

GOOD PRACTICE

LIFELONG CAREER ORIENTATION



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REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
MINISTRSTVO ZA DELO, DRUŽINO,
SOCIALNE ZADEVE IN ENAKE MOŽNOSTI

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Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

Title
LIFELONG CAREER ORIENTATION FOR EMPLOYEES AND COMPANIES
Location / geographic coverage
<i>Lifelong Career Orientation for employees and companies</i> is a programme implemented in companies in the whole Slovenia.
Summary
<p><i>Lifelong Career Orientation for employees and companies</i> is national programme, initiated by the Public Fund of Human Resource Development and Scholarship and co-financed by the ESF. Programme was initiated in 2011 by public tender and selection of training providers that were listed and announced on Public fund webpage. The next public tender was dedicated to companies that apply for funds for training their employees and first activities for companies started in June 2012. Companies choose training providers from the list and companies contracted them for training and other activities related to HRD, according to company's needs.</p> <p>By this programme the Public Fund enabled companies in the time of financial crisis and recession, and reduced funds for training and HRD, to start investing in employee development again.</p> <p>Through the implementation of various activities companies obtain a well-motivated, employable and adaptable workforce and possibility of developing employee career and by that higher personal satisfaction and commitment is reached. In career planning process the interest of employees and employers are co-ordinated what has a greater impact on increasing competitiveness and improvement in performance.</p> <p>The programme is also focusing on development of individual's skills for their own management, planning and career development in accordance with their life goals, abilities and interests with regard to opportunities in education, training and employment/redeployment.</p>
Type of the good practice
It is a national programme, initiated by the Public Fund and co-funded by the European Social Fund within the framework of 1 st Development Priority "Promoting Entrepreneurship and Adaptability" and 1.2 Priority orientation "Training and Education for Competitiveness and Employability" of the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development for the period 2007-2013, and by companies (VAT).
Stakeholders and partners
Target groups are companies and their employees. Users of good practice are companies in Slovenia that use different activities for improvement of their HRD departments and functions (especially small and medium sized companies) while large companies that already have developed HRD departments decided to train their employees and develop personal and occupational development plans based on profiling and put impact on training for annual appraisal and development interviews and rewarding. The implementing body of the programme is Public Fund for HRD and Scholarship, in the programme is also involved training providers that implementing training, and companies with their employees as beneficiaries.
Issue / challenge and goals / assumptions
The purpose of the programme is to facilitate lifelong career orientation to employees in companies and strengthening their HRD departments through network of external providers and by this providing quality career development of employees and better access to such services. The

programme enables companies to have well-motivated employees, flexible to a rapidly changing market and able to acquire new skills. By that programme the competitiveness of companies and their employees is increased. A broader goal of the programme is raising awareness of the general public about the importance of career guidance within companies.

How does it work?

The Public Fund implements programme since the end of 2011, since then two public were published. First, providers of services (training and counselling) were selected and a list of selected providers has been published at Public Fund. Lifelong Career Orientation activities can be implemented exclusively by selected providers. Companies that apply for this programme select the most appropriate provider for training and other HRD activities. The programme consists of 3 lots: (A) Setting up basic HR processes; (B) Training for employers and the provision of services which are directly related to career guidance staff and (C) Training of employees in the field of personal and career development. And within lots the following activities are implemented:

- (A) Definition of vision, long-term objectives and key success factors, Analysis of current situation in company and creation and of HR activities; Establishment of personnel records; Introduction or renewal of company regulations and internal acts; Job systemisation (description of job); Developing a competence model and/or competence profiles for individual job and definition of competency levels and Designing tools for managing and evaluating job performance.
- (B) Employee assessment and identifying skills gaps; Implementation of annual appraisal and development interviews (training of key personnel for implementation); Creating employee career development plan; Profiling employees to identify their talents, potentials and competences, and making a plan for employee personal and professional development; Personal and group coaching.
- (C) Training of employees in the field of personal and career development – acquisition of soft competencies (motivation, effective communication, team work, creative thinking, change management and well-being of employees, stress management, time management, intergenerational dialogue, training of social skills, etc.)

Results

There were two public tenders and 5,580.000 EUR were dedicated to lifelong career orientation activities in Slovenian companies. The implementation of first activities in companies started to implement at the end of June 2012. By now, 169 companies and more than 5,000 employees have been involved in different activities. The second tender was published in the beginning of 2013 and activities will be implemented by 2015.

Companies agree that through training of their employees and appraisal process they better understand and thereby strengthen mutual cooperation, limit conflicts and increase employee satisfaction. Employees accepted training and understand it as positive contribution to company' development and not as tool for negative goals such as decreasing salaries or even losing job.

Evaluation

The evaluation of the first call was made by the Adult Education Centre of Slovenia in co-operation between the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and Public Fund for Human Resource Development and Scholarship. A questionnaire was sent to 169 companies and 86 companies return fulfilled questionnaire. The majority (86 %) of companies agreed that activities implemented through this programme were useful for introducing career orientation of their employees. More than 80 % of companies will continue with activities if co-funding will be further assured. About half of companies plan changes in HRD processes, especially in the area of motivation and personal development of their employees. Three quarters of them agreed that introduction of personal and career development increased efficiency and company' productivity, as competencies

and commitment of employees are increased. The programme increased value added of individual and company and enabled qualitative reform of human resource management, improved communication and mutual cooperation.

There were also some negative opinions related to the programme: companies agreed that there were some difficulties related to reporting to the Public Fund: a lot of administration, collection documents required a lot of time.

Lessons learned

Ability to use new knowledge and skills are the advantages needed for improve performance and increase competitiveness of employees. Today's job market requires increasing flexibility, therefore it is necessary for employees in companies to provide access to career guidance, and encourage them to be included in the various activities to develop their potential. It is important to support employees in holistic development where career plan is carefully designed and where opportunities for personal development of employees and interests of employers are reconciled.

Training providers also commented that in general there was a lack of presence of top management in training, it should be compulsory for top management, e.g.: training in communication, team work, conflict solving, etc.

Sustainability and transferability

Companies are aware of the importance of motivated and competent employees and are willing to continue with improvement of HRD processes but in the term of crisis there is a lack of financing. Although companies started to consider training as an investment instead of costs further funding is needed as majority of companies, especially small where HRD processes are less developed, are facing with day to day businesses and survival in this uncertain market conditions and crisis. In spite of that the programme as such can be transferrable to other regions and countries.

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