

## Navigating the Quagmire to Define K in Sport Event Management

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**Session 9: Other  
Presentation (25-minute)**

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**2:30 PM - 2:55 PM**

As far back as 1973, Bell noted that knowledge was situated as a central feature within our advancing society. Over the last several decades, the value of knowledge continued to escalate. Knowledge has been positioned within society as a principal force of production (Lyotard, 1984, p. 1) and the resource that aids productivity (Grant, 2002). The achievement of knowledge has advanced as a valuable commodity of the times. A race to gain knowledge has stimulated what English and Baker (2006) calls the knowledge transfer race. In this race, each individual has a primary role to acquire and transfer knowledge as the critical element for use in a sharing process. Sharing or transferring knowledge is a process used to develop even more knowledge. Drucker (1994) promoted, the fast and effective transfer of knowledge is the only truly sustainable competitive advantage (p. 10).

It seemed logical to the researchers that to participate in the transfer of knowledge one needed a definition of knowledge for the context of Sport Management and an understanding of the dimensions of knowledge that could be transferred. According to Boucher (1998), a body of knowledge needed to be distinctly tailored for the field of Sport Management. Although a large body of research has been conducted specifically for the field of Sport Management, the research has not addressed the core requirements for partaking in the knowledge transfer race. This literature gap offered an opportunity to develop a new body of knowledge in the areas of defining knowledge, mapping the dimensions of knowledge and the development of insights and understandings for the transference of knowledge as a competitive advantage in Sport Management.

Defining knowledge in Sport Management involved moving beyond dictionary definitions of knowledge that only offered general statements such as intelligent, well-informed (Collins Dictionary, 1991, p. 231) and the sum of what is known (Oxford Dictionary, 2002, p. 499). However, researchers studying knowledge cannot agree on a definition. The difficulty, according to Edvisson and Malone (1997), stemmed from the intangible nature of knowledge. The definitions of knowledge in the literature offered a quagmire of perspectives on defining knowledge for particular contexts.

This inquiry focussed on defining knowledge and mapping the dimensions of knowledge specifically for the context of Sport Event Management. The definition and understanding of dimensions of knowledge were considered by the researchers as foundational for the development of a future strategy for participating in a knowledge transfer race. This inquiry was guided by two research questions. The first was: What are the features of a conceptual theoretical framework for a definition of knowledge in Sport Event Management that surface from analyses of authoritative literature and research? The second research question was: From a definition of knowledge for the context of Sport Event Management, what features provide a conceptual map of the dimensions of knowledge in the field?

The orientation of this inquiry was grounded within a cognitive-constructivist theoretical foundation and encouraged the construction of meaning and new understandings (Wilson, 1997). Constructivism was open to the influence of interpretative reflections and experiences (Prawat & Floden, 1994). The ontological view included idealism, with a belief that a definition of knowledge and the dimensions of knowledge could be determined for the context of Sport Event Management.

The methods included data collection with multiple analyses of the authoritative literature offering perspectives on definitions of knowledge. The data analysis was aided by sensitizing concepts (Patton, p. 391), including pre-established concepts for analysis that provided a general sense of reference and directions along which to look (Blumer, 1969, p. 148). Two evaluation questions were used to guide the meaning of the definition to evolve. The data analysis framework consisted of conceptual experimentation with design flexibility that was emergent (Patton, 2002) that allowed adaptations to occur as understandings and insights were realised and the definition progressed.

The results revealed a conceptual framework for a definition of knowledge that included: SEM-K = S (SEM-CK + SEM-AK) P(C). This definition involved Sport Event Management knowledge (SEM-K) being derived from a synergy (S) between the dimensions of Sport Event Management common knowledge (SEM-CK) and advanced knowledge (SEM-AK) leading to perspicacity (P) (quick insights and understandings) that support competence (C) (actions and ability). This NASSM presentation will delineate the dimensions of Sport Event Management common and advanced knowledge that resulted in a partial knowledge map for the field.

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The implications of a definition of knowledge and a map of the dimensions of knowledge for the context of Sport Event Management include advancing the understandings and insights concerning the concept of knowledge. From this foundational research, further work is needed to develop understandings and insights concerning a strategy for transferring knowledge as a competitive advantage in Sport Event Management.