



Titolo	Tacit vs Explicit knowledge
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Tacit vs Explicit

Tacit Knowledge	Explicit Knowledge
subjective, personal	objective, organizational
based on physical experiences	based on formal logics
context-specific	context-independent
analogical, intangible	codified, written
emotional (beliefs, insights)	rational (words and numbers)
like a "flow" – on the move	like a "stock" – off-the-shelf
easy to protect	hard to modelize
hard to tell and transfer	easy to communicate and transfer
<i>"we know more we can tell"</i>	<i>"cogito ergo sum"</i>

Exhibit 1 – Tacit vs Explicit knowledge

Speaking of knowledge, we can identify the **epistemological dimension**, that's to say the type of knowledge (nature).

The epistemological dimension underlines the distinction between two type of knowledge: **tacit and explicit**. Tacit and explicit are strongly related as we will see later. Both must be taken into consideration for creating and managing knowledge within a project-based organization.



Tacit is embedded into individuals whereas explicit is outside the individuals.

Tacit is “on the move” whereas explicit is “off-the-shelf”.

Tacit deals with beliefs emotions insights, whereas explicit deals with words, numbers, formal logics.

But sometimes, examples worth more than definitions.

Some **examples** of tacit and explicit knowledge **referred to projects**:

- PMBOK is explicit whereas expert judgment is tacit,
- Risk register is explicit whereas risk attitudes are tacit,
- Make-or-Buy analysis is explicit while decision taking is tacit,
- RAM is explicit whereas personal awareness towards project responsibilities is tacit,
- project requirements are explicit whereas implied business needs are tacit,
- WBS diagram is explicit whereas team buy-in process for developing WBS is tacit.

In short:

- Tacit is represented by the principle “*we know more we can tell*” by Michael Polanyi (1891-197),
- whereas Explicit is represented by the principle “*cogito ergo sum*” by Cartesius (1596-1650).