

# 4th European Conference on Knowledge Management Oxford 2003

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**From knowledge transfer to knowledge-sharing: Virtual  
teaming at the Eastern Canada Consortium for  
Research on Workplace Health and Safety**

Project funded by CIHR

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# KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

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- **Researcher-practitioner gap**
- **The Source-Recipient model**
- **Knowledge transfer process**
- **Evolution of knowledge models**
- **Consortium for research on workplace health and safety**

# Purpose of Health and Safety Knowledge Generation, Adoption and Utilization

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**Knowledge developed on occupational Health and Safety thru research or experience is intended to induce change in the workplace**

**Physical  
Environment**

**machines, tools,  
equipments**

**Organization of work**

**Management, process, work  
design, practices**

**People**

**Values  
Attitudes  
Behaviours**

# DEFINITION

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“Knowledge can be defined as an organized representation of reality held to be true either based on experimentation, experience, practice, science or beliefs.”

# Divergent Views on Knowledge

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	RESEARCHERS	PRACTITIONNERS
Concerns and Interests	<p>Discover scientific findings</p> <p>Describe and explain phenomena</p> <p>Develop valid and testable models</p> <p>Publish in top journals</p>	<p>Reduce uncertainty</p> <p>Solve current problems Immediately</p> <p>Gain organizational influence</p> <p>Improve practices</p>

# Divergent views on knowledge

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	RESEARCHERS	PRACTITIONNERS
Attitude	<p>Neutral stand favouring what seems to be objective</p> <p>Compare knowledge with literature</p>	<p>Normative stand favouring what seems to work</p> <p>Compare Knowledge with experience</p>

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# Divergent Views on Knowledge

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	RESEARCHERS	PRACTITIONERS
<b>Problem Formulation</b>	<p>Few variables with causal Relationship</p> <p>Preference for objective, measurable data gathered in a standardized way</p>	<p>Multiple variables with systemic interactions</p> <p>Preference for subjective and experiential data gathered informally</p>

**Problem Formulation**

Few variables with causal Relationship

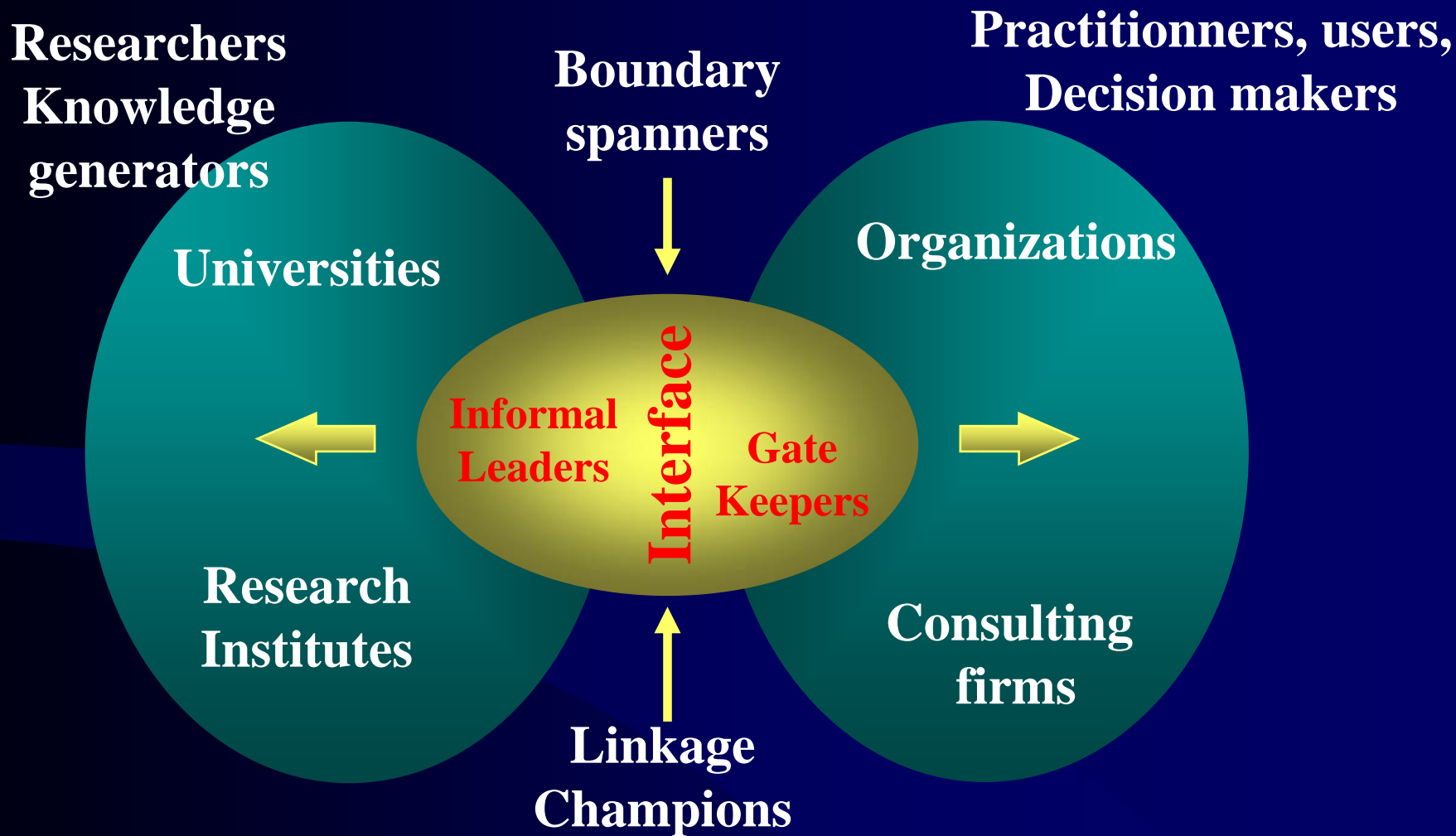
Preference for objective, measurable data gathered in a standardized way

Multiple variables with systemic interactions

Preference for subjective and experiential data gathered informally

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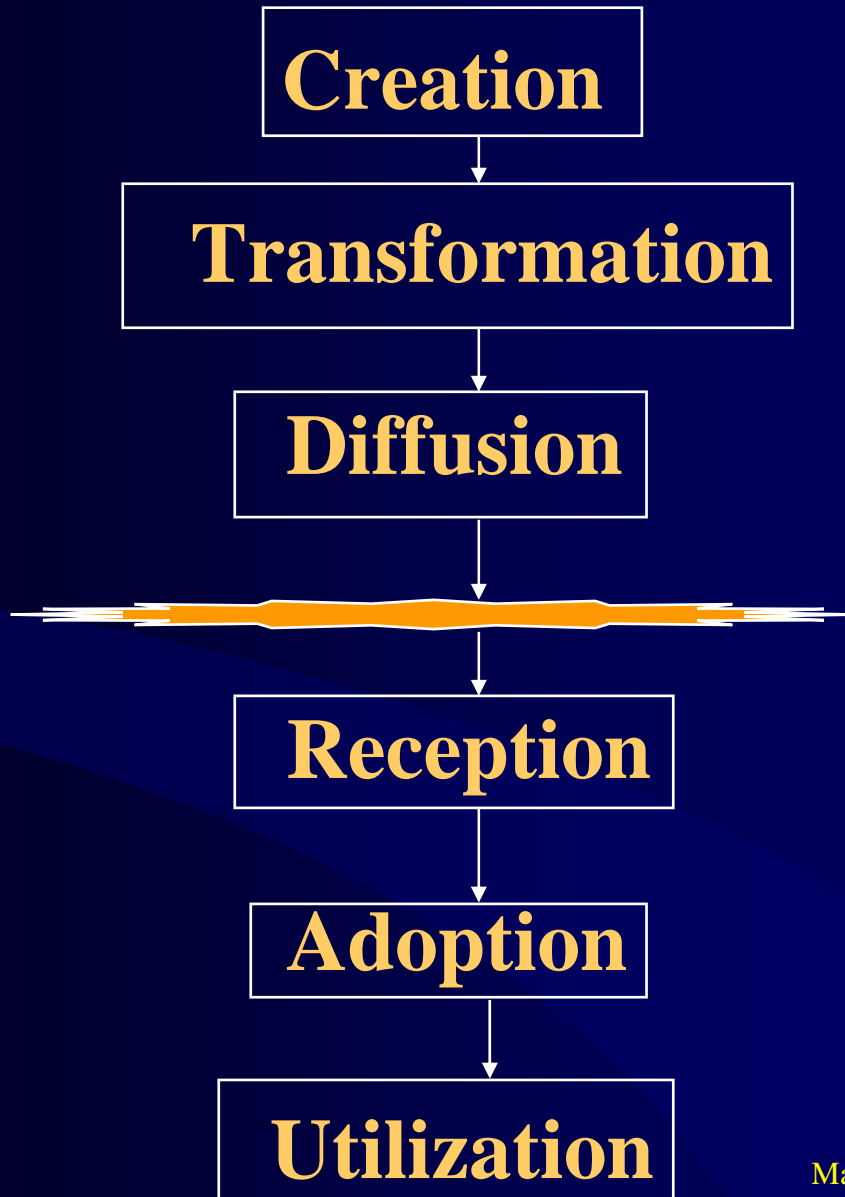
# ORGANIZATIONAL INTERFACES





# Knowledge Transfer Process

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# **KNOWLEDGE UTILIZATION CHALLENGES**

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**Scientific evidence is not enough to change practice**

**Several variables other than the cultural difference influence the utilisation process of new knowledge (political, organizational, socio-economical etc.)**

**Research frameworks are often more use and usefull than research results.**

**Knowledge utilization implies an un-learning and a re-learning process**

# Transfer Process Challenges

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- **Obtain recipient participation from the generation to the utilization stage**
- **Translate knowledge for different audiences**
- **Maintain knowledge integrity**
- **Diffuse results at the appropriate timing**

# Transfer Process Challenges

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- Use a "pull" instead of a "push" strategy
- Legitimate knowledge according to values, practices and beliefs of the potential users
- Use knowledge in practice, not only in a symbolic or conceptual way

# SPIRAL MODEL

*Universe of the practitioner*

*Experiential Knowledge*

*New Integrated Knowledge*

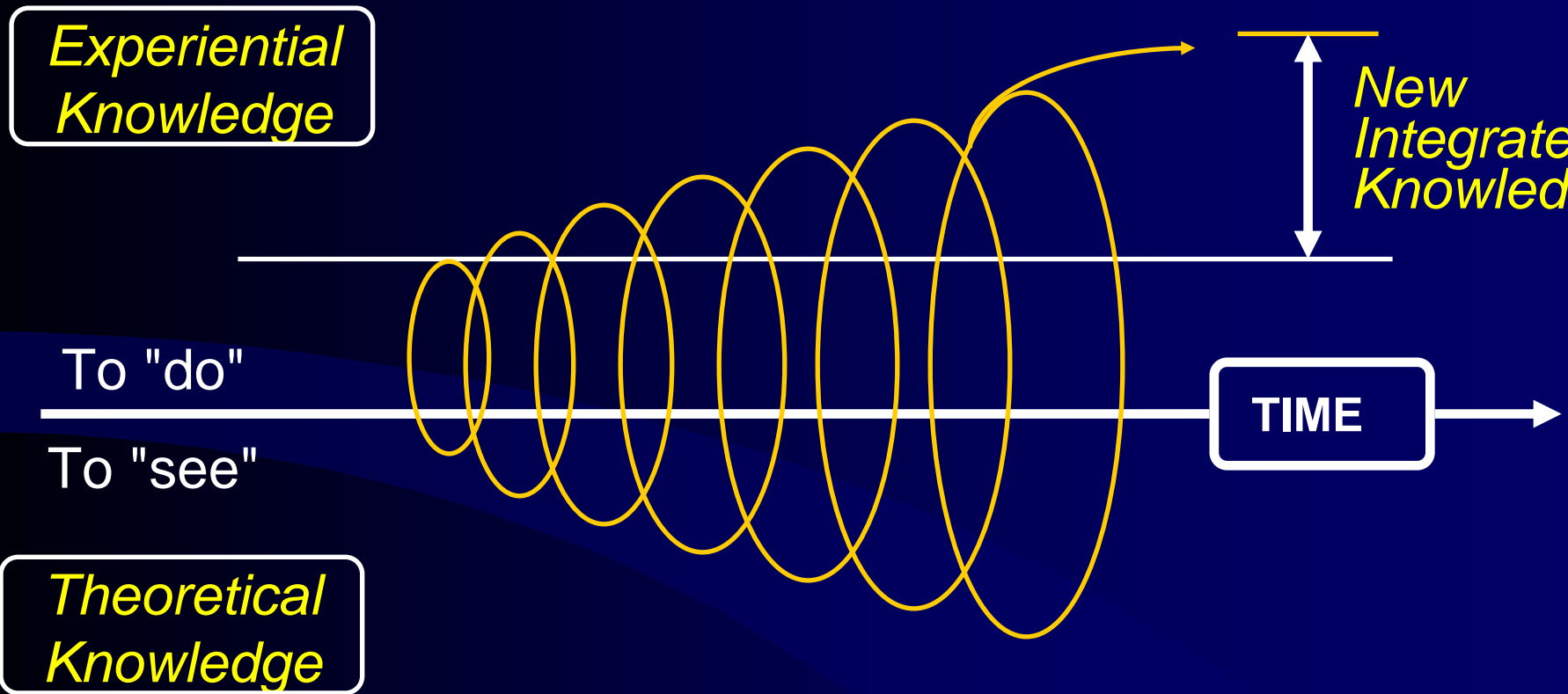
To "do"

To "see"

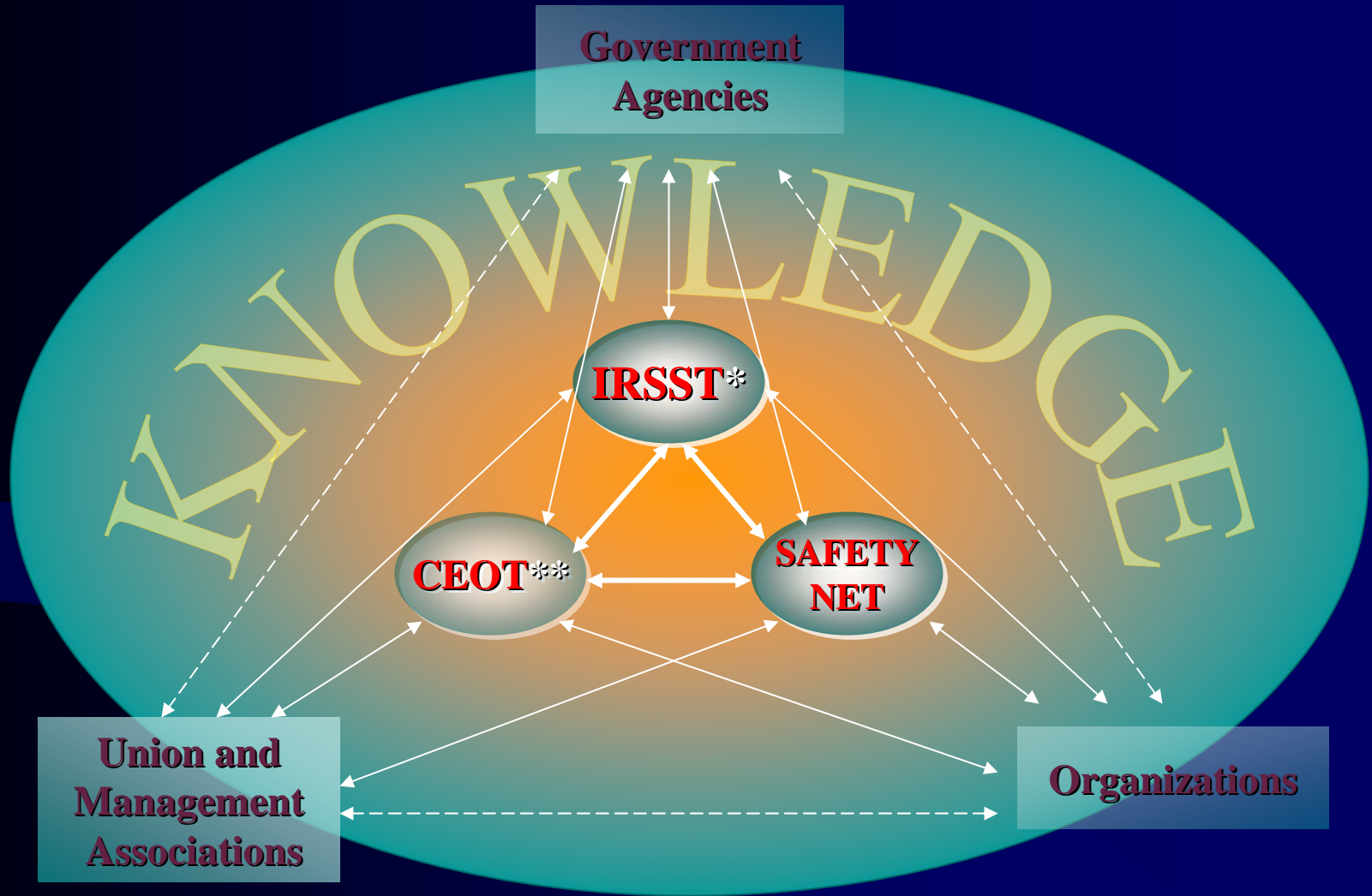
*Theoretical Knowledge*

TIME

*Universe of the researcher*



# KNOWLEDGE SUPPORT NETWORK ON WHS



\* IRSST : Institut de recherche Robert Sauvé en santé et en sécurité du travail

\*\*CÉOT : Chaire d'étude en organisation du travail



# Consortium Partners



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- **SafetyNet: A Community Research Alliance for Marine and Coastal Workplace Health and Safety, Memorial University, St. John's, Newfoundland (funded by CIHR);**

The Chaire d'étude en organisation du travail (CEOT), Faculty of Business Administration, Université de Sherbrooke in Sherbrooke, Québec.

- The Institut de recherche Robert-Sauvé en santé et en sécurité du travail (IRSST), Montreal, Canada's largest independent WHS research institute;

# Creations of the Consortium

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- **Rapid Interprovincial KT Initiatives (Quick Hits)**
- **Knowledge Translation Research Laboratory**
- **Pilot Projects**
- **Interdisciplinary Multi-Site Seminar**
- **Funding and Training for Researchers**



# Collaboration Tools: Virtual Teaming

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- The KT laboratory has developed a virtual office using new Information Technology tools to support knowledge-sharing and distance collaboration for members of the Consortium.

- Sametime Connect
- QuickPlace



# **Knowledge Translation Research Laboratory Objectives**

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- **To increase understanding of the theory and practice of KT as it applies to WHS;**
- **To develop and evaluate new KT tools and strategies fitting the objectives of the Consortium, building on the strength of existing knowledge such as that of the IRSST;**
- **To integrate an understanding of KT principles and practices into the training and continuing education of WHS professionals.**

