

# **Knowledge Management in Event Organisations Instructor's Manual**

## **9: Practical Implications and Recommendations for Event Organisers**

This is the instructor's manual produced to accompany the book *Knowledge Management in Event Organisations*, by Raphaela Stadler, 2021, published by Goodfellow Publishers Ltd.

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## Chapter 9: Practical Implications and Recommendations for Event Organisers

### Lecture 12

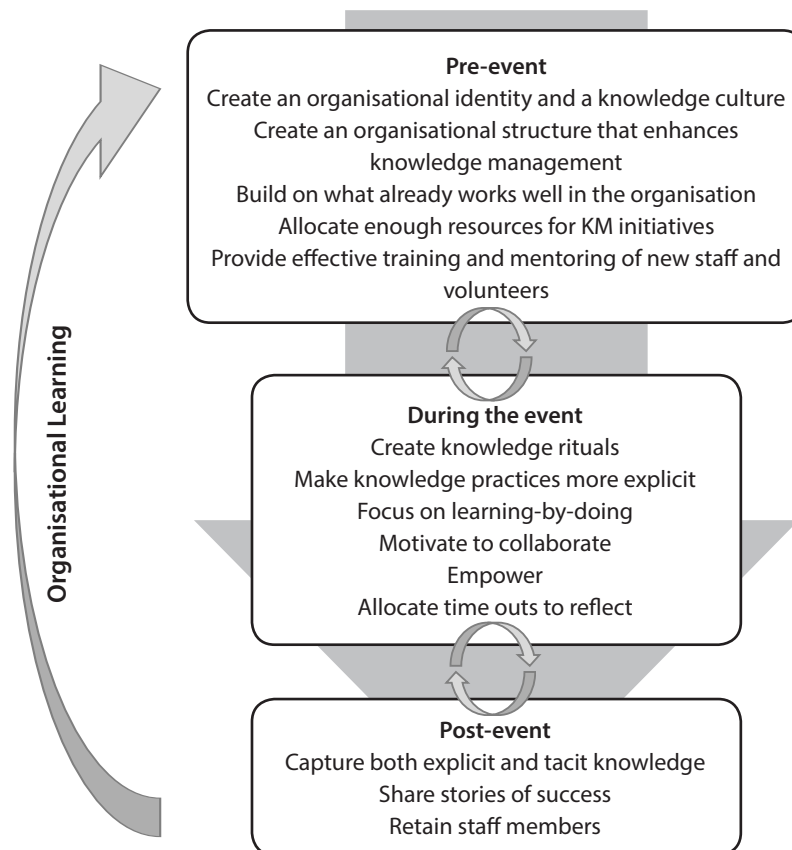
#### Learning objectives

- 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)

#### Introduction

This final lecture brings everything discussed in the book together and provides a framework and recommendations for event organisers in order to manage knowledge more effectively and more efficiently. It is helpful for students to remind them of the 'pulsating' nature of events which requires event managers to think about different knowledge management activities and practices during the different stages of the event (pre, during, post event). The knowledge management activities will be slightly different for each stage, but they also overlap and are interlinked. They do not necessarily start and stop at a certain time, but rather, for example, the ones implemented pre-event can then be reinforced during the event and maybe even used post-event to wrap things up. By bringing them all together, the organisation can learn over time and avoid the issue of reinventing the wheel each event season. Figure 9.1 provides an overview of the different stages and knowledge management activities/practices recommended for each stage.

Specific examples for each of the 3 stages can then be discussed with students. These should be brought together from previous lectures and other examples from the book. Students should also be encouraged to refer back to the case studies presented in the book for some practical examples here.



**Figure 9.1:** Knowledge management recommendations for event managers

### Pre-event knowledge management activities and practices

Some specific ideas for effective knowledge management at the pre-event stage include:

*Create an organisational identity and a knowledge culture through, for example:*

- ◆ 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*);
- ◆ Create an organisational culture (beliefs, behaviours and values; *this is who we are and this is the way things are done in our organisation*);
- ◆ Create a knowledge-friendly organisational climate (*the way we interact and work with each other*).

*Create an organisational structure that enhances knowledge management, such as:*

- ◆ Flat structure, emphasise teamwork and collaboration
- ◆ Interdisciplinary pods and/or communities-of-practice
- ◆ Identify and assign specific knowledge management roles and responsibilities (e.g. knowledge brokers)

*Build on what already works well in the organisation:*

- ◆ Use the Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge approach
- ◆ Share stories of success

*Allocate enough resources for knowledge management initiatives*

*Provide effective training and mentoring of new staff and volunteers, through e.g.:*

- ◆ Align knowledge management and HR management
- ◆ Engage new staff and volunteers early on in the process, identify their strengths, skills, and capabilities, as well as their needs and wants
- ◆ Have a few 'old-timers' available to mentor and teach new staff/volunteers
- ◆ Make effective use of induction kits, good leadership and supervisory support, and clear communication.

A brief discussion or brainstorming session with students at this point is a good idea to reinforce the importance of these different knowledge management activities and practices and how they can be taken forward into the next two stages of the event. It is also important to reinforce the event specific challenges that come with this, as highlighted in Chapter 2.

### **Knowledge management activities and practices during the event**

During the event, the emphasis of effective knowledge management shifts slightly and includes more specific knowledge 'practices', such as:

*Create knowledge rituals (both formal and informal)*

- ◆ Schedule formal rituals, such as meetings (team meetings, full staff meetings); and
- ◆ Allow time for informal rituals and ritual-like activities (e.g. informal catch-ups over lunch or coffee)

*Make knowledge practices more explicit*

- ◆ Make staff members aware of the relational and practice-based understanding of knowledge management, where knowledge is produced, enacted, embodied and shared
- ◆ To understand 'how' things are done, and to acquire the relevant know-how

*Focus on learning-by-doing*

- ◆ For staff members to immerse themselves in the knowledge practice;
- ◆ To enhance their social interaction with others (e.g. with a mentor)

*Motivate to collaborate*

- ◆ Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
- ◆ Praise and highlight positive examples of teamwork
- ◆ Lead by example
- ◆ Reward staff members and volunteers for effectively engaging in knowledge practices (e.g. share success stories during meetings, mention them in newsletters)

*Empower*

- ◆ Use power in a positive way, not power 'over' others
- ◆ Give staff members autonomy, which creates a sense of commitment and ownership and responsibility over decisions made

*Allocate 'time outs' to sit back and reflect on knowledge management activities, processes and practices*

## Post-event knowledge management activities and practices

Finally, once the event is over, any knowledge management activities or practices should emphasise the capture and storage of explicit and tacit knowledge, whether through formal debrief sessions or the informal sharing of stories. The ultimate aim is to avoid reinventing the wheel the following year:

### *Capture both explicit and tacit knowledge*

- ◆ Schedule formal debriefing events or exit interviews, or
- ◆ Ask staff members and volunteers to informally record (e.g. in a digital diary) their experiences
- ◆ Present a prize or reward for the best story and most innovative idea of how things could be improved in the future

### *Share stories of success*

- ◆ Make use of staff members' and volunteers' sense of achievement, pride and success in creating the event experience
- ◆ Ask what kind of knowledge they needed to acquire in order for this to happen, how they used it, and how it could be stored for the future
- ◆ Turn challenges and issues into opportunities for learning

### *Retain staff members*

- ◆ Ask them to come back the following year
- ◆ Create a sense of organisational identity and loyalty
- ◆ Keep them engaged throughout the year

As a final task after this discussion, students should be asked to either create a list/table of Do's and Don'ts for knowledge management in event organisations; or to provide Top Tips for new staff members/volunteers of an event of their choice to effectively create, identify, acquire, use, share and store knowledge.

## Sample short-answer questions:

- ◆ Put together a knowledge management checklist or a spreadsheet for event managers to use pre, during and post event.
- ◆ Provide a list of knowledge management Do's and Don'ts for new staff members and volunteers in an event organisation. What are your top tips for them?
- ◆ Discuss how the knowledge practices implemented pre-event can be reinforced or adapted throughout the later stages (during and post-event) in order to enhance organisational learning over time.