

## **Training Needs for Public Managers**

### **1. Changes in the public administration**

The modernization of public administration requires not only changes in the strategy and structure, but also in culture and behaviour. The process of moving away from bureaucracy to the action-oriented administration is an organizational learning process that can be implemented only through cultural changes. The staff plays therefore a very important role in the whole reform process. Employees can be oriented to output, customer needs and aims only if they realise the role of their work in the process of providing public services.

The bureaucracy with its formalization, specialization and hierarchical structures caused a massive cultural alienation in the working process. Not the collective values, but the fixed norms coming from the top framed the work. The bureaucracy reacted in a bureaucratic way to all changes in the environment.

Particularly in the reform-countries the cultural and behavioural changes are very difficult and long. They demand changes in the way of thinking. The former employees and managers are the same who are now responsible for the modernization and they are one of the success factors. Without any approval and support of the staff it is impossible to conduct any reform successfully. New challenges at every governmental level necessitate modification of the behaviour in many fields, which requires new skills and organizational learning. Comprehensive knowledge is needed for successful implementation of the reform process. Therefore continuous education of employees and managers becomes extremely important.

### **2. Training Strategy – one aspect of HRM**

Due to the reform of public administration resulting in a new organizational structure, a comprehensive strategy for human resource management should be prepared at each governmental level. This strategy should include, in the ideal situation, all instruments of human resource management such as mission statement, job descriptions, job specifications, yearly appraisal interviews, carrier planning, etc.

The **training strategy** plays an important role. The status of the civil servant with inflexible labour conditions including lifelong employment and fixed salary increases becomes less important from one year to another. Qualifications and variety of possible fields of application of each employee become the main factor. Continuous training gains in importance. Compared with the employment in the private sector, the employment in the public one becomes more and more unattractive. Therefore, motivation of employees plays an important role. It is proven that people respond to incentives such as more responsibility and autonomy, higher salaries for good results as well as certificates, titles or awards. Training being an other motivational factor helps to keep good employees in the public administration and enables the organizational development. The public administration reform can be accomplished only with the help of motivated and well-qualified employees.

There are several kinds of staff motivation for training that can be presented from the manager's and employee's point of view:

Manager	Employee
Assurance of continued existence of managers and experts in the public administration	Activation of personal knowledge and abilities that have not been used in the past
Development of junior managers	Improvement of professional qualifications
Independence from the labour market	More responsibility and autonomy
Enhancement of competitiveness	Participation in new interesting tasks
Improvement of internal communication and cooperation	Better chances for self-realization
Increase of professional qualifications of employees	Self-development
Enhancement of social competences	Creation of conditions for professional advancement

Increase of job satisfaction	Better salary
Reduction of staff turnover	Increase of personal prestige
Adaptation to technical requirements	Better job in the future

**Table 1: Motivation for training**

### 3. In-service Training

The traditional secondary and/or university studies for public management often mean 2 to 4 years long education processes with inflexible curriculum. This university education therefore needs to be complemented by in-service training that offers flexible structures responding to changes of the socio-economic context of public sector tasks and strategies, which are able to adapt to the new tasks of administration reform.

In-service training guarantees professional re-equipping of each individual public servant. Flexibility, low costs and the “lifelong learning” approach are best provided by in-service training. A mid-term strategy for in-service training, which should be a part of the general human resource strategy, has to be established.

Effective public sector training system has to be built up with close involvement of universities, private institutions and specific organizations like associations of local self-governments. Their participation guarantees tailor-made curricula as well as the organization of programmes that fits the needs in terms of costs and duration of training. All potential training providers should be therefore considered and integrated in the preparation of training strategy for public administration. Co-operation between professional associations, national higher education institutes, training agencies and other training providers such as NGOs should be ensured. Synergies between training, consulting and research that may arise through the cooperation of associations of local government with specialized research units and training institutes should be used. International exchange of experiences between training institutions is useful. International networks can be a valuable instrument in this respect.

Competition between different providers has to be supported in order to achieve best training at best price. An equal access to the market of services in the sphere of civil servant training has to be guaranteed. However, to obtain

credibility and acceptance, certain degree of regulation of this training market is necessary so that the qualifications they offer receive a proper recognition.

In-service training is not limited to individual training sessions and activities. It needs to be developed into a comprehensive and coherent training programme, which is implemented according to the training strategy of the respective public authority. This programme approach is indispensable to keep the staff motivated in training. Therefore, a follow-up training or events for civil servants having completed an in-service training programme should be envisaged.

Civil servants have to be selected in groups for special training activities. This selection process has to be prepared with high attention, especially when the limited resources allow for training of only a limited number of staff. A systemic process for identifying organizational needs and providing training to equip the staff with the skills the organization requires is needed. Cultural problems – especially in an international surroundings - have to be identified before starting the training to avoid delays in training procedures. Resource problems - inadequate budgets, poor infrastructure, a lack of modern teaching materials and limited opportunities for staff development - have to be dealt with.

In the framework of in-service training, training programmes should be adapted according to the specific target groups, for example as shown in the following model:

Newly recruited staff	Information on the organization (mission, vision, goals, values, ...)
Lower ranking civil servants	New Public Management (NPM): customer orientation, accounting, budgeting, etc.
Higher ranking civil servants / junior managers	NPM / Good Governance; reengineering administrative processes; managing teams & projects, ...
Elected officials of different levels of government	Basics of management, finance & budgeting, Public Relations

**Table 2: Target groups and programmes of IST**

Training should consist of a number of specialized seminars in different areas. These seminars should be client-oriented to different levels of civil servants - young civil servants in the beginning of their professional carrier, top-level public managers, decision-makers, secretaries general. Longer-term courses (up to 6 months) should lead to a certificate and should become an integral component of the promotion system in the local authorities.

Distance and Internet learning (e-learning) has to be considered as a future learning method especially for local and regional self-government. Internet-based training is in particular likely to attract the attention of all public sector officials. This relatively cheap and very flexible method requires, however, appropriate technical equipment and preparation of the staff.

Generally, for the successful composition of a training programme one would recommend a mix of training modules and project work on selected subjects like the one presented in the concept of Summer School for leaders of federal ministries or in the training programme for managers of the City of Vienna.

#### **4. Best practices for IST of public managers**

##### **4.1 Concept of Summer School for central government leaders**

In 2003, the KDZ Centre for Public Administration Research developed an innovative concept for in-service training: The Summer School provides participants with “off-the-job” skills and support the development of public sector managers “on the job”. This means to provide the participants with an opportunity:

- to develop a basic understanding of the objectives and the substance of modern Public Management,
- to get acquainted with the context of output-oriented Public Management,
- to get acquainted with modern instruments and procedures of Public Management,
- to identify requirements and consequences for their own leadership duties,

- to link the theoretical background of two weeks summer school with practical work on the basis of a project (work) with 9 months after the start of the Summer School.

A particular strength of attending the course was the opportunity to meet colleagues from other (public sector) departments (in Austria) who were all in a similar position and situation. Therefore, the exchange of experience on a personal but also on a professional level played a prominent role.

The course was organised on a module-basis (listed below) and also contains a separate coaching part for each participant. This means that, apart from attending all three modules (10 days), each participant has the possibility – and to gain the certificate it is a must – to carry out a project of his or her own which he or she has to present at the end of the course to a committee. Each participant is supported by a trainer who is a part of the course and who should act as facilitator helping with methodological problems etc.

With the exception of the role of trainers, the participants are themselves responsible for finding a so-called mentor (if possible and also depending on the topic) who could either share his professional experiences with them or support them by promoting the project in the organisation. The mentors as well as the superiors of each participant are also invited to the final workshop where the projects are presented.

Contents of the course:

Kick-off meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing an appropriate framework to get to know each other and facilitate cooperation, to scan the expectations of the participants, to clarify objectives, topics and programme execution.</li> </ul>
<b>Module 1 – Key aspects of Public Management</b>	
Main features of Good Governance and Public Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Management – future emphasis of the Public Sector</li> <li>• Modernisation strategies for public administration (New Public Management, Good Governance)</li> </ul>
Central elements of Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract management</li> <li>• Budgeting</li> </ul>

Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance contracts</li> <li>• Decentralised structures</li> </ul>
Process Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basics of process management, developing and optimising processes</li> <li>• Client-orientation as key aspect of successful process optimisation</li> </ul>
<b>Module 2 - Strategic Planning, Project Management</b>	
Strategic Steering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steering at arm's length, steering instruments: replace control through rules by performance contracts</li> <li>• Measuring output and outcome</li> <li>• Controlling</li> </ul>
Project Management in Public Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirements of a project-oriented organisation</li> <li>• Developing and managing projects</li> </ul>
Strategic Planning	
<b>Module 3 – Public Leadership</b>	
Standards and requirements for Public Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Motivation and de-motivation</li> <li>• Specific requirements for public leaders</li> <li>• Instruments of human resource management</li> <li>• Integrated human resource management</li> </ul>
Quality Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Models and instruments</li> <li>• Practical approaches for the implementation</li> <li>• Benefit of quality management</li> </ul>
Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central aspects for successfully managing change</li> <li>• Obstacles</li> <li>• Stages</li> <li>• Project management in change management processes</li> </ul>
<b>Module 4 – Coaching</b>	
Development projects – formulation of a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formulation of a concrete development project</li> <li>• Definition of aims, contents, success factors, time schedule and persons involved</li> <li>• Establishment of next steps and reflection</li> </ul>
Project results – interim results and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has been achieved? SWOT analysis</li> <li>• First measures – and how they should be</li> </ul>

accordingly individual coaching	achieved
Reflection about the implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What has been already achieved? What has to be still applied? Concrete steps for the implementation, future evaluation</li><li>• How the project results can be rounded off?</li></ul>

The main conclusions to be drawn from this type of course are:

- It is important to link theoretical and practical parts (project) within the course to make sure that acquired theoretical know-how is “anchored” in everyday working life.
- Trainers and mentors help overcome obstacles arising during the project activity and support participants professionally, methodologically or – in the case the project motivation declines, which normally happens – even morally.

#### 4.2 Training programmes for mid-level managers of the city of Vienna

The programme covers fix modules each of them lasting three days.

Aims of the training programme:

- Forward-looking concepts of modern public administration in Europe are demonstrated on the basis of their strategic relationships and contexts;
- They are illustrated against the background of legal and institutional framework in Austria and in Vienna;
- Possibilities for specification and the necessity of changes are pointed out;
- Fields of reforms and reform strategies are explained to managers;
- Instruments and methods for concrete situations are worked out and delivered to managers.

## **Module 1**

### **Head of department as manager – a key element of NPM**

Agenda items:

- Leadership in times of transition – core issues of future management in metropolitan administrations;
- Modernisation strategies in public administration (New Public Management, Good Governance);
- Elements of modern administrative management – contract management, decentralised professional and resource responsibility, global budgeting, quality management, CAF (Common Assessment Framework), focus on citizens and customers, competition;
- Competition as a driver of administrative processes;
- Global budgets of the city of Vienna;
- Strategic management – an overview.

## **Module 2**

### **Leadership in a holistic management process**

Agenda items:

- The holistic management process;
- Role and tasks of executives;
- Staff development as a management task;
- Staff development as a system – functions and tools;
- Selected topics of staff development;
- Human Resources planning;
- Searching for and selecting employees;
- Training new employees;
- Employee evaluation and support options;
- Management tasks in qualification campaigns;
- Motivation – discouragement – manipulation;
- Leading with target agreements.

### **Module 3**

#### **Outcome-based and impact-based management – establishment of important controlling tools**

Agenda items:

- Principles of outcome-based and impact-based management – introduction;
- The importance of accounting and reporting in daily administrative situations – the head of department's need for information and control;
- Measuring performance and quality – a methodology guideline and practical examples for the development of targets and indicators;
- Cost-benefit calculation – function, structure, practical examples;
- Benchmarking and key indicator comparison;
- Controlling as a management support tool – introduction, terminology, overview of operative instruments;
- Contract management.

### **Module 4**

#### **Communication as a management tool**

Agenda items:

- Leading with target agreements;
- Employee meetings;
- Team objective meetings;
- The executive as a team coordinator;
- Communication as a management tool;
- Preventing and addressing corruption;
- Reflection of personal communicative patterns in meetings for support and critique.

### **Module 5**

#### **Expanding citizen services – Successful management of change processes**

Agenda items:

- Focus on citizens and customers;
- Focus on citizens/ customers as a central approach to reform;

- Main tools of citizen and customer-orientation;
- Practical approaches to increasing customer orientation in the department;
- Public Relations – basics and approaches for the department;
- Change management;
- The main factors of successful change;
- Change processes in the department – stages, success factors and obstacles – practical examples;
- Project management during change processes.

### **Module 6**

#### **Strategy game: Management Behaviour**

This game will simulate the work of an entire municipal department. There are no defined individual exercises or roles; rather participants will find themselves in an absolute reality. The team will be asked to address numerous company-specific tasks in 5 game rounds of 90 minutes each. These tasks must be solved under the most difficult conditions and in stressful conflict situations. After each simulation round, the entire process is analysed in a feedback session of several hours.