

TOWARDS AN INTERNATIONAL EVENT MANAGEMENT BODY OF KNOWLEDGE (EMBOK)

JULIA RUTHERFORD SILVERS,* GLENN A. J. BOWDIN,†
WILLIAM J. O'TOOLE,‡ and KATHLEEN BEARD NELSON§

*Speaking of Events & Adjunct Faculty, University of Nevada Las Vegas, USA

†UK Centre for Events Management, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK

‡Project Management Graduate Programme, University of Sydney, Australia

§William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration, University of Nevada Las Vegas, USA

There is increasing global interest in the requirements necessary to practice the complex and responsibility-laden business of event management as evidenced by the growth of the number of academic, credentialing, knowledge transfer, and qualification standards programs focusing on the field in place and in development around the world. Educators, regulators, associations, and practitioners are seeking to create and improve curriculums, reduce risk, employ best practices, and achieve recognition as a legitimate profession. This article presents an overview of the current status of the knowledge systems supporting the event management industry and offers a framework for an international event management body of knowledge (EMBOK) that may facilitate the ability to map, define, and align current event management standards consistent with the needs of a global event management environment.

Key words: Body of knowledge; Conceptual framework; Event management; Standards; Education; Event management body of knowledge (EMBOK)

Event management is a multidisciplinary occupation in an exciting and growing industry. It attracts persons who possess creative talents and organizational skills. Event managers enjoy a work environment in which no two days are the same. Events not only have the opportunity to provide people with entertaining, unique, and memorable experiences, but also have the ability to reflect and mold our society.

Today, due to advances in technology, we think in terms of a global society, which is transforming at a rapid pace. As society changes, so will the generations that make up our world, in tandem with occupational requirements for the future (Wessell, 2004). Kerslake's (2002) study of the work place in the year 2020 predicts that the difference in characteristics of the generations will play a major role in the necessary skill

sets required to be successful. These “gold-collar” workers will be expected to be “technical professionals with superior knowledge and expertise and an ability to communicate, market, and implement their skills effectively” (p. 41).

The education and professional development process must also adapt with societal changes (Zevin, 2003), and these changes must be considered when determining curriculum/product development (Breiter & Clements, 1995). Various models, theories, and scales have been used to analyze the connection between education (both degree seeking and non-degree seeking) and careers. According to Ladkin (1999), the importance skills and competencies (Burbridge, 1994; Russette, 2000) have to career advancement and continual growth is monumental. Studies that determine necessary occupational skill sets for event managers have been conducted (Nelson, 2004; Zevin, 2003), leading to research that concentrates on event management training and education.

The time has come to develop the conceptual framework for a common international event management body of knowledge (EMBOK). This foundation may be customized to meet the needs of various cultures, governments, education programs, and organizations. It is necessary for an international alliance of educators and professionals to quantify the scope and framework of performance-based process standards built upon a researched, tested, three-dimensional model of event management functions, processes, phases, and core values. Teaching and doing the complex job of event management may finally be approached in a comprehensive manner. Utilizing this model will ensure all critical functional responsibilities, possibilities, and opportunities are addressed properly and competently.

The International Event Management Environment

Event management is an exciting industry that is experiencing tremendous growth as jobs and related economic and social impacts of events lead to high demand for academic and other educational programs throughout the world (Getz, 2002a). The variety of events encompassed within this industry include meetings and conventions, fairs and festivals, expositions and entertainment events, fund-raising and cause-related events, community and commercial events, sports and leisure events, social and life cycle events, and corporate incentives and marketing events. Stakeholders

in the industry include governments and local authorities, associations, education institutions, practitioners, suppliers, clientele, and sponsors.

Governments are seeking to create worthwhile employment opportunities and, at the same time, considering regulatory legislation that protects their citizenry and minimizes their liability. Associations are focusing on creating and improving educational programming and credentialing products that offer international recognition and career portability for their members. Education organizations, including academic and vocational training institutions, are concerned with developing and maintaining quality curriculum programs based on benchmarked current practice, as well as creating relevant research and development opportunities. Current and future practitioners and suppliers are seeking clear direction towards improvement of quality, efficiency, and profitability. Sponsors and customers are looking for measurements of management competency that will ensure an appropriate return on their investment.

There is undoubtedly continued growth of the number of academic, credentialing, knowledge transfer, and qualification standards programs focusing on the event management field in place and in development around the world. However, according to Goldblatt (2000), “the rapid growth of the event management profession has produced a climate that is confusing, lacking in credibility as compared to other professions, and perhaps detrimental to its future long term health” (p. 2).

There is wide agreement that to be recognized as a legitimate profession, a discipline or occupation must have a common body of knowledge; “good” or “best” practice guidance standards and ethics developed by those working in the occupation; a formal education process including academic schools separate from other professions, training, and associated certification or qualification programs; standards of entry (academic, certification, or licensing); national level journals; and sanctions imposed on the unqualified or substandard performers (Abbott, 1988; Caplow, 1954; Getz, 1997; Jeynes, 2002; Wierzgac, 2003; Wilensky, 1964).

The status of events management as a profession with an exclusive jurisdiction based on expert knowledge and experience is in progress. Getz and Wicks (1994, pp. 107–108) identified four generally accepted characteristics of a profession. These were: government sanction (i.e., excluding those not licensed from practicing); accreditation by the professional governing body of education courses or institutions; a set body of

theory, technical skills, and occupational values; and self-regulation, normally through certification or credentialing. O'Toole (2002) compares professions, trades, and unskilled jobs, noting that the difference lies in the development of a formal methodology supported by a distinct, recognized, and robust body of knowledge into which new and diverse knowledge and heuristics may be incorporated. This promotes consistent and systematic methods that are scalable and fractal, facilitates effective communications and knowledge transfer, and creates visibility of the value and complexity of event management.

Scholars studying the nature of professions contend the designation of profession indicates a protected or exclusive jurisdiction over an occupation or universe of tasks that prevents those without credentials from practicing or controls their practice economically by describing them as amateurs (Abbott, 1988; Freidson, 1986). A professional jurisdiction (and its tasks) must be directly linked to an abstractable and portable formal knowledge system that legitimizes and "expertizes" the profession's jurisdiction (Abbott, 1988). While striving to become a "legitimate" profession, the need for academic credentials is increasing (Goldblatt, 2004). Linkage with education is crucial as "a basic credential for professionals; it delineates the foundation of their expertise" (Freidson, 1986, p. 26) and facilitates advancing beyond trial and error, the "most dangerous and expensive form of learning" (Graham, Goldblatt, & Delpy, 1995, p. 19), which leads to the transformation and formalizing of an avocation into a viable career choice (Nelson, 2004). This formal knowledge system must be comprehensive, consistent, and reliable at every level, provide for "accepted reciprocal agreements among universities, community colleges and technical schools dedicated exclusively to the profession" (Wierzga, 2003), and encompass and facilitate the adaptation and application of management skills from other disciplines (Getz, 1997).

Education at the Forefront

Increasingly, education is playing a more significant role in the field of special events management. Future event professionals are becoming interested in degrees in special events management as well as certification designations, in order to have a competitive edge in the job market. No comprehensive studies have yet taken place to establish the number and content of events

courses worldwide, although a number of authors have explored aspects of events management education and training (see, e.g., Getz, 2002a; Getz & Wicks, 1994; Harris & Jago, 1999; Landey & Silvers, 2003; Perry, Foley & Rumpf, 1996; Slaughter, Reid, & Arcodia, 2003). It should be noted that the majority of these are focused in the Australian context. However, through a scan of university, college, association, and associated industry course materials, together with event-related textbooks and journal articles, a picture begins to emerge of an increasing range and volume of courses at tertiary, undergraduate, and postgraduate levels.

In a 1996 study on behalf of the International Council for Hospitality, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (CHRIE), Nelson and Goldblatt found that approximately 30-40 higher education institutions were offering courses that related to events management. By 1999, when Goldblatt conducted a further study, this had risen to over 140 higher education institutions offering event management opportunities (Goldblatt, 2002). What is not known with either figure is whether this refers only to programs offered in the US or whether it also includes international programs, although given developments in recent years, the figure is likely to be conservative. More recently, Polivka (2004) notes that the number of higher education institutions offering event management-related curriculum has increased to over 200 worldwide, with postgraduate course work in event management taught at many of the world's leading universities.

Opportunities for the development of professional and vocational training and products depend on the identification of occupational entry paths into the events management field. This is accomplished through the study of career patterns (Black, 1999; Currie, 2000). Career patterns (Davidson & Anderson, 1937; Form & Miller, 1949; Miller & Form, 1951; Sorokin, 1927) are the sequence of occupations in the life of an individual or group of individuals. Occupational choices often follow a pattern as per age, gender, marital status, parenthood, and changing life goals. Every profession has typical careers. Career choices are implementations of attempts to actualize the skills, talents, and interests reflective of one's self-concept and are based on the completion of developmentally appropriate vocational tasks (Miller & Form, 1951; Super, 1957).

The prospects for career entry and curriculum development in event management are vast and cross into many educational disciplines including business, hos-

pitality, tourism, arts, sports and leisure, sociology, public administration, and communications. According to the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), event management is one of the fastest growing and most important trends in the public relations profession (Hoyle, 2002). The mere fact that that in the US there is a special events department located in the White House, as well as Spanish Harlem's largest social service organization, demonstrates the pervasive nature of this emerging industry. Even so, how do people find their way into this industry when job positions are cleverly concealed in organizations and departments seemingly unrelated to special events? In addition to working in event companies, people who work in event management positions can be found in the hospitality industry in hotels (marketing, catering/banquets, casino marketing, and human resource departments), meetings, conventions, exhibitions; destination management companies, catering companies, country clubs; not-for-profit organizations (for example, charities, festival organizations); and local and national government entities (universities, parks and recreation, political).

Further evidence of developments in the educational arena can be found in other international markets. Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS, 2004), the organization responsible for processing applications to higher education in the UK, currently lists 33 colleges and universities offering undergraduate events courses in the UK, with anecdotal evidence suggesting that this figure is likely to be on the low side when taking into account additional courses already being offered or in development. In addition, five universities are known to be offering masters level courses in the UK, although some of these also offer undergraduate courses and are therefore included above.

Research undertaken in development of the Event Educators Forum (EEF, 2004) identified over 200 courses currently being offered in Australia that included a significant section on event management, while further research undertaken in development of WorldofEvents.net, an online directory, indicates that these developments are being mirrored internationally, with dedicated event-related courses being offering in Ireland, Germany, France, Canada, and elsewhere. In addition to complete courses, many, if not most, hospitality, leisure, and tourism courses at college or university, tertiary, undergraduate, and postgraduate levels include at least one module/unit relating to event, conference, festival, or venue management. Caution is re-

quired when interpreting the above discussion, as use of the terms course, program, module, and unit differ across international boundaries; however, it does indicate a growing interest in this field as an area of study.

In addition, this discussion does not take into consideration the vocational training programs available through training authorities, technical or trade schools, or nonprofit and for-profit educational programs. Knowledge transfer programs such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Transfer of Knowledge Program (TOK) indicate the value of capturing and creating event management systems, as illustrated by the sale of the manuals and systems used by the Sydney Olympics to the Athens Olympic Committee. The TOK was initiated by the IOC during preparation for the 2000 Sydney Games in conjunction with the Sydney Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) to formalize the transfer of knowledge and information assets from one Games to the next (Silvers, 2004a). Another knowledge transfer program is the European Leonardo da Vinci project MATRIX!, which is seeking to support the comparability of education standards within the events sector leading to flexible vocational training and continuing education in an international context (Siemens, 2004).

Association Educational, Career Pathway and Standards Initiatives

Education is not the reserve of academics, universities, and colleges—industry associations also have a role to play, as evidenced in the work of Arcodia and Reid (2002). Through analysis of the mission statements, goals and objectives, services, and stated codes of ethics of 152 event management-related associations, they concluded that education plays a significant role within many of the associations. A number of associations have developed their own qualifications in an attempt to increase the credentials of their members and perhaps demonstrate their continuing professional development. Notably, of the international associations, the International Special Events Society (ISES) offers the Certified Special Events Professional (CSEP) designation (ISES, 2004), the International Festival & Events Association (IFEA) the Certified Festival & Events Executive (CFEE) certification (IFEA, 2004), Meeting Professionals International (MPI) the Global Certification in Meeting Management (CMM)(MPI, 2003), the Convention Industry Council (CIC) the Cer-

tified Meeting Professional Program (CMP)(CIC, 2004b), and the International Association of Assembly Managers (IAAM) the Certified Facilities Executive (CFE) program (IAAM, 2004).

These communities of practice recognize the need to pursue professional status and success strategies for their practitioner constituents. The level of awareness and respect for the specialized knowledge and skills required for competent event management is critical, particularly during times of economic downturn and downsizing (Wierzgac, 2003). Paul Flackett's Icebergs, Synchronized Swimmers and Ducks Theory (2001) illustrates the invisibility of this expertise: all the action is "below the water line"—happening prior to and behind the scenes of the event itself. Table 1 provides a peek below the water line at the skill set required of event management professionals (Nelson, 2004).

Meeting Professionals International (MPI), one of the leading industry associations worldwide with around 19,000 members, is currently in the process of developing career pathways for meeting professionals as part of its Pathways to Excellence strategy. The initiative identifies five levels of competence, covering college/university students, entry/novice level, experienced

level, senior level, and executive/advanced. As part of the initiative, it is defining standardized classification of competencies for meeting and event professionals as well as identifying critical knowledge, skills, and abilities (MPI, 2003).

The Convention Industry Council (CIC), representing 31 industry-related associations with a collective membership of 98,000 individual members and 15,000 organizations worldwide, is leading an initiative that aims to bring together meeting, convention, and exhibition industry stakeholders in order to create and enhance efficiencies through developing and implementing industry-wide accepted practices (known as the APEX initiative, an acronym for Accepted Practices Exchange) (CIC, 2004a). APEX is being developed by industry panels focused on addressing seven core areas: terminology, history/postevent reports, requests for proposals (RFPs), resumé and work orders, meeting and site profiles, housing, and contracts (Jones, 2004).

The International Association of Assembly Managers (IAAM), representing public assembly venues around the world, has developed a body of knowledge for public assembly facility managers, which is forming the basis of a textbook and a master's course. This refers to core competencies for facility managers grouped into seven broad areas: legal issues, facility marketing/sales and promotions, financial aspects, event services/facility operations, leadership, human resource/personnel administration, and advertising and public relations (IAAM 2004).

In addition to awarding 9854 CMP designations in 26 countries, the CIC is currently pursuing accreditation of its certification program through the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA), a leader in setting quality standards for credentialing organizations (Canning, 2003). The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), under the auspices of NOCA, seeks to "ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the public through the accreditation of certification programs/organizations that assess professional competence" (NCCA, 2003, p. 1). Its assessment of the certification community reveals dramatic growth in the number of credentialing bodies from nonprofit, for-profit, industry, and governmental organizations and entities in the US and internationally, with an increasing number of certification programs recognized by regulatory authorities. The NCCA specifies the purpose of a certification program is to "conduct certification activities in a manner that upholds standards for com-

Table 1
Event Management Skills Ranked in Order of Importance

| Skills | N | Mean |
|-----------------------|-----|------|
| Organizational | 517 | 4.79 |
| Detail oriented | 515 | 4.79 |
| Listening | 518 | 4.78 |
| Problem solving | 519 | 4.75 |
| Oral communication | 519 | 4.71 |
| Multitasking | 516 | 4.66 |
| Interpersonal | 514 | 4.53 |
| Decision-making | 515 | 4.50 |
| Written communication | 517 | 4.45 |
| Time management | 514 | 4.45 |
| Leadership | 517 | 4.39 |
| Stress management | 515 | 4.19 |
| Computer | 516 | 4.09 |
| Marketing | 517 | 3.99 |
| Sales | 515 | 3.99 |
| Personnel management | 512 | 3.92 |
| Risk management | 507 | 3.71 |
| Legal | 501 | 3.41 |
| Accounting | 513 | 3.39 |
| Public speaking | 514 | 3.30 |
| Teaching | 510 | 3.17 |

1 = not important at all, 2 = not very important, 3 = somewhat important, 4 = important, 5 = very important.

Source: Nelson (2004).

petent practice in a profession, occupation, role, or skill” (NCCA, 2003, p. 4), and requires the definition and publication of performance domains, including their associated knowledge and skills, with the development of assessment instruments directly related to those specifications. The resulting certification awarded is used to demonstrate this required level of knowledge and skill to the public and other stakeholders.

However, although reputable, and developing increasingly international profiles of members, many of these international associations are mainly focused in the US and are only one of a number of associations within their sector that industry professionals may join. As a result, although the certification has undoubtedly added to professionalization and raising standards within the association, recognition of these qualifications is not necessarily accepted by the industry as a whole as a requirement to practice in that sector, or across international boundaries, and as such the numbers of people gaining certification is not widespread.

Recognition of the Industry’s Commonality and Maturity

For these and other initiatives to serve the event management industry as a whole, recognition of industry commonality is crucial. There are a number of associations around the world that focus on the end product of event management. The ISES primarily represents corporate and private events such as product launches; the IFEA concentrates on public festivals; MPI focuses on the meetings industry. Although all the industry product associations recognize the importance of management competency, it is not their core concern. This is unlike other professions such as engineering, project managers, doctors, architects, and accountants. Their peak bodies are concerned with the management process. Consider for a moment a road builders’ association, a bridge builders’ association, and an office builders’ association, all of which represent members who practice in different genres, yet the members are all engineers. The Project Management Institute (PMI) is a world body for the certification of project managers. The product of the project management (i.e., a building or a software system) provides subcategories within the PMI. However the process is recognized as the same regardless of the product.

Getz (2002a) suggests the well-educated event management professional “should ideally be able to move

freely among types of events and their diverse settings” (p. 13), but cautions “widely divergent approaches can be expected until, and if, a common base is recognized” (p. 17). Certainly divergent approaches are appropriate for contextual concepts and skills; however, as event management spans such a variety of event genre and disciplines, without the recognition of this industry commonality, the identification of the process and skill standards for event management will not lead to career mobility for practitioners (Silvers, 2004b) and will result in the costly duplication of efforts by various associations with limited resources.

The lack of data, research, and the recognition of common processes are major constraints to forming an event management body of knowledge. This “newness” of the event as an indefinable body of knowledge or discipline is mentioned by a number of recent texts (Getz, 1998; Getz, 2000a; O’Toole & Mikolaitis, 2002; Shone & Parry, 2004). With the notable exception of some recent texts (Allen, O’Toole, McDonnell, & Harris, 2002; O’Toole & Mikolaitis, 2002; Silvers, 2004a), a characteristic of an immature industry is the inability of the industry to recognize its immaturity. The management processes, obvious in other industries, are implicit and nascent in events rather than recognized, described, and therefore able to be assessed. A further example of the immaturity of the event industry is the lack of any provision for the assessment of the event management system or practice (Getz, 1998). Most of the event management texts describe tools and processes for the assessment and evaluation of the event itself. The term “event management” is ambiguous in most event literature. It means event portfolio management rather than the internal management of the event.

Using the Capability Maturity Model (n.d.) developed for the US government by the Software Engineering Institute of Carnegie Mellon University (Crow, 2000), the maturity of event management as a profession (and the sum of its performing organizations) is, as yet, immature because it lacks formalized, standardized, predictable, accountable, and continuously improving processes or systems. It must be emphasized that system maturity levels relate to the processes rather than the creative product that results. It is the process system that must be quantified and will be measured within a conformity assessment (O’Toole, 2002; Silvers, 2004b). The creation of reliable, disciplined, and consistent systems (Collins, 2001) allows performing organizations to move from being “people-dependent”

to “systems-dependent” (Gerber, 1995, p. 100) and achieve the optimized level of a mature and effective quality assurance system.

The capability maturity model is important in the awarding of contracts. The nature of special events, in particular, is that they are a new configuration of suppliers. In such variable management environment, the capability of a company must be known before they are awarded the contract. The event cannot be used as a test of the capability of the contractor. O’Toole (2002) suggested the classification for event organizations as: Informal Level—the event is organized on an ad hoc basis, little is written down; Formal Level—the event has structured management with delegation; Accountable Level—this includes the competencies of the formal level and the event and the management can account for their management and decisions; and Adaptable and Improvable Level—this includes the accountable competencies and signifies the event management, although a formal system, can respond positively to change and improve for each event. From the above it can be easily recognized that the capability maturity model relates closely to a competency system for education levels of event management.

The Search for Industry Standards

Although there are various systems for recognizing competence around the world, standards for the event management industry are being defined by its disasters. The recent conviction of an event manager in New Zealand for Criminal Nuisance has put pressure on the New Zealand event industry to create safety standards (Allen, O’Toole, McDonnell, & Harris, 2005). Mass casualties at sport events in South Africa and rock concerts in Australia and elsewhere have lead to the proposal of legislation to control the event industry. In the absence of consistent voluntary standards promulgated by international or industry organizations, governments are creating guidelines for events, primarily dealing with health and safety issues [e.g., Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the US, Emergency Management Australia, Emergency Preparedness Canada, and the Health & Safety Executive in the UK], which by virtue of their source become de facto regulations.

Governments, particularly those in emerging economies, are also seeking criterion to rely on for the creation of regulatory, authorization, and procurement policies (ANSI, 2000). There is pressure for govern-

ments to assess the competency of an event company before awarding contracts. Their tendering systems currently have multiple criteria to assess an event company and companies must be reassessed for every bid. For example, 60% of the assessment criteria for a major fashion show concerned management competency under the headings of “Experience, Capability & Past Performance” and “Occupational Health & Safety and Quality Assurance” (Hennessy, 2004).

Internal regulation, external validation, and perhaps external regulation will increase in importance as globally harmonized standards of quality and best practice are sought for conformity assessment. Standards that may be used as the foundation for conformity assessments, such as those established through the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) (2004) specifying effective quality management systems for manufacturing and service industries, are increasing in importance throughout the world as a basis for facilitating international trade and balancing regulated public protection and heightened competition. Competency-based qualifications in events-related areas have been developed in a number of countries. Canada is recognized as one of the first countries to explore competency standards, with the development of National Occupational Standards for Special Events Managers in the early 1990s (Stafford, 1993). Later, in the UK, development has focused on National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), in South Africa as Learnerships leading to National Qualifications, and in Australia as competencies under the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

The Challenges of Creating an International EMBOK Structure

The process of event management, variously known as the event planning process or event management process, has been defined, illustrated, or explored by a number of authors (see, e.g., Allen et al., 2005; Bowdin, McDonnell, Allen, & O’Toole, 2001; Getz, 1997; Goldblatt, 2002; Hall, 1992; Masterman, 2004; O’Toole & Mikolaitis, 2002; Silvers, 2004a; Shone & Parry 2004; Torkildsen, 1999; Watt, 1998). However, much of the current literature and research concerns the external management of an event portfolio. For example, of the 103 articles in the journal *Festival Management & Event Tourism* from its inception through 2002 (Getz, 2002a), one concerned the man-

agement system or management processes, albeit indirectly, and in the last four issues, the majority of articles concerned the impact of events. These may be classified as strategic issues of events portfolio management or business program management. The identification of event management is often called operations management (McDonnell, Allen, & O'Toole, 1999) or event project management (O'Toole & Mikolaitis, 2002). The evaluation of the operations is often mistaken for the evaluation of the management system and its practice. It is therefore not surprising that the underlying management systems and processes remain hidden in the event field.

In a recent survey of the events industry, Helde, Jago, and Deery (2002) point out the lack of research in the events industry. They describe three areas of research: Event Evaluation, Event Marketing, Event Management and Operations. However, the areas they survey for their paper do not include any mention of research into event management processes or a framework for management of the event as distinct from the actual event. This is a further example of the ambiguity of the term "event management." Their survey is quite clear as to the lack of information on the event industry, with the notable exception of the economic impact of events.

In the UK, the Business Tourism Forum and The Business Tourism Advisory Committee (1999, p. 36) found that the conference and event industries required enhanced negotiation skills, higher client management skills, and a detailed knowledge of specific venues. In addition, the industry requires people with an informed understanding of, and ability to anticipate, client needs, and to suggest solutions to problems and improvements to plans. Though useful in identifying a number of specific skills, and acknowledging that this was based on a study identifying industry needs, this does not offer comprehensive categories and does not identify on what basis these areas were identified. In addition, it focused on business tourism, or business events, rather than exploring the broad spectrum of the events industry and therefore other equally important knowledge and skill areas may be missing.

Further research, conducted in Canada and Australia, provides a useful insight into the attributes and knowledge required specifically by event managers. While developing occupational standards for special events coordinators, Tourism Standards Consortium in Canada identified administrative and management skills, risk management, program planning and coor-

dination, marketing, interpersonal skills, and human resource management (Stafford, 1993).

In their findings of a study of event managers attending the Australian Events Conference in Canberra, Perry et al. (1996, p. 88) identified 19 knowledge areas and attributes as being required to be effective managers. Respondents of the survey strongly agreed on 10 of these: project management, budgeting, time management, relating to the media, business planning, human resource management, marketing, contingency management, obtaining sponsorship, and networking. Based on factor analysis of the results, Perry et al. then proposed five knowledge domains: legal/financial, management, public relations/marketing, economic/analytical, and ethical/contextual. Although acknowledging that the study has limitations based on a small sample size, their knowledge domains provide useful categories. Returning to this study and others as the basis, Royal and Jago (1998) identified eight skill areas that their respondents agreed were very important: planning, coordination, sponsorship knowledge, marketing, human resource management, administration, public relations, and finance.

Exploring and outlining the requirements for event management training and education is not new. Getz and Wicks (1994, pp. 108–109) identified key areas that they believed should be included in event management courses. In addition to generic management skills, they identified the following event-specific areas: history and meanings of festivals, celebrations, rituals and other events; historical evolution types of events; trends in demand and supply; motivation and benefits sought from events; roles and impacts of events in society, the economy, environment and culture; who is producing events, and why; program concepts and styles; event settings; operations unique to events; management unique to events; and marketing unique to events.

Getz (2000b) presents a two-level conceptual framework to illustrate the approach to studying event management. He argues that the type of event (level two—specialization) is secondary to developing an understanding of the nature of planned events and management fundamentals (level one—foundation). In later research, Getz (2002a, p. 16) identified elements required in developing an event studies/event management discipline. Getz presented these, in no particular order, as: identifiable and growing core of knowledge and skills, both theoretical and methodological (event studies and management fundamentals); research sup-

porting the field (for theory, methods, and teaching); academic departments devoted to event studies/management, or other clear sources of identity for groups of event experts; integrative curricula (not just by type or setting); a full range of academic programs (undergraduate, postgraduate, and research degrees); executive development partnerships (academics and the industry); dedicated research journals; research funding allocated to the discipline; conferences for academics and students, with or without industry participation; industry support and community acceptance based on perceived value; recognition by other fields and disciplines; accreditation of academic programs by professional associations; sustained student demand; clear career paths for students; and professional status for practitioners (code of ethics, formal standards, licensing or other regulations).

Notably missing from all these models is the recognition of time, scheduling, and deadline management and an emphasis on risk management as core elements of event management. Absolutely every aspect of the management of events must be related back to its influence on the deadline, the decision-making process, and managing risk.

Given the range of alternatives available, devising appropriate categories, or knowledge domains, presents a challenge. Some may consider it appropriate to use a traditional management approach, focusing on traditional disciplines (e.g., management, finance, human resources, and marketing). Others may consider an event-specific approach more suitable, incorporating health and safety, production, and logistics. Although either approach is appropriate, research suggests that neither approach would provide the framework required. An examination of previous studies provides a useful basis for further discussion.

The Conceptual EMBOK Framework

A conceptual framework for capturing and capitalizing on existing knowledge and best practices of event management fundamentals requires the colligation of the varied alternatives and the classification of the knowledge in an effective distribution system. The importance of classification to the development of a body of knowledge and the related profession is found in a number of modern texts. Bowker and Star (1999) illustrate how medical classification formed the attitudes, profession, and culture of modern medicine. Hamblyn

(2001) describes the importance of classification of the clouds to the development of meteorology.

Such a framework needs to enable the process to be broken down into individual elements, illustrate the logical relationships between the elements over time, and should facilitate better understanding, an information infrastructure, and the possibility of improvement. This should also facilitate the transference of knowledge from vocational education and training in event management to an effective support for the study of the impact of events and festivals and the phenomenon of events in society (Getz, 2002a).

The conceptual EMBOK model, as illustrated in Figure 1, is based on three dimensions that correspond to the data, phase, and process dimensions of project management. The knowledge domain with subcategories illustrates the grouping of tasks and responsibilities by subject. This represents the data gathered through experience, expert opinion, and review of the literature. As a conceptual model, the graphic representation must simplify aspects of event management. However, this is traded off against the ability of the reader to grasp the complexity of management in a single page.

Based on a content analysis of competencies contained in industry certification programs, vocational qualifications, and a range of events-related textbooks originating from Australia, Canada, South Africa, the UK, and the US, earlier work by Silvers (2004b) identified four key domains: administration, operations, marketing, and risk management. Following the International EMBOK Imbizo,¹ a meeting of event management practitioner and educator representatives from industry associations and

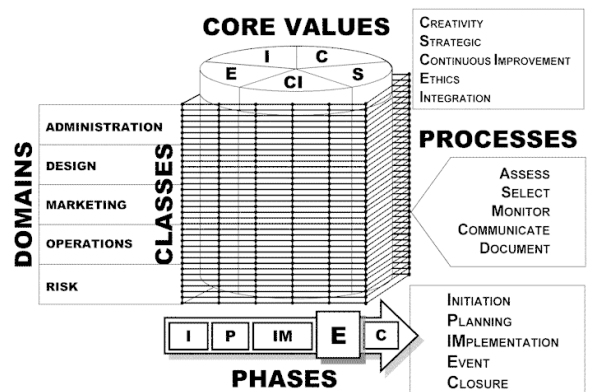


Figure 1. The EMBOK framework.

academic institutions throughout the world, the taxonomy has been refined and recalibrated, with the addition of design as a domain, which is thought to encapsulate a range of activities involved in event management that do not comfortably fit within the other four domains, as illustrated in Table 2.

Each class (functional units or categories) may be thought of as a management area and could be represented with the word “Management” (or “Design” for the design domain) added to each term. Within each class will be elements that are subject to different objectives, procedures, and constraints and have specific characteristics during different phases such as competencies (which enable the model to be mapped to education), standards (which enable the model to be used as a basis for tender assessment, codes, and an international standard), tasks (which enable the model to be used to develop checklists), and schedules. Each element will have a set of descriptors defining its attributes and “location” in the EMBOK Framework such as Administration (domain): Human Resources (class): Volunteers (element).

The phases emphasize the importance of time in any project model. Each element in the knowledge domain has a time dimension. The phases proposed, including initiation, planning, implementation, event, and closure, are derived from traditional project management terminology. The implementation phase in a project management context would typically include the event and closure, but as there is no handover of a tangible asset and the intangible asset is a result of the event experience, the event itself is seen as a separate phase. O’Toole (2002) and Allen et al. (2002) point out the different management environment during the event itself requiring a different and dynamic management scheme.

The processes, including assessment, selection, monitoring, communication, and documentation, are

an integrated, sequential, and iterative system associated with each element of each class of each domain at each phase in the event management process, with tools and techniques that may be used for each. The process system and terminology proposed is based on the already accepted process models for risk management, in particular, AS/NZS 4360: 1999, the risk management standard for Australia and New Zealand (Standards Australia, 1999), as this process system has been formally adopted as a government standard.

The core values of creativity, strategic thinking, continuous improvement, ethics, and integration are the values that must permeate all decisions throughout event management regarding every element, phase, and process. Particular to the events industry, artistic expression and creativity are regarded as essential (Allen et al., 2002; Harris & Allen, 2002; Getz, 1997). The other core values may be found in most other industries, with strategic thinking a current focus of the CMM designation (MPI, 2003).

The EMBOK model shares many of the characteristics of object-oriented modeling. The conceptual basis object-oriented modeling is similar to the working environment of event management, and the EMBOK project can be easily transferred to this type of model. In many respects an event manager is acting as a coordinator of expert services in the same way as a project manager. Each element or cell of the EMBOK can be regarded as an object. The terms used must be discrete in order for call-outs or call-ups linked with specific data, tools, techniques, and programs to be integrated. Each object has data and a program associated exclusively with it, “inherits” programs and data from other objects, and uses universal programs. This sets the stage for modularization of curriculums, research analysis, and business procedures.

Table 2
EMBOK Knowledge Domains and Classes

| Administration | Design | Marketing | Operations | Risk |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Financial | Catering | Marketing plan | Attendees | Compliance |
| Human resources | Content | Materials | Communications | Emergency |
| Information | Entertainment | Merchandize | Infrastructure | Health & safety |
| Procurement | Environment | Promotion | Logistics | Insurance |
| Stakeholders | Production | Public relations | Participants | Legal & ethics |
| Systems | Program | Sales | Site | Decision analysis |
| Time | Theme | Sponsorship | Technical | Security |

The Benefits of the EMBOK Framework

Considering the fact that the “profession” of event management spans such a variety of event genre and traditional disciplines, the development of a framework for an international event management body of knowledge will set the stage for development of practice standards that will lead to the legitimacy of event management as a true profession. A major use for the EMBOK is in the recognition of event management as a process. The inability to describe this process is a major constraint for the development of research. Much research to date concerns the output of the process, such as tourism and destination marketing. The process is hidden by the competitive knowledge of the event company and the focus on the single result of the process.

The area of industry accreditation, rather than individual certification, has largely been ignored by events literature. Stafford (1993) provided an outline of a Tourism Standards Consortium project in Canada in the early 1990s, which involved the development of standards and certification for event professionals. He identified a number of benefits would emerge for educators, employers, and industry professionals. For educators, standards would provide the basis for course development and transferability of educational expertise, and identify competency areas required for event industry employees. For employers, they identify skills requirements and provide a checklist for performance and basis for training. Finally, for industry professionals, they provide the basis for career development and performance measurement (Stafford, 1993, p. 68).

Carlsen (2000) provided an overview of the development and implementation of an event industry accreditation manual by the Event Industry Association of Western Australia (EIA), based on ISO 9000 principles and aimed to accredit organizations, rather than individuals. EIA identified a number of benefits for organizations from accreditation, including: clear statements of policies, procedures, and instructions; improved control of operations; reduced variation in performance from staff; better communication; clarification of roles and responsibilities; improved operational performance, output, and morale; and encouraging organizations to review their activities leading to a clearer understanding of customer requirements (Carlsen, 2000, p. 119). However, in their survey of Australian event organizers in Victoria, Royal and Jago (1998) found a high level of ambivalence towards the

issue of accreditation, though they argued that it may still be possible with increased education and awareness, demonstrable value, and a clear steer from a strong industry body.

The proposed EMBOK framework will serve numerous purposes and uses, not the least of which is the illustration of the scope and complexity of this profession to internal and external constituents and stakeholders, current and future practitioners, and allied and supplier industries, thereby increasing respect and reverence for the profession and legitimizing and expertizing the functions of event management. Its development will lead to a platform for curriculum development, consistent competency assessment, and career pathways and mobility for practitioners. This relies on capturing and encapsulating all previous and new research in the field of event management and creating a holistic model of the skills and knowledge materials to be made available in a public domain format, which may serve as a tool for all levels of academic and professional development programming (formal, association, and informal), research, publications, credentialing, product development, career specialization, assessment criteria, and many other outcomes.

Conclusion

The world has moved on in the 10 years since Getz and Wicks identified the characteristics of an event management profession in 1994. As evidenced by the increasing number of events-related courses, research and publications, and association-related activities, the establishment of events as a profession or a discipline is still generating discussion and has still not been decided. There are very few barriers to entry for organizations or individuals wishing to establish themselves in the events business in known markets internationally. The wide range of events-related associations covering the various sectors making up the events industry, with none in particular being authoritative, and the range of qualifications available (including non-event specific), means that at this moment in time there is no one professional governing body available to accredit courses within specific countries let alone worldwide. Though industry associations offer the opportunity for self-regulation, again the myriad associations operating across international boundaries and cultures makes this difficult.

EMBOK offers a holistic three-dimensional framework that draws knowledge domains together with the

event planning process, which will enable the event management discipline to be mapped, defined, and refined. By offering a framework that uses a common language, it can draw together and incorporate other initiatives, such as APEX, in a recognized format while offering future development opportunities for, as yet, uncharted areas of the event management discipline. By providing a framework for a common body of knowledge, it provides another clear step towards professional development of event management. With a number of countries introducing certification, standards, and legislation to reduce unethical and unsafe practice in the events industry, the EMBOK may also provide a starting point for these initiatives to be mapped against in order to ensure consistency and currency across international boundaries, while maintaining a degree of flexibility and freedom to take into account cultural, educational, and other stakeholder requirements.

Some may argue that the events industry and its various stakeholders, including education and industry, are not yet ready to be prescribed what should or should not be covered within event management education and training courses, or what skills and knowledge requirements are needed to operate in the events industry. Others argue that with the high risks to the general public and attendees at events, it is only through standardizing approaches will competency be assured. The debate will no doubt continue long after the EMBOK conceptual framework is published. However, by developing the EMBOK, the International EMBOK Executive aims to demonstrate commonality in language and approach across international boundaries and provide the basis for further professional development and research to take place. By doing so, and through validation of EMBOK and its constituent elements by other researchers, academics, industry professionals, associations, and other stakeholders, it can ultimately be adapted and refined until consensus can be established.

Note

¹The Imbizo (the Zulu word for gathering) was held in July 2004 in South Africa. The participants included Glenn A. J. Bowdin, MPhil, ILTM, Leeds Metropolitan University (United Kingdom), Dr. Joe Goldblatt, CSEP, Temple University (United States), Matthew D. Gonzalez, MCSE, PMP, GSolutions, Inc. (United States), Janet Landey, CSEP, Party Design CC and Institute of Event Management (South Africa), Kathleen

Nelson, Ph.D., CSEP, CMP, University of Nevada Las Vegas (United States), William J. O'Toole, Project Management Graduate Programme, University of Sydney (Australia), Julia Rutherford Silvers, CSEP, Speaking of Events (United States), and Jane Spowart, Ph.D., Technikon Witwatersrand (South Africa).

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