describes a grouping of records, identifies them as permanent or temporary, and contains mandatory instructions on what should be done with them when they are no longer required for current agency business. The schedule indicates how long the records must be retained before they are eligible for destruction or permanent retention.

6 Q: How do I know if a record has been scheduled? What do I do if it is scheduled? If it is not?

A: Work with your agency's Records Management Officer (RMO) to determine whether a record is scheduled, and to determine the disposition requirements.



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7 Q: How do I dispose of records?

A: Your agency's RMO will guide you in the proper disposition of the record by using the records schedule to determine whether a record is permanent or temporary. The record should then be shredded, filed, or transferred, based on the guidance provided.

8 Q: What if my agency transfers a record to off-site storage and I need it later? How can I recall it?

A: Contact your agency's RMO if you need to recall a record being stored off-site. Your RMO will implement the correct procedures to recall the record for you.

9 Q: What if I have a record in both electronic and paper format? Which version is the official record copy?

A: To be considered the official record copy, electronic records must meet certain guidelines established by NARA. Consult your agency's RMO for guidance in determining whether the paper or electronic version is the official record copy.

10 Q: Can more than one copy of a record have record status?

A: Yes. The record status of a particular document does not depend on whether it is an original or a copy. Multiple copies of the same document may each have record status if each serves a separate purpose. Extra copies of records are considered non-record materials only if the sole reason the copies are preserved is for the convenience of reference.

11 Q: What are my records management responsibilities in a telework environment?

A: An employee's records management responsibilities (see question 3) do not change in a telework environment. All federal employees and contractors are legally responsible for ensuring their agencies' records are properly managed, regardless of the physical location where the records are created, received, or maintained. NARA provides more guidance on records management and telework: <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/faqs/telework.html>

12 Q: How can I access further guidance about records management?

A: There are a number of records management resources available:

- Refer to the "Is it a Record" slick sheet on the KE Policy/Guidance webpage: http://www.prim.osd.mil/cap/KE_policy.html?p=1.1.5.2
- Contact the P&R IM RMO for guidance at PRIMRecordsManagement@osd.pentagon.mil
- Visit NARA's Guidance and Regulations page: <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/policy/guidance-regulations.html>