

Strategy of Staff Development in Hungarian Land Offices

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Executive Summary: The need of modernising the public administration, the transition to market economy, the development of the information society, the closing EU membership of Hungary are factors, requiring highly qualified public servants also in the land management sector, who possess up-to-date professional knowledge and good command of foreign languages. The idea of a "Servicing State" can only be realised this way, parallel with the rearrangement of the public administration. To create basis for all these in the term of 2-3 years, a working group within the Department of Lands and Mapping elaborated the following critical success factors:

- a) Lifting the level of the land office case management,
- b) Strengthening the efficiency of the land office work and its service-oriented character,
- c) Providing the land management sector with competitive national working power,
- d) Supporting the spread of new forms of work,
- e) Preparing the land offices for the participation in the electronic economy,
- f) Providing opportunity for lifelong learning,
- g) Elaborating the system of motivations for continuous training.

The critical success factors and the aims detailed in the strategy are dependent on various financial and management arrangements, the realities of which are laid down in the following scenarios:

Scenario No. 1. - Everything Remains Unchanged.

No real changes, i.e. the education and training are going on ad hoc in the land offices, without planning.

Scenario No. 2 - Overall Reform - Approach

Planned education and training in the professional branch, organised training for the new generation of professionals, elaboration of the necessary system of requirements.

Scenario No. 3. - Prudent Progress

Aims and goals are equal with those of the Scenario No. 2, but they will be realised slower, prolonged in time, dropping certain elements of the programme.

Scenario No. 4. - Target Solution

An external education management company is invited to implement the programme.

1. Introduction

In the past 5-7 years, an overall modernisation was completed in the land management of Hungary - which comprises the land registration, the cadastral mapping, the land protection and land consolidation and also the registration of land use - in other words, the land offices became computerised. This modernisation affects the work of a staff of 4 800 persons. For this reason, the Department of Lands and Mapping of the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development, being responsible for the supervision of land offices, organised a working group for elaborating the education and training strategy.

Beyond the modernisation of the state administration, it is also worth mentioning that such a **huge data fortune** - property sheet data relating 9 million land parcels and/or other real estates, map data of 55 000 cadastral maps etc. - is **maintained** by the land office network on very expensive computerised equipment, the **reproduction expenses of which is about 100 billion HUF**. The efficient handling, updating and maintenance of this data fortune needs highly qualified properly trained staff.

2. Success Factors

- a) Lifting the level of the land office case management,
- b) Strengthening the efficiency of the land office work and its service-oriented character,
- c) Providing the land management sector with competitive national working power,
- d) Supporting the spread of new forms of work,
- e) Preparing the land offices for the participation in the electronic economy,
- f) Providing opportunity for lifelong learning,
- g) Creating motivation for continuous training.

3. Mission and Aims

The mission statement and the related aims were formulated according to the above listed critical factors of success.

3.1 Mission:

To have highly qualified, creative and innovative, dedicated and well-paid land office staff.

3.2 General Aim:

On the one hand to support and speed up the change of office culture through the introduction of the continuous training of the professionals in the land management sector; on the other hand to institutionalise the measuring and appreciation of work performance, elaborate the system of motivations for making the staff interested in the various jobs.

3.3. Main points and details of the general aim

3.3.1. Introduction of the Continuous Training

- education of targeted management skills,
- extension of the forms of the continuous professional training.
- development of communication skills.

3.3.2. Supporting the Change of Office Culture

- create self-developing atmosphere of the offices, receptive and ready for changes,
- develop innovative, creative way of thinking,
- create client-friendly office environment,
- strengthen the solidarity and team spirit.

3.3.3. Institutionalisation of Measuring and Appreciation of the Work Performance

- market-driven attitude - developing the data supply and service on land affairs that completely satisfies the clients' demands
- recognition of the public servant's examination as training and also paying qualification allowance.

4. Scenarios

The following aims and the related four scenarios were proposed, out of which the **Scenario No. 2.** is given here in details, being considered to be the most promising and showing perspectives.

4.1 Scenario 1: Everything Remains Unchanged

The current approach is based on the thought that the present school-form education satisfies the demands of the offices, and in fact when contracting a new employee it is important only to find out, if the person has got the proper qualification. The further training is up to the individual, or dependent on the negotiation between the office and the new employee.

4.2 Scenario 2: Overall Reform Approach

This approach assumes the overall fulfilment of the objectives. The basic principle is that the idea of the "Servicing State" can be realised through the "Servicing Office", run by highly qualified and continuously self-trained public servants. On the top of that, to be able to fulfil the requirements arising with joining the EU, more and more public servants are needed who speak foreign languages. This goal can only be reached if the necessary preconditions are assured, with thorough planning.

A huge data fortune - property sheet data relating to 9 million land parcels and/or other real estates, map data of 55 000 cadastral maps etc. - **is maintained** by the land office network on very expensive computerised equipment, the **reproduction expenses of which is about 100 billion HUF**. The efficient handling, updating and maintenance of these data fortune need well-prepared, highly qualified, properly trained staff.

4.2.1 Implementation

- Introducing an overall reform covering all professional branches and assuring the following for the staff:
- to reach the highest degree in the profession and its appreciation,
- to introduce the education to be certificated land registration secretary and certificated organiser, so filling the gap of the only missing key element in the high level professional education.
- to provide opportunity for the continuous professional training - including foreign languages - on the one hand with the education in the framework of OLLO (Open Learning for Land Offices), on the other hand through supporting the school-form post-graduate training.

- to provide expected order and conditions of the annual training courses.
- to provide conditions for the specialist, short-term training of the new employees joining the organisation.
- to provide the conditions of the internal (land offices, FÖMI) special task-oriented education and training.
- to support the harmonisation of the school-form education in a way that covers the demands of the whole sector.

4.2. 2. Advantages, Disadvantages

The advantage of this approach is that it deals with the circle of problems together with their all relations, and efforts are made to find an overall solution. Further on, it includes the provision of the network with highly qualified human resources for the maintenance of the huge data fortune without loss of value.

The disadvantage is that - considering the above ambitions - the realisation of this scenario takes long time, about 2-3 years, and it is supposed that this one is the most cost-consuming solution.

4.3 Scenario No. 3. Prudent Progress

This scenario represents a more modest approach, where certain objectives need to be given up. This does not mean the complete cancellation of the various objectives, but the realisation of them on a modest level, compared to the Scenario No. 2.

4.4 Scenario No. 4. Target Solution

The training of the land office staff will be carried out in an external educational institution, and not within the land management sector. This scenario is based on the idea that for assisting the realisation the professionals objectives, an external entrepreneur will be invited, who is experienced in organising education/training, and who services the currently required solution and also the basic educational and training infrastructure.

5. Evaluation

The scenarios discussed above meet the objectives to various extents and, at the same time represent different financial needs and implementation risks. **Scenario 1 and Scenario 4 violate such basic objectives that their selection is not proposed.**

Scenario 2, the reform variant would be the most promising but only in co-operation with other ministries (e.g. Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Finance). Provided that all the required conditions are fulfilled, this scenario meets best the above listed critical success factors.

Scenario 3 (Prudent Progress) has a low implementation risk, which means that the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development would be able to fulfil the necessary conditions with only a minimum external support.

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