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Danubius International Business School – Different Ways in Business Education

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Abstract: In this material we propose an analysis of values, mission and vision of a new entity born into Danubius University landscape – Danubius International Business School (DIBS). Viewed as a bridge between theory and practice made from guidance, DIBS is an agent which transforms academic approach into a ready to apply in real world the business knowledge. Also, DIBS aim to participate at the creation of a global business community based on communication, ethics and knowledge. What we want to prove is that academic formation could be adapted to the requests of a fast changing socio-economic environment through complementary steps aimed to offer to participants skills and knowledge needed to solve complex challenges and to adapt identified solutions to new contexts. In the same time, we will demonstrate that inside DIBS, the entrepreneur/ intrapreneur is promoted as a competence creator, for its own or for others, the finality being the consolidation and development of the company for which is working for, having in mind guide-values as ethics based principles which guide the path from what it is through what it should be.

Keywords: entrepreneur; communication; theory; practice; guidance

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act, but a habit."

Aristotle

1. Introduction

The new development of competitive education and research market determine universities to operate into an entrepreneurial manner, which impose the incorporation of economic and social development as a part of their mission. Entrepreneurial university is a model and solutions, tools and consulting supplier to evaluate, manage, and adjust organizational development and the business itself. We assume the entrepreneurial university concept as a structural relation between university and external environment, relation mediated by entrepreneurial spirit (Popescu, 2008, p. 18).

Danubius International Business School (DIBS) is a part of Danubius University and it aim to develop the entrepreneurial dimension of this academic institution, this dimension being translated as initiative, partnership and a different way to educate students as leaders and promoters of sustainable values for business and continuous social development.

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2. Entrepreneurial Culture – Concepts and Hypotheses

The premise from which we start in our approach is that any performing organization is capable to manage its knowledge to add value to their activities and to generate competitive advantage implementing this way an effective knowledge management. We understand that knowledge creation and management is one of the most important capabilities of a modern organization. Through knowledge management organizations reach initiative and business strategy and business people get career consolidation even it is a manager, consultant, specialist or leader. The learning organization and organizational learning are shore paths to competitiveness. Knowledge creation and growth inside and outside organization are leading to improved processes and operational practices and the development of entrepreneurial organizational culture. Organizational culture represents an ensemble of values, believes, interests, principles and behaviours which distinguish change capacity, organizational adaptation to new socio-economic context, finality being a new, adapted organizational culture.

The entrepreneur, in his role of entrepreneurial culture creator and promoter, is the person who has the capacity to transpose ideas in actions, being characterized through trust in its own resources, creativity, innovator spirit, initiative spirit and ready to assume his decisions risks. The entrepreneur, which should have leader character, have the capacity to determine alternative consequences of an action decision, to manage the risk and rich the success as a community recognized performance (Zamfir; Vlasceanu, 1998, p. 630).

Entrepreneurial values, as desirable social actions and as a distinction between *be* and *to be*, are manifested as norms, rules, customs etc. (Zamfir; Vlasceanu, 1998, p. 651). Through values reference to social and organizational processes, values achieve social utility (Bodea, 2013, p. 35). Excellence is a fundamental entrepreneurial value and it suppose the assuming of a fairly result and it means professional trust and predictability, professional recognition and renown. We reckon that another structural entrepreneurial value is personal and professional development as an important source of motivation.

Personal and professional development in the space of entrepreneurial culture supposes to potentiate performances, especially decisional performance. This means (Virga, 2007, pp. 136-137): *decisional creativity,* as an alternative solution generation capacity, as possible and probable scenarios; *decisional ethic,* which represents impartial analysis capacity of a decisional situation, of decision alternatives and consequences; *adaptability,* which define in this context the capacity to take good decisions with scarce information, or to select useful information from redundant, incomplete or twisted information.

One way to facilitate the expression of people or organization potential is trough coaching. The coach actualizes people knowledge, resources and creativity to help to get efficiency and efficacy in establishing communication objectives and taking and assuming decisions. Coaching is a continuum and focused process with uninterrupted learning potential through permanent support and feedback (Palos, 2007, p. 147) regarding performances.

Another organizational development process option is represented by guidance, meaning the action of offering support for an action plan implementation in the quest for process efficiency, building motivation and commitment for reaching inter-departmental and organizational goals.

3. Danubius International Business School (DIBS) Philosophy

3.1. DIBS Vision is an international business community generating sustainable businesses based on transparency, communication, ethics and knowledge, serving people, organizations and the whole society.

3.2. DIBS Mission is to develop and deliver different ways of business education through integrating theory with practice and guidance, addressing the improvement on the same time and balanced participant's hard and soft skills.

3.3. DIBS Values are guide-values which master organization member's behaviour:

- Excellence – meaning continuous improvements of our actions through knowledge, sustainability and equilibrium and as accomplishment of our jobs in an exceptional, wonderful and high quality manner;
- Creativity – promoting innovation in curriculum, methods and implementation;
- Transparency – through communication, respect, loyalty and integrity (we do what we say and we say what we do);
- Leadership – through responsibility, ethics and team spirit, the focus being on efforts coordination to achieve best results which cannot be achieved as an individual;
- Pragmatism – we are transferring our values directly into our organization's daily activities.

3.4. DIBS Believes - As an institution of higher business education, involved in the development of current and future management leaders, we declare our believes as follows:

- We believe in individuality accepting differences among people and organizations – different are not about good or bad, are about humanity;
- We believe in freedom as an expression of entrepreneurial spirit – the entrepreneurship offers the opportunity to valorise freedom.
- We believe in partnership and team work –
- We believe in dialog and communication –
- We believe in good-faith and balance
- We believe in curiosity and debate
- We believe in knowledge and best practices shared to community.

3.5. DIBS principles are assumed as norms which indicate the goal and, in the same time, thought or action direction, guiding to legitimate and acceptable ways to achieve values. DIBS principles are as follows:

- DIBS forms leaders and develop free initiative based on ethics;
- DIBS programs are developed and delivered in partnerships, respecting the individuality and oneness of each participant;
- DIBS promote the global community values;
- DIBS programs design ensures a sustainable balance among theory, practice and guidance in the quest for excellence;
- Knowledge and meanings are built transparent and responsible through communication, respect and loyalty; knowledge is a fusion among experience, education, motivation, emotions and personality and knowledge management facilitate the creation, communication and implementation of any kind of core competencies to get more value from specific activities.

3.6. DIBS Objectives:

- *Become future enablers* – by the developing the business instincts of students, empowering them to become future leaders and generators of sustainable values for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.
- *Key to practice, guidance and teaching* - incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of teaching, practice and guidance aligned to the values of global social responsibility.
- *Experience as the highest form of knowledge* creates educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences and empower a responsible leadership.
- *The quest for knowledge* - engage in conceptual and empirical research to discover the role, the dynamics, and the impact of businesses in creating sustainable social, environmental and economic value.
- *Involvement in business development* - cooperate with business managers into extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting stakeholders expectations and explore jointly effective approaches in meeting these challenges.
- *Food for thought*– create a stakeholder dialog hub where all the parties (faculties, students, business government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups) can have a voice to state and debate the critical issues related to business, global social responsibility and sustainability.
- *Balance is the essence* - What makes **dibs** different is the balance between theory, practice and guidance which is the seventh principle and the root of the whole mantra.

4. DIBS Configuration

DIBS have three core engines: MBA programs, Danubius Coaching School and CREDO (Centre of excellence on organizational development). Each engine is developed in partnership with leaders in the field. MBA programs division is a partnership between Danubius University and Arcadia University from Pennsylvania, USA. Danubius Coaching School is a partnership with Noble Manhattan Coaching Ltd. UK and International Institute of Coaching. CREDO is developed in partnership with many companies and individuals with great experience and good credentials in their fields of interests.

Leading programs 2013-2014:

➢ **International MBA (IMBA**) – Arcadia-Danubius – 1 year;

➢ **IMBA Extras– independent** 1 month courses extracted from IMBA curricula: Leadership for effective organizations; Shareholder value management; Managerial economics; Managing in the global workforce; Multinational marketing; Operations and technology; International business experience; Global strategic management; International finance; Global issues of social responsibility and law.

➢ **Concentrations** – 3 months each

- Leadership specialization: Power and Politics; Contemporary Issues in Leadership; Global Organizational Development.
- Entrepreneurship specialization: Global Organizational Developments; Entrepreneurship and Innovation; E-Commerce.

- Finance specialization: Securities Analysis; Mergers and Acquisitions; Investment Banking.

➢ **Foundation and preparatory courses**:

- Fundamentals of accounting;
- Corporate finance, fixed income, derivatives & economics;
- English for MBA (TOEFEL, IELTS, CAMBRIDGE etc.;
- Using IT tools in business education.

➢ Practitioner Coach Diploma
➢ Practitioner Coach Certificate
➢ Executive & Corporate Coach Diploma
➢ Coaching Fundamentals Certificate

Future developments:

- **Preparation for International chartered/certified qualifications:** Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) - www.**acca**global.com; Certified Public Accountant (CPA) - www.aicpa.org; Certified Financial Advisor (CFA and CIPM) - www.cfainstitute.org; Chartered Institute of Marketing - Chartered Marketer (CM) - http://www.cim.co.uk; Project Management Professional (PMP) - www.pmi.org.
- **Master's programs:** Management (Business, Operational, HR); Marketing (Marketing &Sales, On-line); Business Law; Insurance
- **Corporate programs 1-3-5:** Leadership; Coaching; Corporate communication & PR; Negotiation; Organizational development;

5. Corporate programs 1-3-5

Corporate training programs 1-3-5 addresses mostly middle and top management professionals. The main target of those kinds of programs is to develop managers creative and innovation dimension which make them supporters of change, involving theirs teams in the process of organizational adaptation to the environment and market requests.

In the building process of DIBS we go from the principle of unity and complementarity of theory with practice and guidance: *theory* represent conceptual models, systematic conceptual constructs which are offered on past-future axis (remanence); *practice* suppose applying models to implement concepts, to incorporate them as desirable attitudes and behaviours on present-future axis (actualization); *guidance* as a heuristic activity of implementing, of identifying concrete, pragmatic and individual solutions now or in the visible future (continuum, dynamic).
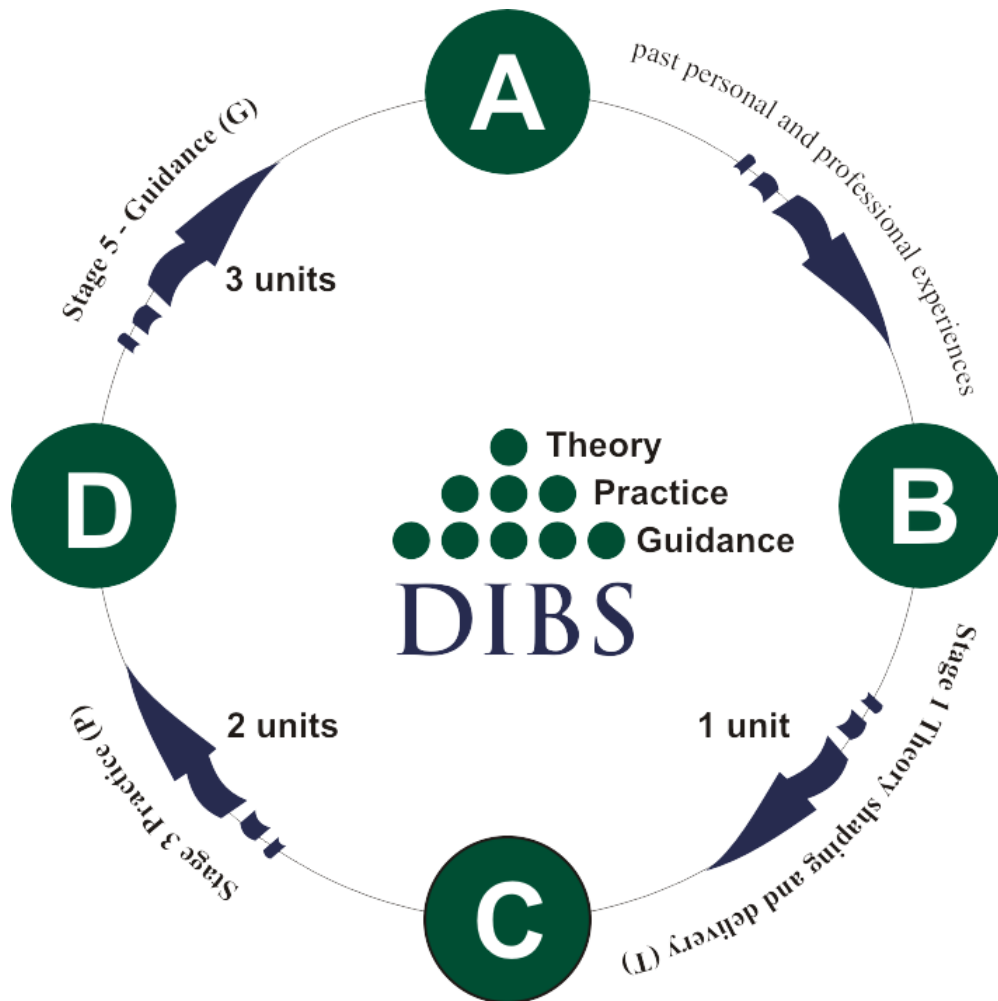
5.1. Corporate Training Programs 1-3-5 Stages:

Point A – is the starting point of the process of gathering anterior experience of participants regarding their knowledge, competences, mentalities, stereotypes and motivations and also the transparency they assume in their communication about self and how they translate their own and their organization assumed reality.

Stage 0 – consist of a workshop where participants share their historic individual experiences (past personal and professional experiences into theirs organization). For an in depth analysis and interpretation this workshop is audio-video recorded on a 15 minutes per participant.

Point B – is the point where an initial analysis and evaluation of need is made through: information gathered on Point A analysis and participant's analysis through questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire has two parts: (a) professional knowledge evaluation (initial evaluation in the field in which the 1-3-5 program is delivered); (b) a self-evaluation. The interview goal is to evaluate the participant motivation from the perspective of acquiring sustainable (durable) and long term predictable results which allow resources regeneration, therefore results should be replicable in the medium and long term without new investments.

Stage 1 Theory shaping and delivery (T)

In this stage, the theory is conceived as a systematic conceptual construct and delivered in a time unit (e.g. 5 hours). Deliverables in this stage are: (a) course support include: program objectives, theme, content and bibliography, each part adjusted to participants; (b) interactive micro-website specific for each program delivery – this micro-website is a part of 1-3-5 program website.

This Stage is ending with a deliverable (e.g. Organizational communication plan structure or Marketing plan structure/content tailored to the industry participants comes)

Point C supposes an intermediary analysis and evaluation (I). Participants are asked to answer to a questionnaire of about 10 questions (5 open and 5 closed), the purpose being to evaluate their new acquired knowledge. This way, we identify knowledge gaps and we have the opportunity to help them fill the gaps through 1 or 2 home work. Then we are prepared to model and calibrate the practice framework. Also, in this point we negotiate the deliverable and its structure.

Actually, in this point we are in a feedback loop which conducts to identifying practice groups for the third stage.

Stage 3 Practice (P)

This stage is delivered through partner companies/organizations. In this stage we approach: case studies – as a non-experimental research of core processes and activities from one or many organizations answering to questions like *how?* and/ or *why?*; workshops with specialists from host companies; individual and group tasks, mainly about developing a deliverable on a concrete case and with limited data. One of these stage goals is to train participants to make decisions in an uncertain environment. In the same time we have a focus on identifying optimal solutions on heuristic cases, presenting and analyzing best practices, introduction of group coaching tools and at the end we aim to develop the implementation plan for the next stage.

Point D – in this point we execute another intermediary analysis and evaluation (II) similar with Point C one. The objective is to assess new hard and soft skill acquired by participants.

Example of hard skills assessed in this point: project management, financial management, budget P&L, contract negotiations, executive leadership, program management, business development, outsourcing, merchandising, strategic planning, mergers and acquisitions, accounting, budgeting, risk management, recruitment, talent development, product launch, direct sales & B2B, marketing, customer service, sales forecasting, technology management, production management, process improvement and others depending on client request.

Soft skills common for all 1-3-5 programs, assessed in this point: Communication (e.g. presentation skills, spoken communication, managing conversations, effective writing), Teamwork (e.g. team building, managing cooperation, diversity and productivity, goal setting and action), Leadership (e.g. inspiring and motivating others, empowerment, influencing change, planning, vision & direction, supervision, coaching and/or mentoring), Client Service (e.g. networking, negotiation, setting and resetting client expectations, building client confidence, seeding and growing the client relationship, opportunity management), Decision Making & Problem Solving (e.g. creativity, flexibility, team problem solving), Managing Time and Pressures (e.g. change, time management, effective meetings), Self Management & Attitude (e.g. stress management, positive attitude and influence, initiative).

Stage 5 - Guidance (G)

This is the stage where implementation plan is applied within the participant's organizations with the guidance of the team who developed the 1-3-5 program. This is an iterative stage, each step being monitored and guided and finally the results are validated by the project team.

Each 1-3-5 program is developed by a program team formed by a theorist (usually a faculty member of the university), a professional specialist (people with high experience in the field of the program) and a consultant. Where is applicable the program team could be formed just by theorist and professional specialist.

A 1-3-5 program is ended with a final report developed for each organization who registered representatives in the program. The final report is elaborated after the validating procedure is finished. Validating team is composed by program team, the participant and the organization representative.

5.2. 1-3-5 Programs Delivery Models:

a. **Independent –** built on a single theme, dimension. This delivery model goal is to transfers skills like general management, negotiation, budgeting, financial analysis etc. Usually, this delivery model suppose 8 to 12 registered organizations with one participant each, but on special request could be applied also in only one organization with a minimum of 6 participants.

b. **Helix single domain –** there are at list three 1-3-5 programs delivered in a single domain e.g. Leadership with 1-3-5 programs like communication – strategy – organizational behavior. This delivery model supposes a minimum of two participants per registered organization, one of them being in a management position. The maximum number of registered organizations should not exceed 6.

c. **Transverse helix –** this delivery model is based on complex and trans-disciplinary business subjects, e.g. performance management or balanced scorecard, who request a minimum of two business functions implicated and at list 3 participants from each registered organization.

6. Conclusions

Danubius International Business School and its unique business education approach represent an answer to the question *How the future business education is look like?*. Actually, DIBS is more than a business education provider, is a business forming and generator agent. Aggregating theory with practice and guidance through 1-3-5 programs and including spiritual dimension along with economic, social and individual dimensions of business, DIBS gives a holistic definition of business beyond what is known today. Everyone knows or feels that economics alone is not enough for a business to reach a sustainable grow and besides land, labour and capital a business should have a spirit, something which some try to name by leadership, brand or goodwill but this is just a small part of what spirit means. We, at DIBS, understand business spirit by knowledge transfer through education with a tangible result.

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