

Training Minds

by Ani Ivanova

Elena Altimirska, PhD, and Ivailo Gurkov, managing partners of Business Effect Ltd, disclose the advantages of proper training and consultancy

What is behind the name Business Effect?

IG: Our philosophy. What we do, namely training and consultancy, has to have a tangible effect on our client's business. It may sound extravagant, but we have refused to provide training if we are not certain that the company really needs this.

EA: Behind the name there is a team of professionals in different areas and with different qualifications: psychology, marketing, finance. For us, the feeling that we share the same ideas and values, complement one another and enjoy our work is what matters most.

Can training courses lead to changes in an organisation?

EA: Training courses are part of the measures aimed at making changes in the organisation. For us, this is a process of at least three phases. In phase one, before the training, we do the necessary diagnostic work using tests, interviews and observations. The second phase comprises the design and implementation of the training sessions, which are oriented in a practical way towards the client's business. The third phase includes follow-up

activities, where we monitor and evaluate the implementation of the acquired knowledge and skills, together with the client.

IG: All three phases are equally important for the overall success. Very often, people are after the effect from the second phase alone, but we have to be clear that this is just one of the steps and, no matter how well it is carried out, it is not enough by itself. Also, the company sometimes "gets tired" of the efforts that the third phase requires and then the effect is only short-term. Even the best prepared and implemented training may not achieve the desired results, if there is no actual support from the company management, and if it is not aligned with the business objectives and specific character of the organisation.

Which levels in the organisation hierarchy is it best to train?

IG: Practice shows that executive levels need to acquire and accumulate certain practical skills. In sales, for example, these can be different techniques for managing a successful conversation with the client and mastering certain practical tools. The level of abstraction



changes as we move up the hierarchy: case studies may be drawn from the respective business area and the conclusions and comparisons come from the participants. Group training is not suitable for the top management and the best solution there is coaching. ■



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Business Effect's successful strategies can produce an efficient solution for your entire organisation. Their thorough analysis of your business gives them the edge in helping your management to gain an outsider's view of the organisation and its needs. Also, their knowledge of best practices and management systems will not only help you discover the ones that work for you,

but also assist you in putting them into practice to achieve the desired results.

One important step to improve your company's efficiency is to enhance employee skills. Business Effect helps you in this with training programmes focused on sales and customer care, management skills and human resource management. It can also focus on team building and development, organisational development and culture, and personal efficiency. The analysis that precedes the training is crucial, as it allows the modules to be tailored to your needs. More importantly, the consultant will also monitor the implementation of your staff's newly-acquired knowledge and skills into their workplace performance.

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tried and tested methods and insights into strategic and business planning, efficient use of financial resources and sales process development. Thus the development of management staff and the efficiency of individuals and teams are enhanced. Corporations, too, can improve their performance. Business Effect impart their executive knowledge through consultations on organisational culture and change, management systems and efficient teams. They advise on medium-level management development to improve effectiveness and support long-term strategies.

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