



Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management

Global Body of Knowledge (GBOK) Project

“The standard” to practice public relations and communication management

Version 2.03(1), July 2015

Introduction

Global Body of Knowledge (GBOK) Project

This document is the result of extensive analysis and examination of over 31 credential schemes, education frameworks and scholarly work in the area of communication management and public relations. It was developed in 2015 at the request of Global Alliance member organizations that wished to examine the possibility of setting a global standard for the practice of public relations and communication management.

During the first phase of the project, research identified that there is a high degree of matching across the credentialing, education frameworks and other research examined from Global Alliance organizations. It allowed for the development of a first draft list of knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviours (KSABs) reflecting the content of current frameworks, many of which have been in existence for many years.

This second draft is the result of the inaugural presentation at the June 2015 Global Alliance leaders workshop where over 40 leaders of public relations and communication management associations were present and offered comments. This 2.0 version will be used for a consultation period between July and September 2015 and posted on [Google Drive](#).

What we need to do now is to create a forward-looking competency and capability framework that captures contemporary KSABs and those that will be needed in the future. For example, a current hard trend is the commoditization of public relations tasks (think UBER and AirBnB) and just around the corner, the ability to interact with robotic tools that are able to auto-generate text.

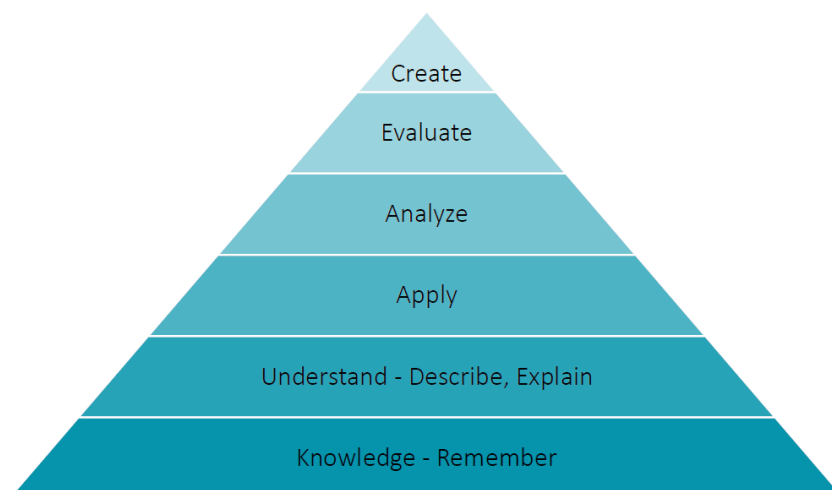
Project team leader Jean Valin (jvalin@videotron.ca) and Global Alliance Chair Gregor Halff (gregor.halff@esmt.org) are available for webinars or seminars with Global Alliance member organizations and other interested parties.

About this proposed GBOK

The document is organized in the following manner:

- **Knowledge** is the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject. A comprehensive list of knowledge (K) areas that is common to the two levels of practice described: entry level (officer or junior level in early career) and mid-career (experienced or senior professional and or manager). The knowledge elements (K) underpin the skills (S) and abilities (A) elements described in the diagram below.
- **Foundation** skills and abilities that are seen as universal and essential to practice anywhere in the world. These are considered the essential elements of the GBOK.
- **Skills** are the proficiencies developed through training or experience.
- Abilities are the qualities of being able to do something. There is a fine line between skills and abilities. Most people would say the differentiator is whether the thing in question was learned or innate. Skills (S) and abilities (A) elements are necessary to offer excellence in practice.
- **Behaviours** (B) put abilities and skills into practice.
- The organization of the GBOK is a variation and adaption of Bloom's taxonomy of learning. The knowledge areas (K) are at the bottom of the pyramid and stand alone in our GBOK. The skills (S) and abilities (A) are part of the other elements of the pyramid. See Bloom's taxonomy diagram.
- Some KSAB statements have been kept broad by design to aid in adoption on a global scale. It is understood that organizations that would adopt the GBOK would be able to add specificity to statements when required in their country. Conversely, some KSAB statements are quite specific reflecting a perceived need to be clear and purposeful.

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Bloom's Taxonomy (Revised)
Based on an APA adaptation of Anderson, L.W. & Krathwohl, D.R. (Eds.) (2001)
Source: American Psychological Association

In this project we have described KSAB elements for two levels:

- Entry-level
- Mid-career or senior level

The assessment tool (see below) can be used to assess an individual's proficiency in those areas. The proficiency levels are used to describe an individual's capability with respect to each of the knowledge, skill and abilities content areas described on GBOK.

The GBOK entry-level KSABs reflect levels 1-4.

The senior level reflects KSAs consistent with levels 4 and 5. The chart below is a standard assessment tool that is an application of Bloom's taxonomy.

Level 0	Unaware	To have exposure to or knowledge of:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have I ever heard of these topics at all?• Have I only heard about these topics in a casual conversation?
Level 1	Aware	To have experienced or been exposed to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have I had some organized introduction or instruction on these topics?• Have I used some of these topics in my work?• Can I tell myself what these topics really mean?
Level 2	Ready	To be able to participate in and contribute to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do I know enough about these topics that I can comprehend what other people mean?• Can I participate in give-and-take dialogue on these topics?• Have I ever participated in an event when this topic was used?• Did I contribute to the discussion or action surrounding this topic?
Level 3	Capable	To be able to understand and explain:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To whom could I explain these topics? What would I actually tell them?• Have I ever actually explained any of these topics to someone else?• Have I written something about these topics?• Have I given a presentation where I explained these topics or needed these topics to explain about a workforce program activity?

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- Level 4 **Skilled** To be skilled in the practice or implementation of:
- Have I applied my knowledge in this area? How did I apply it?
 - Was I able to improve my program by applying my knowledge in this area?
 - Have I applied my knowledge more than once?
 - Did I learn new things about this area by applying my knowledge?
- Level 5 **Expert** To be able to lead or innovate in:
- Have I ever lead a workforce program in this area?
 - Have I taught someone else about these topics?
 - Have I discovered new knowledge that has improved this area?

Vision

The Global Alliance members see an opportunity to strengthen and unify the profession globally through the adoption of a global standard that sets out a reference point or standard to practice communication and public relations around the world. Developed on a consensus basis by GA members, it will be proposed for adoption at an Annual meeting of the GA following an extensive consultation period in 2015-16.

How can professional bodies use the GBOK?

Professional bodies can use the GBOK both as curriculum standards and a credential scheme checklist.

Credential schemes

A defined Body of Knowledge (BOK) is the core element of a credential scheme. It is a base or starting point from which examination processes and credential program entry criteria can be established. It also provides a comprehensive checklist for participants who can self-assess their readiness to enter the process, knowing that the examination process will verify competency in the KSABs described in the BOK. The GBOK is being proposed as a strategy to achieve the vision.

The Global Alliance does not offer a credential. GA member organizations can offer a credential based (or-re-based) on the GBOK. It is up to GA member organizations to decide if they wish to adopt the GBOK, notify the GA of their intention to use the GBOK and, if further discussions reach a consensus, register their successful candidates in a global registry of qualified professionals.

Given that in reality the profession has not developed in the same manner in all countries, it is proposed that for credentials and curriculum standard purposes, the foundation elements of the KSABs described in the GBOK be mandatory while the balance of the KSABs be applied using a weight factor set by national or local bodies offering a credential. The weight assigned to KSAB elements would reflect the percentage of questions or evaluation processes found in a credential scheme.

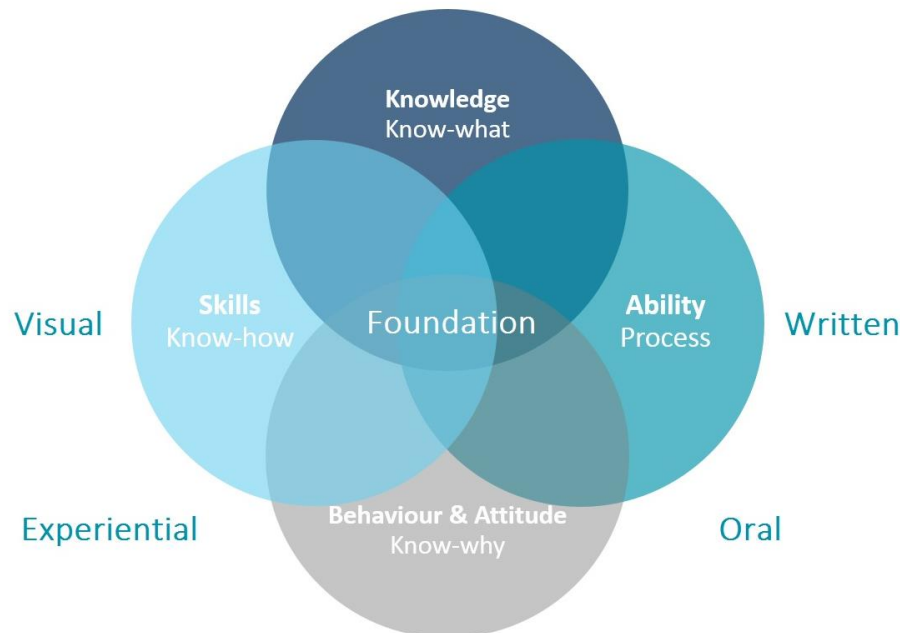
Curriculum standards

The KSABs proposed for entry-level positions or entry-level credentials can be used to describe undergraduate level learning outcomes that are at the core of curriculum development in universities and colleges. The entry-level KSABs offer a way to describe what is expected in a first job in public relations or communication for a variety of roles.

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Conceptual Framework

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Early career or entry-level roles

Our research identified two types of work - technical or managerial - and twelve roles typical of an entry level or early career in public relations:

- Account or client management
- Strategic planning
- Public relations program planning
- Project management
- Media relations
- Social media relations
- Issue management
- Crisis management
- Internal or employee communication
- Special event, conferences and meetings
- Community relations
- Stakeholder relations

Mid-career or senior roles

Our research identified the following roles as typical of a more experienced professional and of senior professionals:

- Reputation management
- Government relations and public affairs
- Evaluation and measurement
- Definition of values and guiding principles
- Building and managing trust
- Advanced environmental scanning and trend identification
- Evaluative research
- Building and managing trust
- Issue identification

Contact information

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