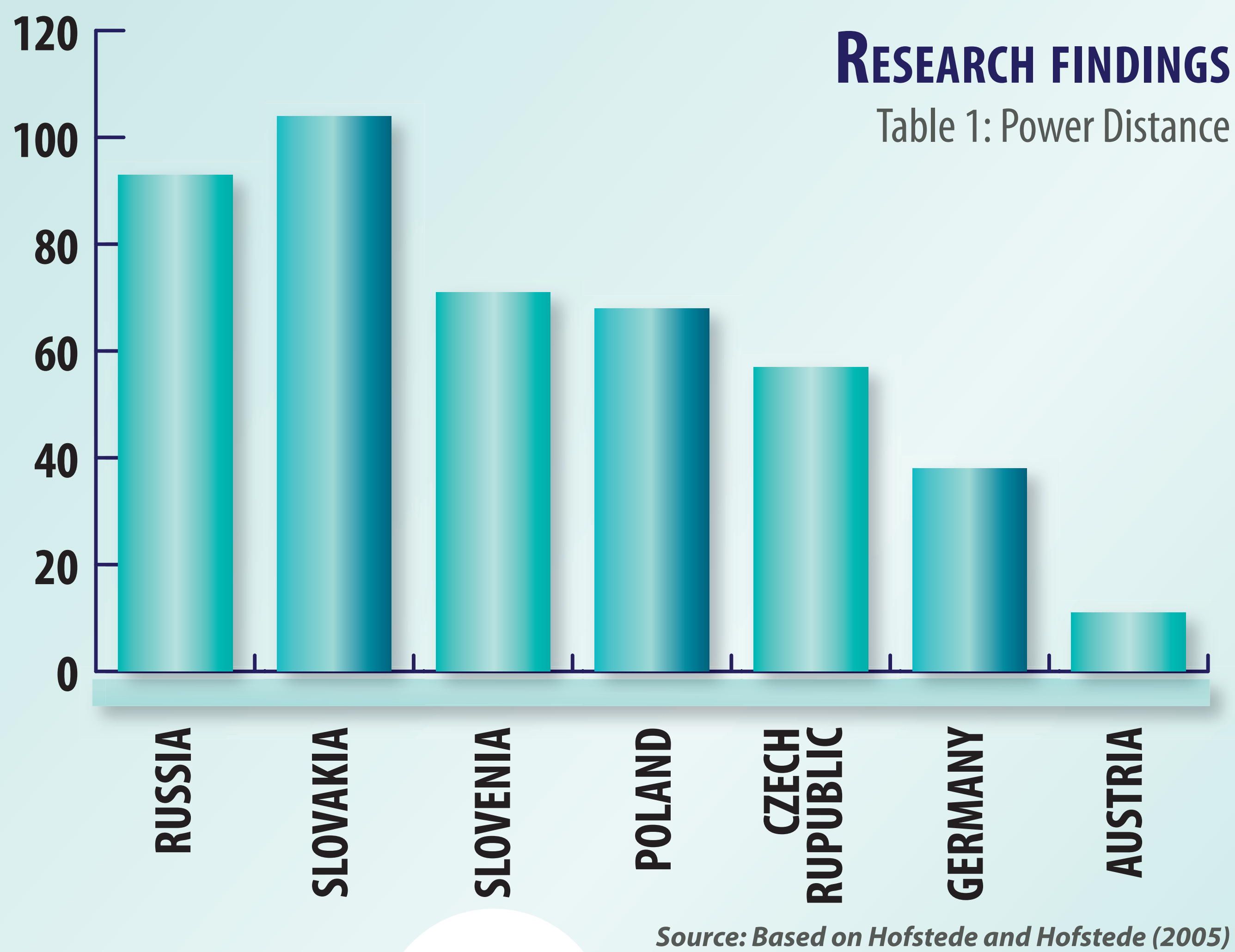


TOOLS FOR KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN CULTURES WITH HIGH POWER DISTANCE



POTENTIAL TOOLS FOR INCREASING KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Figure 1: Creation of an Intercultural Company Learning Platform



ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- Work placements
- Social events
- Rotation of international meetings
- Intercultural workshops
- Provide a stage
- Forums of Excellence
- Reciprocal Travelling
- Company's visits
- Job rotation

Picture: www.learnforresults.com

MAJOR PROBLEMS

- The flow of knowledge is stagnated between hierarchical structures
- The knowledge flows mainly top down, making the upward flow of it difficult
- The knowledge value from organization's lower levels is underestimated

MAIN CHARACTERISTIC OF HIGH POWER CULTURES RELATED TO KNOWLEDGE

- Control, Secrecy and Power
- Avoidance of knowledge sharing facilities or activities
- Treating knowledge as a private property.
- Hiding own mistakes
- Personal pride
- Fear of loosing the job or personal value
- Lack of TRUST

CONSEQUENCES

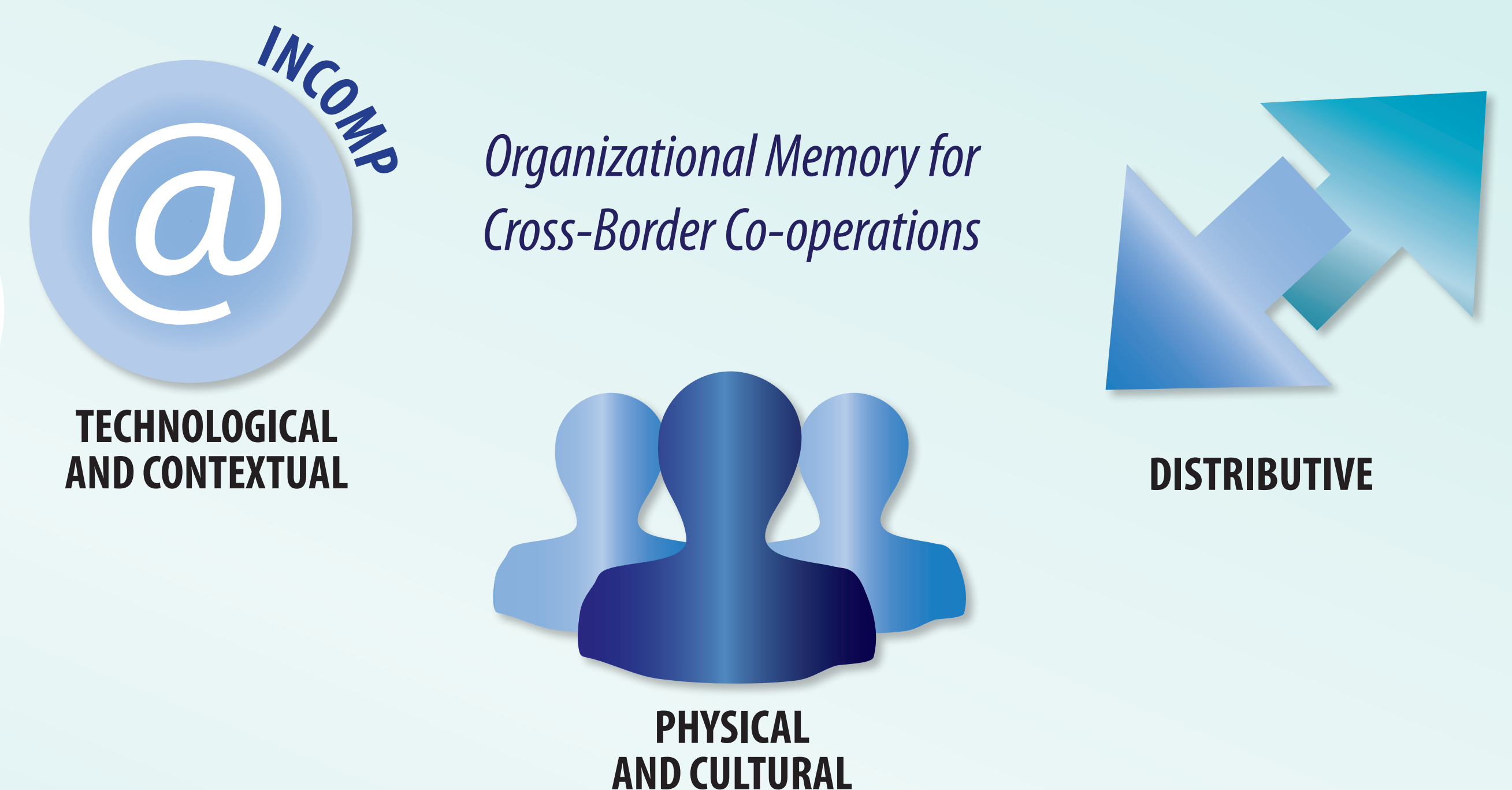
- Knowledge transfer conducted in a hierarchical (imposing) way leads to the only option of immediate compliance of unquestioned orders
- The acceptance of knowledge is questionable, ????. Does real cognitive understanding and integration of knowledge takes place as a way of personal growth and contribution to knowledge creation?
- Limitation of creativity and consequently in innovation
- Passive employees' behaviour, always waiting to be told
- Waste of intellectual capital

METHODOLOGY

- Phenomenological approach
- Qualitative research methods (case study)
- Techniques (2 focus-groups, 7 participant observation and 23 in-depth interviews in Russia and Germany)
- Data analysis (grounded theory)
- Sample background: Industry and Academia

POTENTIAL TOOLS FOR INCREASING KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Figure 2: New Organizational Memory for Cross-Cultural Co-operation



Technological and Contextual: The installation of an International Co-operation Master Program (INCOMP) for the exclusive usage of the co-operation members should enable all the members to have easy access to all types of searchable documents (e.g. co-operation publications - existing and/or newly and commonly developed -, relevant texts, emails, and web pages, interesting scanned documents, news and developments of the co-operation)

Distributive: The dissemination of the INCOMP can be done by following the 3Ps of knowledge dissemination as suggested by Holsapple (2003, p.112): "Pull, Push, Point. Pull refers to individuals going to a knowledge repository and requesting explicit information. Push, refers to information being sent to one or more individuals as it becomes available e.g. via intranets. Point, refers to receiving instructions on where to find knowledge". An additional P for 'Person', being the individual who possess the respective knowledge and can provide further help is suggested.

Physical and Cultural: An informal discussion room as a knowledge creation area should be available where constantly sessions of joint work, understanding/explanations of procedures, questions and answers, discussions of interesting topics, experimenting and sharing of feelings can flow freely. This knowledge creation area is regarded as an excellent arena to share tacit knowledge.