

The importance of creating and keeping records in the age of globalization

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Table of content

- Introduction
- Definition of records
- Record creation and recordkeeping
- Political good and public good
- Perspectives, characteristics and qualities of records
- The Importance of creating and keeping records
- Conclusion
- References/works cited.

Introduction

- Records creation and records keeping is an aspect of records management.
- Record keeping is synonymous with community living.
- Creating and keeping records is a human need.
- Records may refer to any information one creates, remits, and receives in the course of performing a task or carrying out an activity.
- “Emails, SMS messages, information in business systems, letters, and photographs and images” and so forth are all forms of records according to (National Archives of Australia 2014).

Definition of records

- Much literature exists on the definition and meaning of records.
- According to Williams (2004:9) records refer to information “output of individuals’ and organizations’ current operational processes and activities”. Diamond (1995:1) views record simply as any form of recorded information. Parker (1999:3) holds the view that records are documents or other items containing recorded information, which are produced or received as part of a business activity or operation.
- For the Queensland State Archives, (2010:19) records are information objects that document business activities and transactions. To be regarded as evidence a record must be complete. Complete records comprise contextual and structural data as well as content data.

Record creation and Recordkeeping

- Record creation refers to “the act of making a record and incorporating it into a recordkeeping system (Queensland State Archives, 2010:19).
- Record creation can be regarded as the process of documenting an activity or action in accordance with specified procedures.
- Record keeping system refers to “an information system that captures, manages and provides access to records through time (International Records Management Trust (IRMT), 2009, p. 34).
- Recordkeeping is defined as “the act of making and keeping evidence and memory of government business in the form of recorded information” (Queensland State Archives, 2010:18).

Political Good and Public Good

- Political goods refer to the reason for the existence of the state from the perspective of citizens
- Any benefit or service, in limited supply, which the members of a state may secure to themselves according to laws made or specified through political processes of policy determination.
- Political goods benefit sections of a community as opposed to the entire community
- How much political good one enjoys depends on the political forces or resources at one's disposal determines.
- Examples of political goods include HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Political Good and Public Good

- Public goods are “a very special class of goods which cannot practically be withheld from one individual consumer without withholding them from all”
- Unlike political goods, public goods are universally available to all citizens and are not diminished in consumption.
- Public goods are collective goods geared towards serving an entire community while political goods serve the interests of sections of the community represented in a government.
- Examples of public goods include defence and security

Perspectives characteristics and qualities of records.

- Scholars differ in their perspectives as to what a record is or stands for.
- For Diamond, (1995:1) a record is any form of recorded information. While for Parker, (1999:3) records are documents or other items containing recorded information, which are produced or received as part of a business activity/operation. Similarly, from the National Archives of Australia (2014) glossary: “Records are any information created, sent and received in the course of carrying out the business of an agency”.
- The differences in perspectives have given rise to the need to specify attributes or characteristics by which one may identify a piece of information as a record.

Perspectives, characteristics and qualities of records continued

➤ Below are some of such:

➤ Content

➤ Context

➤ Structure

➤ Evidence of activity

➤ Authentic

➤ Integrity

➤ Usable

➤ Reliable

➤ (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003 and ISO 15489-1, 2001: clause 7.2

The importance of creating and keeping of records

- Records are to an organization what blood is to the human body. The essence of records in an organization includes the following:
- Records contribute to greater business efficiency..., build corporate memory by embedding knowledge in an organization... support improved productivity because they enable easy access to shared information needed to make the right decisions at the right time....[and] help to document the rights and entitlements of individuals and organizations (National Archives of Australia 2014 slide 12).
- Records play a critical role in the process of policy formulation.
- Record keeping is fundamental to public administration and bureaucracy generally. Records are central to public administration and bureaucracy because they “provide a reliable, legally verifiable source of evidence of decisions and actions” (World Bank, International Records Management Trust, & Information Solutions Group, 2000: 2).

The importance of creating and keeping of records continued

- Record keeping is essential for fighting corruption.
- Records affect the quality of decisions organizations make.
- Records enhance the achievement of efficiency and consistency in productivity.
- Records sets standards for organizational requirements.
- Records produce evidence of transactions in an organization.
- Recordkeeping is essential for accountability and historical memory.

Conclusion

- Though the importance of records creation and records keeping cannot be over emphasized, there is need for records education for every organization member. There is also need to put in place integrity mechanisms that will help to minimize problems of records quality in any organization.

End of presentation.

- Thanks for your time.
- Comments/Suggestions are welcome

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