



The APPA BOK: A Benefit for You (and Just About Everyone at Your Institution)

By Gary L. Reynolds, P.E., APPA Fellow

Occasionally we find ourselves in need of information we may not ordinarily have at our fingertips. In the past I may have phoned a colleague, gone to the library, or dug out old textbooks and thumbed through pages to find the answer to my question. (I wouldn't dare ask my boss and show my ignorance.) This search may or may not have been successful.

Today, we can e-mail, tweet, Google, or Bing our way to thousands or millions of responses, that may or may not have relevance to our question. However, in the industry of educational facilities, our need for information is often more narrowly defined, and it would be good to have a resource that could provide answers in a more focused form.

That is where APPA's Body of Knowledge (BOK) comes into play.

A WEALTH OF RELEVANT INFORMATION

The 60 chapters in the BOK are divided into four main parts: General Administration and Management; Operations and Maintenance; Energy, Utilities, and Environmental Stewardship; and Planning, Design, and Construction. These parts cover a wide range of topics from accounting to building systems, and from construction contracts to sustainability. The chapters are written by our colleagues with many years of experience in higher education, or by business partners with specific expertise on certain topics. With the latest version of the BOK in electronic format, the

APPA staff is able to work diligently with the content coordinators and individual authors to update the electronic BOK on a continuing basis. But more important, it is instantly searchable.

For many of us long-time APPA members, our roles have changed over the years. When I moved from being mechanical engineer into roles of increasing responsibility, the type of information I required was different from my past needs and thus difficult to find. I simply didn't know where to look. In the early days of my career the research process was often difficult and time consuming. Today, a simple query in the BOK search engine can provide links to appropriate sections. For example, I just queried "architect agreements" and

Accessing the BOK:

Go to the APPA website (www.appa.org) and using your APPA credentials, and log into myAPPA. Click on the BOK link in the section called myBookstore.

Take advantage of this tremendous membership benefit and ensure that everyone in your organization can easily access the BOK. You won't regret it!



was immediately directed to the section on AIA documents in Michael Haggans' chapter, "Design Management."

Perhaps more important, the BOK is an APPA member benefit and is available to everyone within your institution, not just to your institutional representative. I'm not sure many of us understand the implications of this important benefit. As staff within our organizations get promotions or change roles, they will be facing the same dilemma I faced in my career, but now they have a resource that can quickly provide answers to questions they may have.

For example, you may ask an up-and-coming staff member to take over the recycling program. If I were that person, my first response would be, "What do I do in that capacity?" Now, a

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quick search in the BOK can lead them to multiple sections on recycling in parts 2, 3 & 4. This search took seconds and provided a wealth of information on recycling.

GETTING FROM HERE TO THERE

So how do you get access to this wonderful resource? Easy access to

the BOK by anyone at your institution may be its most important attribute. I would suggest that you show anyone who may benefit from using the BOK how to access it. Even for staff who aren't tech-savvy, you could be open to a whole new world by showing them how easy it is to access the BOK. To be sure, providing access to the type of industry-relevant information that the BOK provides can be nothing but beneficial to you, your staff, and to your institution. ☺

Gary Reynolds is a Past APPA President and assistant vice chancellor for administration at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. He can be reached at greynold@uccs.edu.

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