

THE POWER OF KNOWLEDGE AND INTERNAL QUALITY CHECKS: THE KELLEN COMPANY'S EXPERIENCE AND TOOLS



In the 1990s, organisational knowledge was declared a major asset - the key to an organisation's sustainable competitive advantage. Kellen values managing and investing in knowledge as much as it values more tangible assets, appointing knowledge teams to get as much value from organisational knowledge as possible.

As a premier association management company, Kellen's employees manage associations in different industry sectors and professions and advise on varied topics. Individual associations may have different objectives, but they often face common challenges (dues, governance structure, membership development, etc.) All associations can benefit from existing expertise. Kellen feels it is key to share knowledge within the company, making it accessible to all, and taking advantage of a cross-fertilisation approach.

Knowledge is not just data and information, it derives from minds at work. In most cases it is not documented so organising the sharing of knowledge is essential.

Kellen uses various tools to accomplish this:

+ Monthly Knowledge Sharing Sessions: Colleagues with specific expertise in a sector or topic present views and experience to the rest of the staff. These sessions allow for brainstorming, encouraging the

exchange of best practices.

+ Knowledge Matrix: Colleagues with particular experience are identified, and can be called upon to maximum advantage when needed.

+ Global Best Practices Manual: Topics such as contract procedures, client communications, service delivery, financials, and insurance coverage are covered. A separate manual documents the more strategic knowledge of Kellen's account executives.

+ Global Business Groups: Members of all five offices share information on specific sectors or topics (e.g. food, construction, PR, Marketing) ensuring that knowledge is shared globally.

+ Leadership Conference: All 190 employees convene in Atlanta once a year for three days of extensive training, exchanging best practices and other skills.

Throughout the years, Kellen has developed several tools to check the quality and effectiveness of its services. These tools adapt to associations' evolving needs and help retain clients.

+ Association Survey: This is submitted yearly to the association's President, Vice-President, Board and Chairmen of working groups, aiming to:

a) evaluate the association's satisfaction with

“KNOWLEDGE IS NOT JUST DATA AND INFORMATION, IT DERIVES FROM MINDS AT WORK. IN MOST CASES IT IS NOT DOCUMENTED SO ORGANISING THE SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE IS ESSENTIAL.”

- the quality of services and their understanding/perception of added-value functions ;
- b) assess if the association's needs have changed or will change allowing Kellen to adapt the value proposition to the new needs of the association
 - c) assess the effectiveness of the structure established between Kellen and the association (helping to provide the association with value).

+ Activities Management Report: The dedicated team produces a quarterly management report on the Secretariat's activities with appropriate recommendations, to management

+ Client Team Meetings: The dedicated team holds weekly internal meetings not only in order to allocate tasks and ensure the finalisation of all planned activities, but also to share experiences and best practices

+ Ensuring high quality of output and deliverables: By sharing experience, best practice and any specialised training among staff employees, Kellen ensures that services performed are of excellent quality. High employee retention within Kellen also contributes to the high quality of deliverables.

+ Examination of the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Associations - the EuroConference: Kellen is organising the 7th EuroConference on 28 February in Brussels (www.kelleneurope.com/euroconference) - a unique academic research and professional forum in Europe dedicated to examining and measuring the factors that affect the association's efficiency and to identifying best models of operation. For the first time this year the EuroConference will feature a plenary session, morning speakers and four afternoon breakout sessions on issues such as Governance, Association Advocacy, Operating Globally and Media Engagement.

The knowledge and the quality tools developed by the Kellen Company ensure that Kellen achieves its mission: "to exceed client expectations through a commitment to excellence".