9 Practical Implications and Recommendations for Event Organisers

Learning objectives

- [ ] Explore recommendations for event managers to implement effective knowledge management strategies within their organisations.
- [ ] Understand appropriate knowledge management activities and practices for each stage of the event management process (pre/during/post event).
- [ ] Identify areas for future research into knowledge management in event organisations.

Introduction

Throughout this book a number of practical implications and recommendations for event organisers have been mentioned and outlined. This chapter aims to bring them all together in relation to some of the challenges faced by event organisations specifically, as covered in Chapter 2. It is worth remembering though, that any knowledge management initiative in any kind of organisation is not just down to top management and their aims and objectives. Debowski (2006: 337) nicely summarised the four key knowledge management principles as follows:

♦ Knowledge management is everyone's business;

♦ Knowledge practices are legitimate core business;

♦ Communication is essential; and

♦ High performance should be encouraged.

While the recommendations presented throughout this chapter are largely aimed at event managers, they need to be incorporated with all employees in mind; permanent and seasonal staff members, volunteers, as well as contractors, suppliers, local businesses and other stakeholders. An event organisation can only learn as a whole over time by effectively bringing together knowledge and expertise from as many different sources as possible. Furthermore, effective knowledge management, and a more explicit understanding of it, will enhance professionalisation across the events industry and will make event professionals more employable in the future (Stadler et al., 2014).

The book has also highlighted that there is still a need for further research into knowledge management in event organisations. In the final section of this chapter, suggestions for future research will hence be presented. This could be in the form of student research projects, dissertations (undergraduate or postgraduate), as well as consultancy work or other types of applied research.

Knowledge management recommendations for event organisers

The 'pulsating' nature of events requires event managers to think about the different stages of their event and hence different knowledge management strategies, processes and practices during each stage (Clayton, 2020). These recommendations are based on the kind of knowledge practices can be implemented pre-event, during the event and post-event, in order to maximise organisational learning in the long run. It is important to remember that these strategies sometimes overlap and do not necessarily start and stop during a specific phase. In fact, it is best to think of some knowledge practices to be implemented pre-event, but then to continue throughout the later stages, perhaps reinforcing them or adapting them as and when necessary. Similarly, the knowledge management activities staff members engage in during the event will be beneficial to maintain post-event and perhaps even carry over into the next event season, where in turn, pre-event knowledge management can then start at an already higher and more complex level than the year before. Figure 9.1 below illustrates the recommended knowledge management activities and practices throughout the different stages.
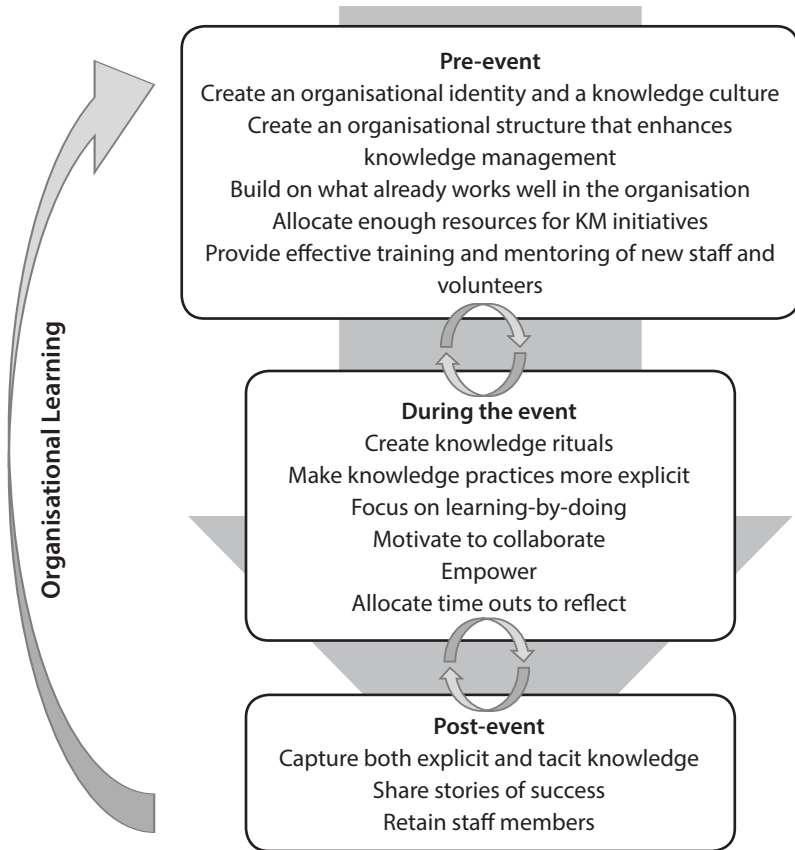
Figure 9.1: Knowledge management recommendations for event managers

Pre-event knowledge management and knowledge practices

As highlighted throughout this book, any knowledge management initiative needs to be built into a broader strategy for the organisation as a whole. Ideally, knowledge management efforts need to be aligned with the existing culture and structure of the organisation, otherwise they will be of limited success (Du Plessis, 2006; Chen & Huang, 2007; Intezari et al., 2017). In the months leading up to an event and with only the permanent team around, it is therefore crucial to create and reinforce an organisational vision, mission and identity, which help staff members identify themselves with the organisation (*I am a member of this organisation and it is important to me*). Equally important is the creation of an organisational culture (*this is who we are and this is the way things*