

Is the BOK Necessary?

That is the question of 16 APPA

members and staff who met on December 3-4, 2019 to discuss the content, delivery, and purpose of APPA's Body of Knowledge (BOK). Facilitated by APPA Fellow Bill Daigneau, the group discussed the current use and visibility of the BOK;



conducted a deep-divide analysis of its strengths, weaknesses, and audiences; and

developed helpful recommendations that the Information and Communications Committee and APPA staff will review and determine how best to implement.

Participants were unanimous that the BOK is necessary. As one participant put it: "The BOK is everything—certification, everything." However, as another participant said, "The BOK as it exists is not necessary, but the content is."

WHY?

The most salient reasons for continuing the BOK are that the BOK...

- In its 62 key topics establishes a foundational network for educational facilities management
- Identifies key items
- Serves as a basis of continuing education
- Connects silos
- Connects the workforce to organizational and academic mission
- Is a repository of facts and trusted source within the context of educational facilities
- There must be a BOK upon which to base certification questions/requirements.

Among the objectives/roles the BOK should meet are:

- Meet needs of different audiences, but especially help those entering the profession of educational FM, including those transitioning into it
- Support APPA's CEF (Certified Educational Facilities Professional) credential in some form or fashion

- Support the Institute for Facilities Management (although each instructor adds art to the science)
- Be the trusted sources, accurate, relevant, contemporary
- Provide information in a variety of ways (e.g., webinars, *Facilities Manager* articles)
- Meet needs of different audiences
- Provide *credibility* to what professionals propose
- Be a repository of knowledge of the many, not the just the few [authors]
- Help a person on a career path
- Serve as a reference source for an entire career.

As these objectives/roles were being discussed, the issue of core v. new technology was brought up, specifically the question of when something new becomes core.

CONCLUSIONS

Participants at the APPA BOK Summit concluded that the BOK is indeed a valuable asset and is a diverse, structured, and well-organized resource. Members value the BOK highly, but do not use it frequently. A significant (perhaps the primary) target should be learning for the emerging/transitioning FMer, and recognizing that new FMers learn in different ways.

The BOK can be—needs to be—a differentiator, something that sets APPA apart. To that end, remember that much of the value of the APPA BOK is that it speaks to educational facilities management. If we do nothing with the BOK, APPA will suffer severe consequences. For example, we may lose members, lose dollars, and damage our brand.

We are already acting upon the recommendations of the BOK Summit participants and will update members on our progress as we review, revamp, and improve the APPA Body of Knowledge. ☺

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Founded in 1914, APPA provides members the opportunity to explore trends, issues, and best practices in educational facilities through research, publications, professional development, and credentialing. Formerly the Association of Physical Plant Administrators, APPA is the association of choice for more than 20,000 educational facilities professionals at more than 1,500 learning institutions throughout the United States, Canada, and abroad.

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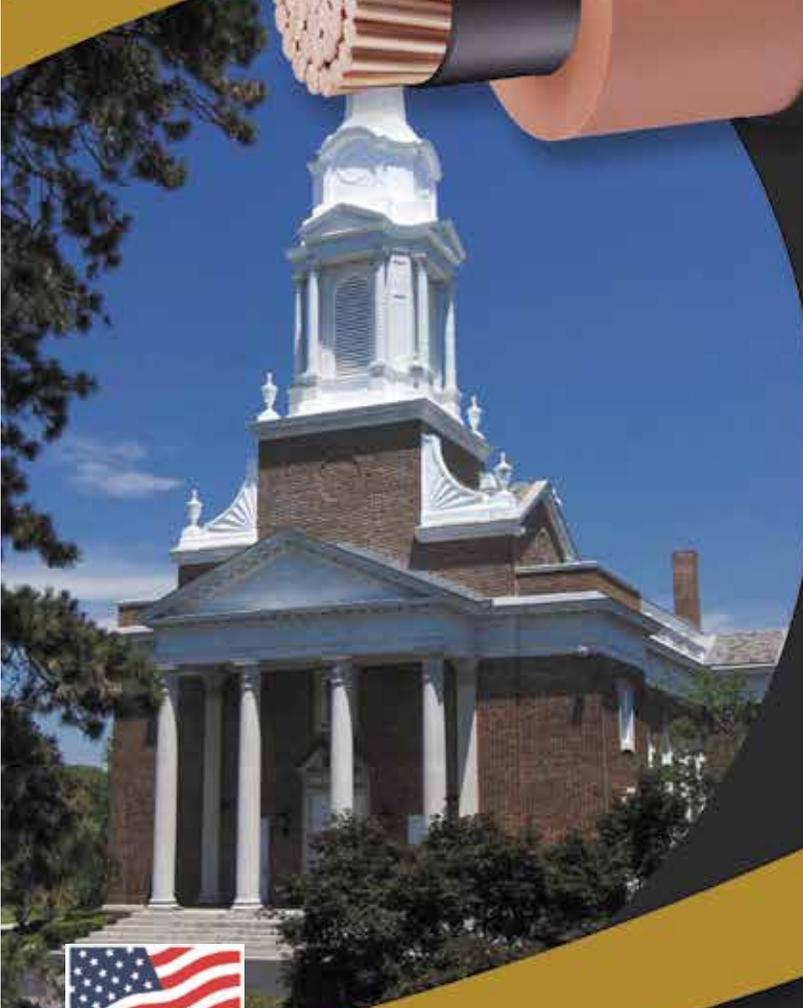
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