



# The Jewel in APPA's Crown

By Jack Hug, APPA Fellow

A story is told about Abbott Lawrence Lowell, president of Harvard University from 1909 to 1933. One day a visitor asked him, "How is it, Mr. Lowell, that so much knowledge is concentrated here on the banks of the Charles River?" Lowell purportedly replied: "It's very simple. Every year, we admit to the college the most brilliant young men in America, and when they graduate four years later, they are entirely ignorant. So they must have left their knowledge here." That, in caricature, is the challenge facing managers: How do we turn the candlepower of our people into the wattage of the organization, rather into something that goes out at 5 p.m.<sup>21</sup>

Many reading this article will recall the earliest versions of the APPA Body of Knowledge (BOK): *Facilities Management: A Manual for Plant Administration*, first edition (1984), second edition (1989), and third edition (1997). Many of you have contributed to and benefited from these early efforts.

The insightful thinking of the APPA Knowledge Management publication team and their creative use of digital technology have brought us a body of knowledge that is a truly useful management tool. The APPA BOK is not simply the first electronic body of knowledge for our profession, but also the envy of

other professional associations. The development of the BOK was a lot harder than it looks. The leadership of Steve Glazner, Anita Dosik, Maggie Kinnaman, the collaboration of the content coordinators, and especially the hard work of the chapter authors, have helped sustain the BOK's quality over time.

## A TOOL TO ENGAGE AND MOTIVATE

The APPA BOK content will assist you in your search for professional guidance, best practices, and support for your

a look at the BOK. And remember also that the authors are valuable resources themselves, so don't hesitate to consult them directly or to use the important references offered in each chapter to gain additional understanding of the subject.

Furthermore, putting the BOK to work in our facilities organization gives us a performance advantage by helping us better understand, evaluate, and compare the realities of our particular campus situation, individual capabilities, and organizational capacity.

# BOK

## Body of Knowledge

organizations developmental requirements. It is valuable intellectual capital for our profession and a proven, trustworthy, forward-thinking resource for a profession focused on serving education.

The BOK is a tool that can motivate and engage the facility management (FM) workforce. One of the best practices for use of the BOK is to recognize the ease of quick access to content in each chapter. Whenever you need a quick refresher, an introduction to a new or unfamiliar topic, or an in-depth study, take

## A POWERFUL COMBINATION

The BOK is grounded in practice, meaning that hundreds of FM professionals have had input into the content development, largely based on real-life experiences and practices. A powerful catalyst for learning occurs when this content expertise is coupled to action and knowledge, yielding opportunities for self-improvement, team development, and positive organizational performance. BOK's benefit to facilities organizations is multiplied with the explicitly announced goal of having every person in the organization lay their hands on the collected know-how, experience, and wisdom of so many of their colleagues.

Organizations function at their best when knowledge is created and when people grow. Success is often tied to a greater

understanding of important foundational knowledge—to knowing the basics and to understanding the profession's core competencies. The BOK is a comprehensive framework, assembling valuable insights for understanding why facility management professionals work together and how they can work together to achieve a distinct group purpose—things that none of us could possibly accomplish alone. Capturing these insights within a coherent system—a working whole—is what a good body of knowledge does.

#### MULTIFACETED USES

Additionally, the BOK is used at the APPA Institute for Facilities Management, where attendees not only benefit from the written BOK but also from knowledgeable faculty leading lively group discussions and practicums—shared work experiences generated by use of the BOK content. As stated on APPA's website, individuals completing the Institute training are well prepared to take the Educational Facilities Professional exam (EFP) and successfully earn their EFP designation. After graduating from the Institute, the attainment of the EFP designation is seen as the next logical progression on the APPA educational continuum path.

To succeed in an ever-changing education facility management marketplace—one that values expertise, know-how, and facility management professionalism—we must continue to have members committed to furthering organizational knowledge, skills, and abilities, technical knowledge, and human insight. The core of ideas contained in the BOK will endure because they represent our fundamental realities and responsibilities.

#### A TEAM OF CONTRIBUTORS

We owe our thanks to the BOK contributors and their unwavering dedication to expand and sustain the BOK content, and also to those APPA members who

have more to contribute as our profession's knowledge continues to grow and expand. I encourage others to join in this effort. As you grow your own talent and deepen your organizational expertise, consider adding your insights—your candlepower—into the wattage our profession needs.

#### COMING ATTRACTIONS

This year's new authors contributing chapters to Part 1, General Administration and Management, include:

- *Human Resource Management*—Jenna Elmer, University of Arizona, has written a new chapter with a totally new approach to building an effective workforce.
- *Leadership and Administration*—Ana Thiemer, University of Texas Austin, has expanded the Ethics chapter by authoring Part II on this important

leadership topic.

- Also for *Leadership and Administration*—Polly Pinney, Arizona State University, is writing a much needed chapter on customer service.
- *Business and Financial Management*—Beth Clark, Penn State University, will write a new chapter on budgeting issues. ☞

#### ENDNOTES:

- 1 *Intellectual Capital: The New Wealth of Organizations*. Thomas A. Stewart, Doubleday, New York, 1997.

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