

HELP OFFICE TIMISOARA
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Romanian TNA Report

Implementation

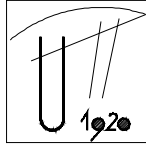
In order to be able to implement the training needs analysis, we translated the survey taking into consideration the proper meaning of each question and granting special attention to the specific terminology used by the Romanian private sector.

After translating and printing it, we disseminated to several local companies in order to provide us with valuable information upon the matter. Though we didn't have much time and there wasn't specific budget for applying the questionnaire, almost all respondents were questioned face to face by one member of the HELP team. A great part in fulfilling this task was played by OTIMMC (The Territorial Office for Small and Medium Enterprises and Commerce), one of our local partners, which had brought its experience gathered over the years in the support of the TNA. Besides confronting the representatives face to face, we have also sent the questionnaire through e-mail to several addresses, but we soon understood that this method was less efficient because we obtained only the requested information, without any comments, being more difficult to draw further conclusions, or even worst, the questionnaire was lacking information, being unable to be used.

The companies interviewed cover different fields. We met with people from the following business areas: production, services, commerce, logistics, transport, tourism, restaurants, pastry, food industry, wood industry, construction, consultancy, printing, music, education, training, car industry, beauty saloons, and others. After finishing the survey, we understood even more that business type goes hand in hand with training needs, and that there is a valuable opportunity for HELP because the need for training programs isn't properly covered by the offer.

Business Response

Considering the economical context in which Romania is at the moment, we were pleasantly surprised to find out that the companies didn't exclude the training from their businesses even if they were in great part conditioned by cutting costs. Most of them declared



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that they were willing to invest in a training program if it proved efficient for their businesses.

Being a young project, HELP was a new concept for many, but all of them showed high interest in the activities we have planned. After receiving their response, we were confirmed once more the importance of the objective pursued by the TNA.

All in all we can declare ourselves satisfied with the companies representatives' attitude towards both training and the survey itself; they appeared concerned by the future of their businesses, fact that determines them to invest, now more than ever, in having highly qualified employees, which can be an important element in making the business, more competitive in the society based on knowledge.

TNA Results

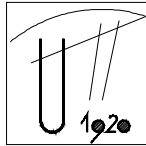
As far as the results obtained through the survey are concerned, they are relevant for the region covered by the Romanian HELP Office. As it was mentioned before, the businesses chosen to be interviewed, represent various fields, have different capacities, function either in urban area or rural area.

Employees

During the period of time dedicated to the survey, we have interviewed 50 representatives of the business sector. 46% of those interviewed represent businesses which have a department specialized in Human Resources and 54% represent businesses which do not have such a specialized department, the tasks belonging to the manager or to someone from administration. Most of the companies which don't have a Human Resources department are micro-enterprises, with less than 10 employees, but there are also several exceptions.

The segmentation of the respondents according to the size of the enterprise represented, is the following:

- Micro: 56%
- Small: 38%
- Medium: 2%
- Large: 4%



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When talking about the importance of either qualification or experience, most of the respondents said that both of them are important, qualification being a proof of the studies graduation, and the experience being the proof of the previous practice. Besides the qualification and experience, we must also consider training because training doesn't change the qualification already obtained, but brings new skills and improves the existing ones, helping the employees to adapt to the technological and methodological changes. Most of the respondents prefer to hire experienced people rather than scholars.

86% declared that they do hire university graduates, only 14% don't. When asked, to what extent were they satisfied with the graduates they hired, 90% declared they were very satisfied with their organizational skills, 72% were very satisfied with their communication skills, 78% very satisfied with the theoretical knowledge of the graduates, 72% very satisfied with their practical skills, and 88% satisfied with their willingness to learn. (This data was obtained through analyzing the results from question B4, top grades 4 and 5).

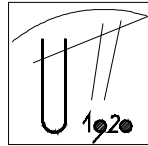
When asked to what extent they consider that universities can provide the type of training required by their business, most respondents (70%) continue to believe that universities are indeed able to offer the specific programs.

These information shows that the universities from the region do offer high quality education and the representatives of the business sector trust their capacity to provide such programs .

Skills and Experience

As far as the skills and experience are concerned, it is more difficult to draw a conclusion whether it is hard or easy to find suitably qualified people for a company because the responses are divided almost equally: 52% consider that it is indeed hard, 48% think is not. When considering experience, the separation becomes more clear, as 60% consider it being hard to find well experienced employees, but, still, 40% think is not difficult.

After analyzing the importance granted by employers to the skills listed, we concluded that they would like to have employees which have all the skills as well developed as possible, even if those skills weren't necessarily relevant to their business or to the job. Most of them ranked the skills high (4) or very high (5), but it wasn't mentioned any other skill except those listed in the questionnaire. The most important skill that an employee should



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have is the ability to deal with customers, but, unfortunately, this ability is mostly lacking, being rated as high also on the list of skills shortages.

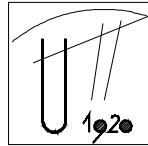
Surprisingly, even if 60% said that it was difficult to find well experienced employees and the majority declared that their employees are lacking customer services skills, most of the employers (86%) declare themselves satisfied with the general level of their employees. This could be due to the fact that they fear personnel changes and prefer to try and improve their own employees rather to bring others, from outside the company.

When speaking about the recruitment modality, most employers use internet, newspapers and recommendations; recommendations because they provide certainty and newspapers and internet because they address a large number of people. This are the most popular ways also because they are the cheapest. If it were to address a private agency for employment, the employers should pay extra; they consider that it is more adequate to invest these money in training, than to pay them only for recruitment, Some employers have also mentioned announcements, radio and television, posters, and job-shops.

Training programs

As far as training programs are concerned, only 32% of the interviewed people declared that their company has regular training programs. 56,25% of the regular programs are held inside the company, either with an external or internal trainer. 68,75% of the respondents who declared that they have regular training programs, declared that they also have annual budget for these in their business plan, probably, the other 31,25% have their own trainers, as regulars, paid from the wedges budget and not needing a budget specially directed towards training. Inside the company, the job level most often offered training is the intermediate one, which covers 56,25% of the offered training. The main type of training offered to employers consists of customer services. Most of the employers consider that the most adequate modality of training is that on-the-job, followed by seminars, which bring a practical approach.

Out of 68% who don't have regular training programs, 47,05% consider that they don't need training, whereas the reason behind the lack of regular training programs of the other 53% is almost equally divided into lack of adequate programs and lack of finance. We were intrigued by the fact that so many declared that they didn't need training and quested a reason why. We can conclude that the reason lies in their size, because 64,29% represent micro enterprises and the other 35,71% of them represent small enterprises. These



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respondents belong to various fields, like bars and restaurants, commerce, production, car fixing, services, tourism, construction and even education.

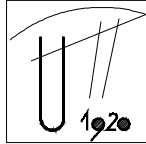
The lack of adequate training programs caught our attention because it showed available opportunities for HELP to develop new trainings that the market needs. The areas in which companies had difficulties in finding suitable programs are: wood industry, waste management, construction, tourism, transport, logistics, commerce, consultancy, beauty saloons.

When asked if they were willing to invest in training if it improved the efficiency and profitability of their business, only half of those who previously affirmed they didn't need training kept their opinion, 80% responding that they would invest in such a program, though, the majority saying that sometime in the future, not immediately.

Statistics show that the strongest influence in choosing a training program, is the financial one, the price being on the top of the list, followed by the objectives of the program.

The reason why some of the interviewed don't invest in training programs is that they face difficulties when looking for such programs. Only 40% responded that they didn't have any trouble in finding the proper programs, the other 60% being equally split between not knowing where to look and not being offered what they needed. After analyzing the numbers we concluded that the most requested and scarce training was in the area of customer services, closely followed by organizational skills and workplace technology.

A 70% majority agreed that a one-stop-shop would be indeed of great help in identifying and meeting the requirements of their company (percentage obtained from the number of respondents which gave grades of 4 and 5). This is where HELP can really make a difference, because by extending the partnership both at the local level and regional, it can identify faster and more proper the actual needs of the companies and in this why start creating the requested programs. Also, here is a chance for international cooperation, because not all the offices will design the same programs and if a certain company needed a special training which is not in the offer of one office, and is not so requested, they can address another office who already has this program, either to offer it, or to send a trainer specialised in the field to cover only a part of the program. In this way there can be created an open network, specialised in offering high quality trainings, incorporating also foreign experience, which tends to be well received by the market.



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Conclusions

Businesses do need training! This is the most important conclusion that we can draw after analyzing the results obtained from the survey. And what is even more important is that they are willing to invest in such programs because they became aware of the importance that human resources capital has upon the well being of their companies. In order to become competitive, businesses don't just need employees, they need professionals which are able to provide high quality services.

There are many training development opportunities that HELP could benefit from, but the one that really stands out, it refers to customer services. Businesses declared their awareness in the possibility to improve their relationship with the customers, and not only the possibility, but the need to do so. Besides the customer services, they admitted that weren't completely satisfied with the soft skills of their employees; soft skills which are the essential basis in offering superior customer services.

Our proposal is to develop one macro-program divided in several individual modules, starting with soft skills shaping, and continuing in such an order that they are related to each other, but being also available separately (technical skills, marketing, management, accountancy, etc.). This is a comfortable form, which also contributes to ensuring sustainability.

Alexandra Iris Mihai

Romanian HELP Office Secretary