

## **Towards an IKM (Int. Knowledge Management) Certification Program by ICKM**

### **Objectives**

A KM (Knowledge Management) certificate sets a standard in the field. As such, it has to address a network of knowledge claims about a domain of practice that has emerged with consensus support from those communities driving the development of the field. Those claims comprise

- Conceptual frameworks, such as the Knowledge Life Cycle
- A settled ontology, including basic terms, such as knowledge
- A set of methods addressing the various KM dimensions, such as Repertory Grids for individual externalization of tacit knowledge
- Work practices to establish a credible body of knowledge, including a KM project and process methodology

Knowledge Management is about generating, distributing, and evaluating knowledge. It (re)shapes knowledge creation and processing, addressing knowledge production rules and processes. It is a convivial approach for all societal systems participating in continuous testing and evaluation of knowledge claims, including the certification itself. Sustainable knowledge management has to be a self-referential endeavor. Questioning rules and already reached consensus is an integral part of KM. Such capabilities for meta-analysis require emphatic and deconstruction skills, such as active listening and contextual reflection.

The ICKM (International Council on Knowledge Management) has bundled Knowledge Management experts and their capabilities over a period of years. They have monitored the evaluation and validation of assumptions, frameworks, methods, and work practice, both, from the scientific and practical perspective. The council's proponents have monitored the development of KM knowledge since its very beginning, recognizing and managing the diversity of the field.

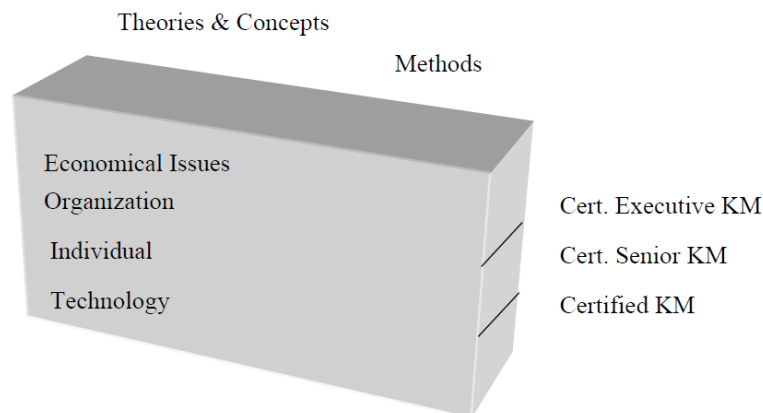
Due to the origins and specific, since multidimensional nature of KM any certification program needs to allow reflecting and practicing persons with different backgrounds to qualify for KM. Those backgrounds might refer to economics, technology, engineering, cognitive sciences, work sciences, social sciences, and related fields. The certification shall document the capability to be able to intertwine at least two KM dimensions, either conceptually or practically, given the economic, social, organizational, and technical perspective on KM.

## The Program

The 3-layer certification program aims to establish and promote quality standards for all types of business cases in knowledge management. The IKM (International Knowledge Management) certificate should guarantee some common understanding of KM for business developers and researchers. The program considers the depth and the width of KM relevant for the qualified use of methods:

- 1 *Technology – Organization – Individuals – Economical Issues*: Since methods finally focus on one of these dimensions, e.g., BSC on economic, each of these dimensions has to be understood in terms of its significance and methodological capabilities. In fact, KM touches several dimensions whenever a method is applied, either directly (e.g., business process improvement concerning the organization of work) or indirectly (e.g., exchange analysis referring to communication affecting the organization of work).
- 2 *Theories & Concepts – Methods*: Theories and concepts set up frameworks. They provide the context of methods and method developments. The more theoretical underpinnings and conceptual knowledge about methods can be provided, the more KM activities can be set in a coherent way. On the other hand, theories or concepts can evolve without being linked explicitly to methods. For instance, systems thinking is not bound to a certain method, but can be applied in various contexts, and thus be implemented by a variety of methods.

The certification program can be illustrated along a cube, once the levels of qualification are considered.



**Fig. 1** Relevant dimensions

The types of certificates are mutually dependent. Senior KM requires, both, successful Fundamental KM, and Intermediate KM. Intermediate KM requires Fundamental KM. The overall amount of credit points provided by the program is at least 40:

- Certified Knowledge Manager: at least 5 credit points
- Certified Senior Knowledge Manager: at least 15 credit points
- Certified Executive Knowledge Manager: at least 20 credit points

### ***Certified Knowledge Manager***

This layer comprises social, organizational and technical skills, both in terms of conceptual background and method application. The conceptual background is composed of basic knowledge in fundamental schools of KM, such as Nonaka et al.'s SECI approach, in order to understand the origin and objectives of the field. Fundamental KM qualifies persons to participate in KM projects, and to be involved in KM activities focusing on one of the four dimensions (technology, social, economic, organizational).

KM certification leads to

- a paradigmatic understanding of the current knowledge management system generation, e.g., Value Networks, by being able to articulate its main contribution to KM in own terms and activities. Proficiency in fundamental terms of KM is required.
- differentiating technological, social, cognitive, and economical aspects of KM by being able to assign the methods to the concerned dimension(s)
- the capability to apply at least 4 KM-methods addressing economical, technological, individual, and organizational aspects in an integrative way through training in dedicated case studies for each method application (mini case studies)

A corresponding qualification scheme would have not less than 5 credit points or any equivalent.

### ***Certified Senior Knowledge Manager***

This qualification step widens and deepens both, method and concept qualification. In addition to the fundamental skills the intertwining of aspects becomes crucial. Besides widening the conceptual knowledge, this certificate targets towards in-depth knowledge of methods and their interfaces in the course of complex KM problem solving processes.

Senior KM certification leads to

- the capability to reconstruct the main paradigms of the current knowledge management system generation, including Systems Thinking, Value Networks, and Knowledge Life Cycle.
- The application of at least 10 KM methods, addressing at least two KM aspects,

trained through case studies for each method application (analogously to fundamental KM).

- The capability to perform a mini project involving at least 2 methods addressing two different aspects of KM.

A corresponding qualification scheme would have not less than 15 credit points or any equivalent.

### ***Certified Executive Knowledge Manager***

This layer ensures the reflectivity and superiority to develop the field of KM, both at the concept, and the method level. Executive knowledge managers are familiar with aligning several dimensions along a complex KM project. They are able to guide and lead KM (system) developments at a KM program level due to their in-depth understanding of project management.

Executive KM certification leads to the

- capability to reflect and analyze novel approaches towards next KM system's generation in light of the main paradigms of the current knowledge management system generation.
- acquisition of deep understanding in one application domain, such as knowledge work or intellectual property, including a thorough conceptual and methodological understanding of that domain
- capability to perform an organizational learning step for/in an organization by means of a KM project / program in the role of the responsible project /program manager.

A corresponding qualification scheme would have not less than 20 credit points or any equivalent

### ***Certification and Certification Procedure***

The aim of ICKM is to establish the Knowledge Manager as a profession. Each person who wishes to apply for a certificate (at all levels) is allowed to do so. The only precondition is adequate practical experience or a bachelor degree. Thus, the certificate is on personal level and not dependent from any courses or programs. Therefore, the certificate has to be renewed each 5 years when people are not working in this profession. Certificates for people working in the profession will be extended by request.

Programs or courses are allowed to offer the ICKM certificate as part of their examination or

as part of the course respectively. However, they have to involve the local certification agency for this procedure. Each candidate undergoes a certification test. For the Fundamental test this is a multiple choice test. For the other stages (Senior, Executive) the test is composed of two parts – a written and an oral part. The latter requires a senate with two experts determined by the local certification agency which works on behalf of the International Council of Knowledge Management, one of them an academic, one of them a practitioner.

For the written exam part, open and closed questions have to be answered in not more than 2 hours. The test person is not allowed to use any prepared notes or information device. The oral part comprises the presentation of a practical project.

The local certification agency has to provide the necessary infrastructure. The test language is English or a national language. ICKM board is licensing one local certification agency. The quality of the test and the test procedure need to be monitored from independent experts nominated by ICKM. .

### ***Preparation***

Preparation for certification has to be performed by the applicants individually, either by booking KM courses or by subscribing KM curricula. However, the certification agency might advise certain curricula and/or courses for preparation.

### ***Candidate Application procedure***

Candidates can apply at any KM certification agency, working on behalf of ICKM. Agencies have the right to set up exams at specific times. Agencies are selected by the ICKM directly.

### ***Test procedure***

The participants are supervised through the entire test. They might train on prepared examples before starting the test. The participants have to be identified by legally recognized ID documents, such as the passport. Then the participants are given time to complete the test.

The tests cannot be performed on the same day like preparation courses.

### ***Results***

The test results have to be made available within two weeks after taking the test. In case of failure sufficient feedback has to be provided to the respective candidate. It has to be provided in a way that candidates can improve their performances. In case of success, the certificate has to be handed to the participants.

**Theories & Concepts, e.g. from**

- Senge, Scharmer, Argyris, Schoen, Kim, Oesterle, Bach, Allee, Firestone, McElroy, Nonaka, Takeuchi, Von Krogh, Probst, Romhardt, Snowden, Prusak, Kaplan, Drucker, Edvinsson and others

**are fundamental to understand and reflect challenges on all levels of the knowledge paradigm, such as**

Knowledge Society, Knowledge Politics and Knowledge Economics, Knowledge Law  
Knowledge Strategies, Knowledge Organisation, Knowledge Processes Knowledge Work,  
Knowledge Leadership, Knowledge Culture Knowledge Processes and Knowledge  
Engineering, Knowledge Networking Individual Knowledge Work, Knowledge Space  
(Ba)

## **Methods – in order to master the challenges**

The following list is exemplary, not taxative.

### Addressing elicitation

- World Café
- Critical Incident Technique
- Repertory Grid Technique
- Mind Mapping
- DeBono's 4 hats
- Storytelling
- 3,6,9
- Brainstorming
- Knowledge Audit
- Blog
- Wikis
- Microarticle
- Rich Pictures
- Structure elaboration techniques (concept mapping, morphological settings)

### Addressing representation and processing

- XML + metadata representation schemas
- Transformation languages
- Causal chain diagrams
- Mind Map
- Concept Map
- Topic Map
- RDF
- BPMN (BPEL)
- UML
- Holomap

- Social ware

#### Addressing analysis

- exchange analysis
- impact analysis
- knowledge creation analysis
- cultural due diligence

#### Addressing social processes

- Dialog (David Bohm)
- Moderation
- Active Listening
- Fish Bowl
- Marketplace
- Paying methods
- Incentive schemes
- COP
- Socialware
- Open Space
- Knowledge Bar

#### Addressing value management

- Magic Shop
- Scorecard Methods (BSC, EFQM, KM Balance Sheet etc)
- Monetary Methods (SHV, EVA, MVA, Tobin, DCF etc.)



## Curriculum Description Template Elements

- Contact and Responsibles
- Objectives
- Origin and Background
- Market Context (Non/Profit)
- Duration
- Concept and Structure (study paths)
- Courses (Methods, Theories Concepts addressed within)
- Practical Work (Case Studies, Thesis a.t.l.)
- Formal Organization including institutional context (admission procedure, study support program etc.)
- Degree(s)
- Validity

## Course description template elements

- Contact and Responsible(s)
- Name of the course
- Name of the lecturer(s)
- Prerequisites for Participants
- Timetable
- Format: face-to-face, web-based, combined o.s.
- Credits in terms of standardized credit points
- Relationship to Curriculum (if any) or other Courses (if any)
- Objectives
- Relationship to existing KM framework
- Methods that are addressed
- Material to be Used
- Content
- Procedure / Learning Design
- Assignment(s)