

Managerial culture between the globalization's challenges and management education drama in Romania

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The XXIst century will be the century of the globalization. From a managerial perspective, the most important challenges of globalization process are: the global market, entrepreneurship and strategic vision. In dealing with these challenges, the managerial meritocracy is confronted with the need of renewing more often its knowledge and abilities.

A Globalization's challenges demand new managerial abilities

Based upon a presentation given by Rosabeth Moss Kanter at Harvard Business School in the summer of 1998¹ and on our own reflections, we consider that mastering the exponential dynamic of business environment in a global market demands managers possessing a mix of *seven abilities* ("7A" model):

1. Ability to assess the gap between the actual and potential performance of the organization. The idea is the organizational performance should be compared neither with its past dimensions, nor with those of competitors, but with the potential one;
2. Ability of "kaleidoscopic" thinking helpful in building new models from known modules. In such a thinking, the innovation - as the organization's *modus vivendi* -, becomes the art of challenging the hypothesis and traditions;
3. Ability to give the employees the sense of their organization's mission;
4. Ability to create partnerships and transform them in strategic "assets" of the company (suppliers, middlemen, customers should be perceived as the "extended" family of the organization);
5. Ability to induce in employees, the feeling of being co-owners of the organization (in order to get the synergic effect of the activity);
6. Ability to overcome the obstacles and crisis (the success belongs to those who know and are able to insist on achieving their objectives);

¹ R.M.Kanter, *Frontiers of Management: Strategic Challenges for Next Century*, 1998, Executive Education Reunion, Presentation on May 31, 1998

7. Ability to recognize and reward the team members' involvement and commitment.

B Dramatic context of the managerial education in Romania

Learning the "7 A" model is a major managerial education issue. In Romania this issue is dramatic, due to the fact that managerial education must be almost entirely renewed. Why? On one hand, after 1990, the Romanian higher economic education had to be rapidly and essentially restructured, in order to answer the requirements of a fundamental different economy than the central planned one. To a certain extent, the academic competence of the teaching staff has offered a solution to this issue. But, it is sure the professional training of the managers is susceptible of major adjustments, especially in the case of those graduating before 1990 (who represent the vast majority of the Romanian managers).

On the other hand, there is a great deficit of continuing education in management, the actual alternative being, almost exclusively, the formal and primary professional education. This deficit tends to grow due to some secondary effects of transition: decline of motivation for learning, rise of budgetary pressures on higher education or big economic gaps between counties. When existing, continuing education in management is in incipient forms and concentrated in big, traditional academic centers. This restricts the possibility of upgrading the knowledge and abilities of managers running companies in smaller towns.

Under these circumstances, in Romania there is a huge educational market in management.

C A solution ?

The problem described above could be solved through lifelong learning and updated education in management. The educational market in management could be satisfied by centers of continuing education. These centers should try to overcome the boundary between academic education and practical-professional training, based on competition and quality. The business environment itself requires the lifelong learning as the main challenge and, in the same time, as the most important characteristic of future specialists.

Being aware of this requirement, the governments of many European countries put the continuing education in the core of their educational policies. 1996 has been the "European Year of Continuing Education". Also, the document of the Worldwide Conference of Higher Education (Paris, 1998) strongly recommends the principle of lifelong education as the most important feature of the

educational systems. These are only a few examples proving the continuing learning is a huge European educational market.

Following this European trend, Romania wants to transform the continuous education in the most important engine of the "learning society". Thus, in 1998 was set up the National Counsel for Continuing Education and Training, which designs strategies in this field.

A certain way of developing centers of continuing professionalization is supplied by the framework of SOCRATES II projects. In our vision, the overall objective of such centers should be the preparation of professional managers ready to operate with the "7A" model and based on it, to be able to formulate and implement appropriate change decisions.

This intervention in JEEMS is aimed at inviting any interested potential partner from Europa (academic institutions, research centers, advisory agencies, commerce chambers, other profit and non profit organizations) to take part to setting up such an international lifelong learning center, as a basis in creating the European managerial culture in Romania. This would be a real step toward globalization of managerial education. Would be a transition from the words to the deeds of globalization!