



CONTENTS, STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES OF THE STUDENT COURSE

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4. Specific Basic Competences for Consultants



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4.1. Organizational Culture:

Definition: Organization Culture is something very complex. It can probably defined as the way a plurality of people can get unitary goals through different personal and technological support contributions harmonically linked the ones to the others.

In order to summarize and simplify this concept, a simple example can be proposed, regarding the evolution from a “*natural and spontaneous*” organization structure and a functional one.

Imagine a small truck owner who provides transportation for clients, and makes his job with good customers’ satisfaction. Thus he can increase his own organization by buying 3 small trucks and appointing 3 colleagues as drivers to deliver goods as he is still driving his own truck. However, when he has much work to do, he must decide to stay in a office, in order to receive the clients’ orders and to plan the travel itineraries for the colleagues.

Otherwise his clients will not get a transportation effective service, and will abandon him and his business.

This is called a Functional Organizational evolution, and can go on by a growing approach.

4. Specific Basic Competences for Consultants 1

4.1.1. Adaptability to needs and specific requirements of the family business's situation

Definition: The described skill regards a very focused attitude to pay attention to the single Family business situation.

Every business should not be watched at as a mechanical machine, but in family business case this is more and more true.

If sometimes a business can be seen as a “cold” machine, where money is the lubricant oil, in family business case this is quite never true. So, it must be considered as a living organism, where emotions are the blood not less than money. The consultant needs to be aware of little psychological details, well keeping in mind that when dealing with emotions there is not so much a majority hierarchy. A wife, a son, a sister, a daughter, a mistress opinion can be more influencing than an important payment or than an important deal on the market.

In order to manage these very delicate aspects, the consultant should not only count on his/her own sensitiveness, but should be professionally prepared - and up-dated – about the ways and techniques to understand and manage interpersonal relations. Aspects like interpersonal perception, interpersonal communication, group dynamics, co-operation features, behaviour basic know-how should be analysed in depth and practiced as a way to manage critical or also too cold or too warm situations.

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4.1.2. “Being collaborative” and cooperative with the situation and needs of the family business

Definition: the skill is “indirectly” focused on the need of understanding before acting. It is very much linked to the above mentioned skill. The difference is in the aim. The know-how – and the personal sensitiveness – should be oriented to facilitate the whole family

relations evolution, in order to let everybody understand that the company can be something having a **value** which is a long-time one, and is such to support people in individual difficulties, not only in market competitiveness.

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4.1.3. Ability to observe the internal relationships and rules

Definition: What happens within the family members and the company managers is generally not evident or visible by paper or other documents: it is the triumph of intangible! The consultant MUST be sensible to what happens under the visible surface. Intuition is very important in that, but at the same importance level is a knowledge about human behaviour and co-living rule: interpersonal communication first, interpersonal perception, co-operation rules, particular aspects and effects of frustration, silent jealousy and interfamily rivalry. Being aware of what is silently happening is a base for managing them and governing the whole picture dynamics.

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4.1.4 Awareness of business sector.

Definition: Notwithstanding the interpersonal relations are something independent for the business sector, it is important for the external consultant to be aware of different rules regarding different business environments: to be in the food sector is well different from being the mechanic one! Agriculture is different from Manufacturing, Services to the person are something different than Craft activity or ICT activities. Also the money scale is important. 1 million € is an amount that sounds very different in a small high quality printing company, from a process oil refinery! Individual subjective sensitiveness is different from cold “objective” figures.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6iLzO6gko0>

<http://familybusinesscast.com/best-practices-for-employing-children-in-your-family-business/>

ARTICLE

<http://www.ffi.org/?page=chooseaconsultant>