

THE PUBLIC ROAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES TOWARDS KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract:

Our analysis realizes an incursion regarding the problems about forming and perfecting human resources from the public administration, pointing out that – although it registers a superior quantitative evolution – the effects, on being consistent with the level registered in Europe, are minim. Also, it’s attempted an establishment of some well defined connections between information and the training process, in the content of functioning organization based on knowledge.

And last but not least, it’s emphasized the central point’s shifting; in the case of using informational technologies in administration, from producing (procuring) information, to their efficient transformation and revaluation; through an operative and easy transfer towards the beneficiaries connected to the state of knowledge.

Key words: organization, information, knowledge, training, public administration.

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INTRODUCTION

The financial support granted by the European Union (EU) – through the Operational Program “The development of Human Resources” – creates superior conditions for a new and modern approach to the problem of forming and perfecting members of the public or private organizations.

However, we ascertain that, although for many years, the development of human resources has benefited from this support, the effects are quite modest, usually the “profiteers” of this measure are the forming institutions or certain trainers.

We believe that this situation is due, mainly, to the absence of specific strategies and to precise targets, as well as coordination, at different levels, of the efficient use of the pre-adhesion funds.

More over, the cooperation and correlation of those programs with public education institutions were sporadic and they pursued small and personal interests.

In these conditions, even at public administration level – where there are acknowledged institutions and specific programs and strategies – the personal development remains more an individual preoccupation rather than a major target of the human resources management.

THE RODE OF PUBLIC OFFICERS TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN ADMINISTRATIVE SPACE

We are passing through, even in these moments of acute financial crises, a boost period of professional perfection – including under the form of masters degree or other forms of superior education – without having the certainty of obtaining some pluses in personal or professional development.

We state this thing because, on long term, such measures can be considered useful and inefficient, as long as there are not achieved according to the coordinates and at the level imposed by the demands of forming public officers!

Because, paradoxical, event at the top level of administration (management officers and high public officers), perfection doesn't happen always according to international standards and to a European level theme.

Even in best cases – of context prepares and with European structures – we can find a rejection reaction (including at government and parliament levels) regarding different “heterogeneous bodies” generated this way – from the YPS category of public managers or counsellor of European businesses (Crişan, 2001 – 1).

On this matter, the current situation of this people is significant, most of these young specialists are distributed (let's not say wasted!) in different public organizations, at different levels, loosing their trace and even their naming.

Moreover, there have been cases in which it was disputed the usefulness of the existence of such elite officers and employees similar – regarding training, mentality, thinking and way of acting – to the Europeans.

From these type of phenomena, to the maintenance of an old and rigid system (or the refusal of trenchant changes) “the road” seems more logic and of course quite short.

In these conditions, in most cases, the eventual transformations (reforms) of the administration have been unessential and without substance; so that, the Romanian administrative system functions mostly as difficult as before with minimum chances of being integrated in the European administrative system.

Because even tough they were applied, the changes have been “Romanianased” excessively, being conditioned by too many inter-human influences which limit performance and advantaged the commodity, “commitment”, perseverance of old values, “mutual advantageous gains”, and so on.

From this point of view, we appreciate that the intervention of superior factors or a modern legislation doesn't contribute – even though there are monitoring, control and penalty actions – to limiting these phenomenon.

There are some important observations, because they condition and influence the content and the forms of the knowledge process (initiation, forming and professional perfection), as well as the intensity and the level of the proposed objectives.

If we take an actual example we can ascertain that, although, in appearance we see the existence of a real “boom” in the field of professional forming and perfection due to the National Administrative Institute (NAI) and to its territorial structures, there are several things that the authorities should consider concerning their future implications and the attitude of future “European officers” in their transformation process (Crişan, 2007 – 2, pp. 138-151):

- courses can be taught by anyone and they can contain any type of information;
- under the pretext of the so called forming decentralization there aren't any precise structures (in different fields) that are accepted and applied, so that the courses can be held by lecturers that have different levels of training and various methods of teaching;
- there are no serious (and invariable) attempts to generalize good practices and to apply successful patterns (which have proved to be viable solutions to the problems raised by the communities), which automatically means a waist of resources, time and intelligence in finding solutions that really exist and can be operatively and easily applied;
- moreover, the EU money are often managed (see the Operational Programs) towards things and projects that have been already implemented in other parts of the country, instead of using them, at a superior productivity, towards new solutions;
- there should be found other ways of developing and stimulating the interest for innovation, including through introducing new as a criteria of career evolution and

appreciation, or by granting awards and financial stimulants for the proposals for improving the organizations activity;

- also, it would worth to test – through some pilot projects – all the daring ideas for modernization, if they prove to be viable, at all the levels in the organization;

- perhaps, with all this effort, we should start with the most simple thing – supplementing the small percent of the personnel costs, used for the training and perfecting the public officers, which should be directed towards the production of some CD's, courses, data bases with good examples from practice, modern e-learning systems and others;

- it would be interesting the idea to impose – at all public administration levels – of communitarian structures in every field of action, parallel with the elaboration of courses and manuals (at European level) which could offer fundamental notions unanimously accepted in the continental administrative space;

- we must analyze the monopolization efficiency of NAI and other organizations subordinated to the public officers training system, especially because in certain strategies, the institution should train only certain categories of employees (managing public officers, public managers, trainers for the future trainers, prefects and middle-prefects, management officers, “probationers”);

- there isn't always a correlation between the specific of courses and the actual activity of the participants in administration, which leads to a decreased efficiency and quality of the lecturer's performance and creates difficulties in adapting the shared knowledge;

- the evaluation is often made only based on inconclusive tests and not based on small project/studies adapted to the situation from LPA, with proposed solutions that would solve problems (as an actual effect of the received knowledge);

- referring to the management public officers, there is an “inflation” of post-college and masters degree training course organized in public or state colleges; this is a reason for us to plead for the idea that at the professional file of the public officers (specially at management level) to matter only the training forms realized in common or with the approval of the NAI, based on programs accepted at national level and held by professional lecturers or doctors in that field or persons that have worked in public administration).

In this context it becomes interesting the point of view related to the necessity of creating and operating a system of continuous training – based on the existent patterns in the studies and practices of prestigious European institutions – which should include the compulsory 4 levels of forming (Matei, 2004, pp. 3-7)

- Level 1 – training preceding the recruitment, according to the necessity of training potential public officers (high-schools, colleges);

- Level 2 – initial general forming, which is suitable to the basic administrative education, offering basic knowledge to possible public officers or beginners in the form of initial training programs or professional reconverting, of profile institutions and universities;

- Level 3 - training to adapt at the job, after recruitment, which allows thoroughness regarding the professional requests specific for the current activity, through programs that take place in profile institutions or in universities;

- Level 4 – continuum training, which refers to perfecting practices or to periodical knowledge update, that take place in certain short term programs inside the network of specialized institutes, or based on career plans and demands of a public position.

The proposal presents a high rate of interest because it can form a solution for a strategic thinking of the human resources management (and of their careers) and in other fields of activity.

Implicitly, we can notice – in this type of system – learning represents one of the major stakes that stand before humans in the third millennium, opinion shared by more and more intellectual circles (Michel, 2000).

Through continuum learning, humans discover what they should do in order to learn more, and the society, it self, is transformed by every new accumulated knowledge.

But here consumption imposes the appearance and the development of an information production and, implicitly, a demand of some authentic industrial markets.

In the game between demand and supply appears and it is even imposed a new philosophy and a new management of information, of informational and documentation systems, having as main components the content selection, its process (for a pertinent use) and managing the information technologies.

We have to mention that learning and forming have to be made efficiently, in an appropriate environment of organizations based on knowledge, capable to ensure conditions for the transformation of their own members into real citizens of the Informational Society.

In this content, school and university have to accomplish, in fact, only the optimum framework in order to ensure conditions for learning and forming.

The real problem – raised especially now – is to guide and to direct this process towards the coordinates of the actual (and perspective) development of the Romanian society in the national space, as well as in the European space.

That is why we consider that – from the crossing to the perspective of knowledge based organizations – it would be extremely good to elaborate and to support certain national forming and learning projects that would stake out including the financing attributed through structural funds (circumscribed to major needs and problems of general interest).

Unfortunately, the financial resources are quite limited, therefore – especially in the knowledge area – we can't afford the luxury to waste them on useless things, losing at the same time important time resources in the effort to reduce the development differences compared to other countries.

And in this content, in previous programs, training to learn how to document yourself and to inform should have an essential role.

We consider that the will to learn more it isn't decisive, but the manner in which we know how to learn is more important.

The informational explosion, the complexity of the documenting operations, the necessity of a better administration and of a new management of documenting units imposes not only a rigorous defining of responsibility levels, but also a different organizational vision (including from the perspective of hiring experienced personnel).

Unfortunately, at the present time, the professional content of this type of activity is limited, in most organizations, to the preoccupations included in the classical circuit – document acquisition, sorting and indexing them, giving access to users at magazines and books – that are accomplished by one person.

Or, in the great documenting centres, it already functions a real work division (acquirers, cataloguers, computer persons), and the new informing technologies bring to mater new professions and activities – administrator of structural documentation, specialist in electronic archivist, speed governor of electronic forums, manager and creator of web-sites – that ensure the development of new connections between information, documentation, archives and the institute's culture.

Transforming information into knowledge presumes a graduated crossing from production logic to the one about information use and capitalization, which would implicitly mean the incorporation of an added value to information products and services.

The information will become a product that has to be adapted to different needs – from providing information (survey, counselling, supervision) to a mix between informing and documenting (administrating informational systems, creating supporting systems for decisions, animating the expert groups), which will generate new diffusing ways.

Considering these mutations the public organizations are relatively prepared!

In fact, the informing process – in most activities from the public sector – refer to the assimilated legislation, realized through individual meanings, as an output of a self-perfecting process and not as an effect of an organizational culture based on the constant assimilation of the new.

“The salvation of the situation” – in this case too – has come (and is still coming) through the “miraculous” internet connection, or sometimes through some Intranet networks or debate groups, which is understated regarding the expectations of the administrations role of promoter and catalyst of progress and of the new.

A common explanation for this state of things – convincing if they are between some limits – is activity orientation from most of the public organizations exclusively towards obeying the law (Crişan, 2007 – 3, pp. 170-178) and towards satisfying general interest.

But in reality – in the emphasized autonomy and decentralization conditions – the local public administration is called, mainly to ensure and to coordinate everything related to the well functioning of the community, including carrying out quality services accessible to any citizen.

This imposes that the informing – and consequently, forming – to be registered on other coordinates, more complex, with a more pronounced dynamic, dictated by the appearance of “competition” in the public sector (for example, accessing communitarian funds).

It is still an open debate at what measure a good informing creates premises for an appropriate forming, regarding demands that are shared to the community, especially for a durable development generated by an action.

Another complex action is finding the suitable ways (and accepted by the citizens) to extrapolate this informing-forming process beyond the “boundaries” of their own organizations, extending it to the community through different communication instruments.

The way we resolve these problems can influence the reform process based on knowledge, that attracts not only public organizations (mainly administration), but the community members also, that are the beneficiaries of the administration measures, as well as the main supporters (especially financial).

No doubt, especially in the actual period, under the pressure (and through) modern technologies, modern information methods are becoming more powerful, diversified and complex, in an evolution from data bases to extremely complex systems.

This pressure is applied to the public organizations, which must offer an adequate response to some major trends – that appear more often in the society that the administration is managing – and that implicitly create a set of important expectations that the citizens have.

It also important that the reference of expectations and reactions to be related to the superior community in which we are integrating (EU), making the citizens understand that there have to be made some major changes of their way of living and in their actions.

CONCLUSIONS

In these conditions, we are convinced that – at public organization’s level – the battle for knowledge can not exist without immediate achievements of some major

desideratum – introducing performance evaluation advanced systems for the human resources and of a modern officers career management, appliance in public administration of a management based on the concept of the 3 E (officers have to work not only good, but legally too, and especially efficient) and the realization of a public management that promotes – at authority level, as well as at citizen level – informing and knowledge as a major support in implementation of the new and in the participation to the decision process.

Just knowing everything that is new doesn't solve the reforming the old problem, because we need to solve simultaneously several complex problems – from increasing the legit capacity of expression of the employees, to dialogue and involvement of partners from the technical field, and to optimum social communication with the great audience.

In fact, from the knowledge perspective, it should be created a real informational culture, which allows every citizen to take a better position (even closer to its own goals), as well as the members of the informational system.

In order to assimilate it we need a mentality change, mandatory for the functioning of organizations based on knowledge and innovation.

Otherwise, how would we reach the fundamental objectives of such an organization as long as its members aren't convinced by the need of knowing more, of knowing how to do things faster and better?

Besides, there isn't yet a firm response to the natural question – informing generates implicitly forming?

Because, especially in the conditions of “information vulgarization” – respectively of the opening of the informational sources towards the world – forming an individual can't be limited only to a simple knowledge transfer.

Even though it tends to become permanent and the informational technologies allow the overcoming of geographic and temporal borders, in need being able to ensure a forming, in real time, beyond the time and space barriers and the financial resources.

Such a conclusion imposes a complex and an immediate analysis of the future forming missions of the education units, but also of their functions and services, parallel with the difference between producing and transmitting information – as knowledge elements – and their consolidation in the form of informational and formational products with a high rate of transfer.

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