

MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN CROATIA*

Prof. Drazen Kapusta

Principal

Cotrugli Business Academy, Croatia

Cotrugli Business Academy (CBA) was established with its goal of creating leaders who could initiate the processes which enable both their companies and communities to flourish while finding a deep personal fulfillment in doing so.

World Business Academy (WBA), the founder of CBA, is a network of business leaders who collectively create resources for individuals to be more effective, efficient, and responsible in commerce, society and their own lives.

WBA deals with concerns of contemporary business and its future ones such as: corporate governance, sustainability, macro-economic trends, emerging concerns and opportunities, new models for profitability, and the role of fossil fuel in our firms and civilization itself.

Three principles link these themes:

- Business processes, skills, resources and talents to pass a sustainable world to our children;
- We can do the right thing in the right way *AND* make a profit;
- As the most powerful institution in society, business must take responsibility extending across the whole range of society's concerns.

WBA Fellows represent some of the best and brightest men and women who are shaping today's global landscape. For many years, they have researched, analyzed, reported and predicted the transforming paradigm shifts in business and society.

CBA curriculum is designed, monitored and updated by the WBA fellows who are among the leading experts in their fields of expertise such as Verna Allee, Warren Bennis, Deepak Chopra, Harlan Cleveland, David Cooperrider, Stephen Covey, Daniel Goleman, Stuart Hart, Dipak Jain, Joseph Javorski, Peter Senge, Margaret Wheatley and Diana Whitney.

*Paper presented at the Conference on "Country Perspectives on Management Education in a Globalizing World" hosted by XIME on 24 – 25, January, 2008

Since its initial stages, CBA has turned into the fastest growing Business School in South Eastern Europe (SEE) by enrolling 110 students into the fifth Executive MBA generation in Croatia, and 35 students into the first EMBA generation in Serbia which begins this May. With operations in Brazil being in its last phase of implementation, CBA is actively engaged in the process of global expansion.

All of these characteristics put CBA by far on the top of the list of what is currently on offer in Croatia, and perhaps in the region as well. Not to overlook other players in the field of executive education, we should consider the following:

In Croatia, there are several business schools offering programs more or less competitive to CBA:

1. University of Economics in Zagreb is state-owned, part of Croatia's biggest University, offering a Masters program in economics, but brands it as an MBA program.
2. International Graduate Business School, Zagreb reinforced with a partnership agreement with Kelly School of Management (#100 business school in US). This program has only small number of students...
3. There are also many other organizations offering different types of management education: open enrolment programs, in-house education and others, but none of them has any significant market share in Croatia.

Furthermore, in the wake of preparations for CBA's HRM 2008 conference in Croatia, a survey targeting managers and directors has been conducted. It brought out more than 200 responses revealing the following information:

- When asked what the governing attitude of people in Croatia was, the widest response was that people are open to change.
- 27% feel that Croatian managers are professionally capable of handling the challenges of the market.
- 8% feel that Croatian managers and entrepreneurs learn enough.
- 8% feel that Croatian managers only look after their interest and profit.
- Only 7% disagree that ethics is lacking in business and communication.

These findings also reflect current thoughts and views on management education in Croatia:

- 43% of respondents undertake regular management education activities

- Developing high-potential individuals (57%) is the main objective for management education activities.
- In-house development is the most common activity.
- On-the-job training is identified as the most effective form of learning by 49% of respondents.
- Only 10% believes that e-learning has significantly altered learning and training offerings.
- 63% believes that management education activities could be critical to the success within an organization.
- 85% uses some form of evaluation to demonstrate the value of their management education activities.
- 57% has a training budget.

Views on management education in Croatia

There is a lack of properly educated leaders at all levels of society and organizations in emerging markets. In USA 1% of population holds an MBA diploma. Estimates show that in South East Europe, which include Croatia and neighboring countries, this percentage is below 0.01%. In Croatia the in-house development programs are being used frequently as they are perceived to have a high effect (85%). 74% of responses to our research agree that management education can have a positive impact on an organization's bottom line. Therefore, enhancing the opportunities for a professional education and developing the management education market in Croatia is of great importance for the future.

* * *