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ICTs. TOWARDS PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSITY AND ENTERPRISE IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

Abstract: *The paper deals with various aspects of partnership between universities and companies and also sources and causes of changes occurring in both of them. On the list of sources an important place is occupied by information and communication technologies (ICT), which have transformed the university's relations with its partners and resulted in a radical change in our conception of management. The managerial system has turned to the "e-management": a new decision-making process incorporating new concepts related to the Internet. Likewise relationships between universities and companies as vital players in the European Union have been affected by ICTs. The case of PGV Network is used to illustrate a cultural approach to dealing with these changes.*

Keywords: *information and communication technologies (ICT), Internet, centralisation, transversality, knowledge, management science, managerial skills, PGV Network, new technologies, transfer of knowledge management, university and company, Visegrad Group*

JEL: A2, O33, 052

Introduction

Management is a discipline that is defined by its purpose, business, and the variety of knowledge it requires. Historically, learning management sciences was designed, in a way, to conform to the dominant structure since the beginning of the twentieth century with the introduction of specialisations which are still the basis of major organizational functions: Purchasing, Marketing, accounting, finance, production, human resources, R & D, etc.. Managerial Science par excellence, the management can be considered as a priority area of higher education and training of high level executives to the extent that it tends to present the company in its complex reality and contemporary, in particular, to understand the close interdependence of its components along with its relationship to the environment. In the list of managerial skills, which we recognize, the most important one, in our opinion, is adapting to change and complexity, which involves:

- Recognizing the complexity of people, structures, technology, environment
- Learning to make changes in structure and organization without being prompted by external pressures
- Knowing how to cooperate with men and careers
- Learning to differentiate in order to better integrate

Adaptation of Management to competitive context and the international dimension of economies have been influenced by economic and technological developments. The new technologies of information and communication (ICTs) have questioned the strategy and business organization, by changing the management in terms of efficiency and flexibility.

ICTs have also transformed the university's relations with its partners, including encouraging its rapprochement with the industry and its international mobility. Thus, the university and the company have become vital players in the European Union.

Internet and the Question of Strategy

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the emergence of new information and communication has caused a radical change in our conception of management. Thus the managerial system turned to the "e-management": new decision-making process incorporating new concepts related to the Internet.

The transition to the Internet has required great flexibility because of the rapidly changing sectors. The mission concept of the company (producing, selling) has lost some of its meaning as each seeks to maximise profit by adapting to the more profitable areas, usually related to the Internet.

The strong growth of the Internet has caused deep changes in the field of strategic decisions, requiring companies to be vigilant in choosing their decisions and upset more or less all their functions.

Planning has become a difficult exercise, particularly in times of crisis.

Internet has challenged the concept of strategic segmentation, which was performed once through the "Strategic Business Area." The emergence of ICT has made this concept obsolete by removing or making less visible the boundaries between fields. The analysis of a sector has become more difficult due to many entrants, changing boundaries and rules of operation.

The strategies of cost leadership and differentiation have been challenged by technological developments as they are susceptible to imitation and technical developments. The Internet offers cheaper services, more comprehensive, personalized. With regard to the strategies of concentration, they lose their meaning because ICTs can make virtual mergers.

ICT also influence the types of business growth. Indeed, we note that companies tend to buy other firms rather than developing in-house expertise. In addition, to save time, they seek alliances rather than improving skills not mastered.

The Need to Reconsider the Internal Organization

To be fast and flexible, the company should form a comprehensive and consistent system. As such, two major changes are needed in the organization.

Centralization

If companies' habits were to decentralize the power to better fit the market structure and to better respond to the request, the trend was reversed because of ICT. The possibility of having real-time information enables managers to make decisions that they did not face in a traditional relationship.

Transversality

The organizational structure was reviewed. Indeed, the vertical model proved too heavy for the organization of a web site. This means that all the organic system has now been put online: from reception to delivery. The information system has become the basis of the organization, this by the establishment of intra-extranet for example an order from a client (extranet) results in the manufacture of a product (Intranet), a call to the provider (extranet), etc.

In addition, in order to maintain its information system adapted and competitive, the company realized it needed to be constantly in a state of competitive intelligence for the ICT sector is changing very rapidly. On the other hand, its relations with the environment have undergone significant changes.

The relationship with suppliers

Declining costs of communication have opened new prospects for the company. This allowed the company to outsource certain activities previously internal. Indeed, all sectors of the company could be physically and geographically independent, while maintaining unity of command necessary for proper coordination. This had the effect of making the boundaries of the firm quite blurred. Finally, if the strategies were generally oriented downstream, we find that the facilities of communication enabled companies to create with their suppliers, networks of relationships closer.

The relationship with the customer

On the financial side, ICTs have allowed the company to the economy in some networks (eg franchise). The existence of an Internet portal or site collaboration to push the boundaries of the enterprise at lower cost since the introduction of new stores was no longer necessary.

Another big advantage of ICT is that they have facilitated the industry intelligence, implementing new strategies for monitoring the market-oriented

competition and, especially, customers. For a decade, businesses can indeed use the forums to better understand consumers.

Finally, it has improved the relationship with customers. Admittedly, in the opposite direction those consumers have learned to organize themselves through virtual forums to defend their interests.

The timesaving inherent in ICT is effective at every stage and at the global level. In this context, the company realized that if she wanted to work with ICTs, it was expected to function as a comprehensive and appear vis-à-vis the client, as a new and more homogeneous.

The Company and the University: Dynamic Players in the European Context

Over the past decade or so, the emergence of new types of management driven by the Internet wave was confirmed. E-management has not totally replaced traditional strategies, but it has renewed strategies paving the way for new modes of organization without changing the basic values of managerial action. Customer value is confirmed. Polls tell us that satisfaction and quality of services and products are the first strengths of growth. Consumption becomes more responsible and environmental concerns take precedence over the satisfaction of “false” needs.

It is also necessary to rethink the ways of governance. The crisis that we experience has shown the need to restore the historic mission of the management and protecting it from abuses of ownership for the emergence of innovative strategies in the long term. With the enlargement of Europe, companies have discovered new markets and education systems, new cultures. Since the 1990s, the company and the university have become major players in the European issue. Both of them have made a major effort to rationalise (cost control, technology upgrading, market adaptation, marketing strategies and raising capital). This rationalisation was based on new knowledge: that of management. The company found its place in educational programmes and research developed in the dynamics of exchange.

Cultural Approach. The Case of PGV Network

Technological developments in the field of information and communication have fostered the bringing together of cultures and educational systems as evidenced by the case, now a well-known the PGV network. PGV network is a good example of production of new knowledge in the context of trade. It was born and evolved with the involvement of enlargement of the European Union.

Heavily involved in the process of organizational and managerial change, the network of the Visegrad Group for many years, participating in the reciprocal transfer of knowledge management.

Overall the network is structured through links between scientific researchers and faculty, institutional linkages between universities. The collaboration of scientific type evolves into a collaborative teaching style including distance

learning via videoconferencing for educational monitoring (Grenoble-Bratislava) or the transfer of entrepreneurial knowledge (Grenoble-Perugia), business intelligence (development of national economies, foreign investment and corporate earnings), joint publications and expertise. By contrast, type of research collaborations and publications give rise to individual joint projects (writing articles, microwave research, contacts with companies) and friendships beyond formal exchanges).

Over time, the network has led to exchanges between members often distant from each other, managers, regionalists, economists, sociologists, and communication specialists. This multidisciplinary approach is favoured by the mastery of computer tools, including Internet communications.

At the beginning the PGV network gave a management science major role and relied on ICT to achieve a real-time communication with its members and expand its research programmes. Its success is not only due to new technologies as you can imagine, but these technologies have played and continue to play an essential role in its operation, organization and strategy. They were the essential tool of rapprochement of knowledge, cultures and organizations in Europe of the 21st century.