

Doctorate Dissertation

**Management training in Greece:
Evolution from improvisation
to the systematic development
of professional qualifications**

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WBS5260

June 2008



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Key Words: Management, Training, Qualifications

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Summary

Executive management training is a fast growing field in adult training and an important component of a wider demand for reconstruction in the educational system and its orientation towards a closer relationship with the needs of the labour market and the priorities of the business environment.

This study investigates the development achieved in this field in Greece from the initial efforts made by the Greek Productivity Centre, the Hellenic Management Association and the Athens University of Economics and Business in the beginning of the 1960s up to today's development of recognized vocational training programmes and the contribution of Executive MBAs by modern educational organizations, as well as, by both Greek and foreign Business Schools operating in this field.

In particular, this study examines the structure and the content of short-term in-company seminars, open courses and long-term courses leading to Certificates, Diplomas or Master's Degrees and the efforts of introducing distance learning.

The Hellenic Management Association, which is the most reliable management training establishment, is the major case study of the research.

In addition, the contributing factors in the provision of training services, such as the process of designing, organising, implementing and evaluating the courses, are also analyzed together with modern training methods and techniques, trainers' specialization and qualifications, the attitude adopted by companies and the role of the State and supervisory organizations.

The study involves a team of trainers who propose some changes with a view to improving their work and the overall efficiency of training through action research.

In addition, it examines the conditions of developing a model programme leading to an Advanced Diploma in Management, which is designed for executives who are already on the "management threshold" on their way to being promoted to higher managers.

In conclusion, the study establishes a dynamic development in the field, supports the introduction of learner-centred methods and training technologies and makes proposals for improvement and better organisation.

A 514 pages book on "The Art of Management" is an outcome of the project. It is published and delivered to the trainees of several training programmes.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Business training

The training and development of the human resources of companies and organizations, hereinafter referred to as “business training”, is the most important and productive part of lifelong learning, an institution which complements the three-tier educational system. In addition, it contributes to employee specialization equipping them with the necessary qualifications for their job.

Business training is of particular interest to the following:

- Companies and organizations, especially human resources managers and training heads¹.
- Education Companies and Vocational Training Centres (KEK).
- Professional trainers, as well as in-company trainers.
- Some Universities and various foreign university branches in our country which run postgraduate studies for employees and certified vocational training programmes.
- The State, through the organizations that supervise training programmes and their financing, as well as the EU which undertakes part of the financing through relevant projects.
- Trainees who participate in these programmes.

There are three main business training financing sources:

- **Companies** which are interested in training their staff so that they can cope with increased work demands.
- **Employees** who understand that technological change and the conditions of economic life and the labour market necessitate their further training and development.
- **The State** which is interested in establishing a competitive economy in the international environment and recognizes that the qualifications of the country’s labour force make up its main development factor.

As regards the Greek State, business training is financed through certain bodies, mainly through the Greek Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) and European financing projects. On the other hand, employees themselves often pay the fees in order to participate in open programmes organized by education companies.

However, what happens with the companies which wish to train their staff? A company may decide to train certain individuals only if it is convinced that the time, the effort and the money spent will stimulate its employees and will positively affect their work performance, and – most importantly – that it will contribute towards the realization of the company’s goals.

Indeed, human resources training and development, when properly implemented, is the most important investment for companies and organizations as it contributes towards both the professional development of employees and the accomplishment of company goals.

In particular: By “business training” we mean **the training of adults** who participate in the operation of an organization / company, especially in tasks associated with the company’s operation and development. **Business development** is the point of convergence between organizational behaviour and company training, i.e., the way in which the training of staff and executives contributes towards the realization of company goals.

1.2. Management training

Executive training for middle and higher managerial positions or for individuals who are already heads or managers is the most dynamic part of business training. A lot of companies encourage these individuals to attend short-term seminars which specialize in managerial modules, or long-term series of subjects which are certified by an educational organization, or even postgraduate programmes at Master’s Degree level in Business Administration, e.g. Executive MBAs. In recent years, these programmes are particularly prized in the field of business training, but also among adult training programmes, because they tackle the need for a more all-embracing business managerial training of executives.

The advantage of management training when compared with other adult training forms is that it is pursued both by the individuals who are directly interested in them (supervisors and managers) and the companies they work for which undertake part or all of their tuition fees; in addition, the relevant legislation which supports the financing of offered programmes is also a contributing factor.

Management training aims to equip trainees with the necessary qualifications for today’s or tomorrow’s role of managing executives and inspire in them a leading attitude that is both cooperative and responsible in order to achieve consent and synergy in their work.

Management training in Greece is now half a century old. We can consider the year 1960, i.e. the year when the Greek Productivity Centre was founded, as the starting point for systematic management training.

Until then, company and organization executives held some formal qualifications such as a degree in economics, law or technology at the very most or even simply a school-leaving certificate from a vocational Lyceum. Their work experience had also some bearing on their qualifications. We should also include small- and medium-size entrepreneurs as business executives. This is due to the fact that the largest part – approximately 97% – of Greek enterprises in those days, but also today, were small and medium-sized companies².

1.3. Studying management training

This study focuses on investigating the role of management training in Greece, the progress this institution has made from the initial efforts back in the 1960s to this day (2007), the way the institutions serving this field have developed, the procedures for distinguishing professional trainers and consultants, the type and the content of the relevant training programmes, as well as, the potential of this institution in our days, a time of intense change on a social, economic, work and technological level. Furthermore, it looks into modern concepts and trends both in the field of management and in the field of adult training.

To tackle the needs of this project as best as possible, it was necessary to:

- Collect and study the relevant bibliography, as well as, documentary evidence from the field of business, educational organizations and supervisory organizations.
- Study in depth the biggest educational organizations which provide management training services. In particular, I chose the Hellenic Management Association (HMA) as a main case study, the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB) and the Athens Laboratory of Business Administration (ALBA) as supporting case studies.
- Systematically record my personal experience as trainer in the past seventeen years (1990 – 2007), as well as, the experience of my colleague trainers through the use of interviews that were especially designed for this particular purpose.
- Conduct a research among trainees on long-term postgraduate programmes and vocational specialization programmes.
- Design a model general management training programme adapted to the needs of executives that are going to be promoted to managers.
- Collect the findings and present them in a comprehensive and coherent form.
- Make proposals for improvement and for more efficient application of management training in Greece.

1.4. The significance of the project

This project would only be meaningful if its results could be of use to management training stakeholders in Greece. My involvement in the field to date has shown that there is intense interest in improving training programmes which has been mainly expressed by:

- Trainees who devote time, money and personal effort in order to find help with the increased demands in their work and become able for wider and higher level responsibilities, thus improving their career prospects.
- Companies and organizations, both in the private and the public sector, wishing to become more competitive and survive despite the adversities experienced in their field of activity and to invest in their human capital or, at least, to improve their status and practice.
- Educational organizations for whom management training is a component part and main priority.
- The Greek State which aims to help businesses and train their staff through its relevant organizations so that it can help the fields of activity that can survive and develop.
- The European Union which aims at reinforcing national, regional and local economies through its various projects for the benefit of European economic competitiveness.

I believe that research on the factors which have a bearing on the effectiveness and efficiency of management training programmes in Greece can be a decisive

contribution towards meeting the needs of the aforementioned stakeholders because it can:

- Give an overall picture of this particular field, something that is missing today; hence fruitless improvisations are allowed to perpetuate.
- Lead to scientifically documented conclusions which record and interpret the operating conditions of the field.
- Allow definite and feasible proposals to crystallize in order to improve management training.
- Open a window to potential new horizons in the field of management or / and adult training.

However, why should a project like this one be considered to be valid and reliable since the field of social sciences has cast doubt over the possibility of measuring and explaining / interpreting experiential data?

Because, first of all, a combination of methods has been used in order to make sure that the subject in question is fully “encircled”. To be more precise, assiduous supervision was pursued and, in my opinion, it was achieved through bibliographical research (and also through reviewing business documentary evidence, editorials and material found on the Internet), through the study of representative cases and the application of an action research programme which involves, apart from the researcher, some of his fellow teachers on the postgraduate programme in business administration run by the Hellenic Management Association, and also through the trainees on this particular course and the designers of the programme.

Secondly, because the trainees are the executive crème-de-le-crème of Greek businesses and organizations who have volunteered to receive training in the methods and practices of modern management (a lot of whom at a mature age) with a view to offering the best they can to themselves, the companies and the organizations they serve and the community in which they function and necessarily refer to.

Thirdly, because the person signing this research was an executive in small/medium-sized companies for a number of years (1977-1990) and later became a business consultant and trainer (1990-2007). His experience offers a subjective inside approach of the issue in hand, while it simultaneously allows him to have access to necessary resources that are necessary for the project. In addition, he has studied Economic Sciences (BSc, University of Athens) and Organizational Behaviour (MA, Middlesex University) which have afforded him a point of view that is as much dispassionate and objective as possible and have distanced him from all biases that could undermine the foundations of scientific approach.

Chapter 2: Terms of Reference / Objectives and Literature Review

2.1. Subject matter of the research project

The subject matter of this research project is management training. As already mentioned before, management training is the training of executives who are intended for middle and higher managerial positions or for individuals who are already heads and managers.

How is this particular subject defined within the wider framework of both adult learning and business administration? To understand how, we need to clarify a few terms.

First of all, the term “training”, or to be more precise “training and development of human resources” refers to the efforts made by adult employees to train themselves in the field of their work and to reinforce themselves with knowledge, skills and suitable behaviours that will make them more effective, efficient and reliable. In many cases, these efforts are supported, financed and organized by the companies or organizations where they work and, in some cases, by employers’ or employees’ associations from the respective trading sectors. The State and the European Union support, finance and supervise the application of a lot of such training programmes. These programmes may be short-term, i.e. lasting a few days, middle-term, i.e. lasting a few months, or long-term, i.e. lasting many months or even years. The qualifications awarded to individuals who attend these programmes may be simple Certificates of Attendance, Diplomas, Postgraduate Diplomas, Bachelor Degrees, Master’s Degrees or even Doctorates. Therefore, the term training is not necessarily distinguished from the term “education”, since some training programmes are full courses that are taught by recognized institutions of post-secondary education and lead to degrees³.

The term “adult learning” and the interrelated terms “adult training” and “adult education” refer to the training of adults, employees or unemployed individuals or even to the broader social education system (e.g. foreign language lessons, sailing lessons, parenting, cooking, yoga, Open Universities, etc).

In the last few decades, the terms “lifelong learning” and “continuous learning”, which are associated with the need to continuously adapt work qualifications to the ever-changing conditions of the work environment, have prevailed, especially when referring to employees.

Employees working in the organized environment of a company or organization are trained in specific operations of that business. In this case, we mean “business training”. The most important part of business training is management training, i.e., the training of executives in matters concerned with the broader field of business administration studies, such as organizational behaviour, marketing, production, logistics, management accounting, financial management, information systems, etc.

Figure 1 shows the relationship of management training and business administration studies in the context of adult learning:

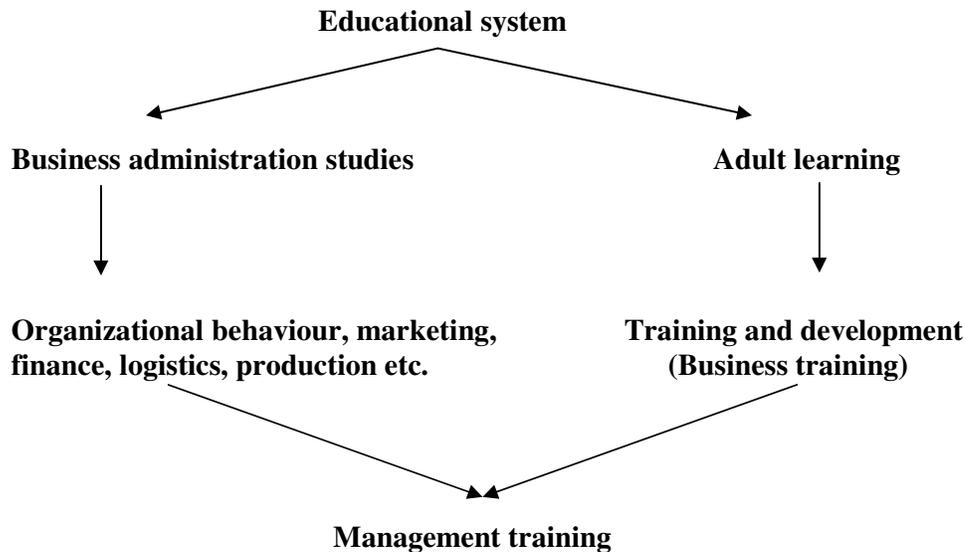


Figure 1. Management training in the wider context of business administration studies and adult learning

We must admit that management training is a relatively new discipline of cognition since it was developed in the developed countries (North America, Western Europe, Japan, Australia), mainly after World War II. In Greece it first appeared hesitantly in the beginning of the 1960s, was reinforced during the 1980's with the help of European Union financing and has been impressively developed from the 1990s to this day. Today, management training enters a mature phase leading to a systematized development of professional qualifications.

2.2. Aim of the research project

As soon as I started tackling the subject matter of the project, it was particularly hard to point out its dimensions and identify the basic problem of management training in Greece. I soon realized that the whole issue is not that simple as one could surmise on prima facie evidence. On the contrary, there are many concealed aspects that are associated with the broader trends of post-war Greek society. I, therefore, had to examine a lot of social, economic and political factors which have influenced and shaped the conditions both in the Greek educational system and the work environment of businesses and organizations.

- Social factors: The social stratification of the Greek society during the post-war years. The Greek educational system, priorities and impediments.
- Economic factors: Aspects of development in post-war Greece. Fields of activity that benefit and fields of activity that decline. Business administration, domestic mentalities and imported methods.
- Political factors: The role of the State in the economy. The network of customer relations. Government politics and the political party character of Public Administration.

I also had to study modern education theories and trends, especially as regards the training of adult employees. Technology plays an important part in the project. Moral issues arise both with regard to the content of training programmes and the ways they apply. Today's challenges in the field of business and an investigation of oncoming changes had to be incorporated in the project as well.

Finally, after numerous notes and material that I had collected, I brought into play the useful – albeit sometimes painful – Occam's razor⁴ and defined the main aim of this research project:

To investigate the multi-faceted role of management training in the Greek business environment and to find out the ways through which it contributes to the development of specific qualifications (knowledge, skills and attitudes) and the development of administrative capacity in the executives who are interested in taking up head positions, higher managerial positions or general management positions in businesses and organizations.

2.3. Questions of the project

In order to serve the main aim of the project as thoroughly as possible, I had to put forth twelve separate questions as follows:

1. What is the wider social, economic and political environment and the historic context of management training in Greece during the last fifty years (1960-2007)?

What were the pioneering institutions of business and management training? What social and economic factors contributed to the creation of relevant programmes? What is the role of political life on decisions concerning employee and executive training? How did this institution evolve and who were the "big players" during these decades? What is the situation like today?

2. What is the role of the main interested parties in management training?

How do the basic stakeholders support management training and how do they attempt to shape the working conditions of the institution?

3. How is management training associated with the development of administrative capacity?

What do we mean by "administrative capacity"? What is the role of initial training, previous work experience and individual personality in the moulding of administrative capacity? How can management training contribute towards its further development?

4. What type of administration knowledge, skills and attitudes do executives need to develop in order to cope with the current and future needs of a changing business environment?

What kinds of changes take place in the modern business environment and what are they due to? What is the role of manpower? What is the necessary knowledge of today's executives? What are the skills that help them cope with the increased changing needs? What attitudes facilitate better adaptation?

5. What are the objectives and content of standard management training programmes?

What training programmes (in-company, open participation, long-term) are addressed to executives aiming at developing their administrative capacity? What do they focus on? What are the prevalent trends and where is future interest directed to?

6. How do educational organizations and companies cope with the needs of management training?

What main educational organizations and companies appeared in Greece addressing the training needs of business and organization executives? Did they manage to tackle their objectives efficiently? What is the situation like today?

7. What is the profile of trainees attending management training programmes?

How are trainees categorized? Are they self-financed or receiving benefits and how? Do they join voluntarily or are they obliged to join? What types of businesses attract them to training programmes? What programmes do the various ages prefer?

8. How do trainees respond to the existing management training programmes?

Do they attend them with interest? How do they participate? What are the training programmes they give priority to? How do they evaluate them? What would they like to see changed?

9. What are the qualifications and the role of professional trainers in order to teach and facilitate trainee learning?

What are the criteria for selecting trainers on training programmes? How are trainers trained? What is the content and the remaining characteristics of a typical trainer training programme? What institutions train the trainers? What are the theoretical documentations and the newest trends in this field?

10. What are the proper training methods for developing administrative capacity?

What is the contribution of adult training theory on this matter? What are the most usual training methods? What training methods and techniques are preferred by trainees and why? How is management training evaluated? How does new technology influence this matter?

11. What can we do (trainers, educational organizations, the State) to improve management training and make it more effective?

What do we mean when we talk about management training effectiveness? What can a management training trainer do to improve his job? What should be done by educational organizations? What is the role of training managers and HR managers? What is the contribution made by the State and how could this be improved?

12. What form and analytical timetable should a model basic management training programme have that is deemed necessary for today's heads and managers and tomorrow's leaders?

What do we mean by "basic management training"? What is the form of such a model programme? What should be included as its subject matter and why? What could stakeholders expect from such a model training programme?

The questions above aspire to clarify the initial question, i.e., how management training contributes to the development of administrative capacity in Greek business and organization executives and how this can be improved. Can these questions shed light on the entire spectrum of the issue? I could not claim such a thing since the discipline of management training has not been investigated for a long time. No doubt, there are other factors that have a bearing which could not be investigated. Such factors may be psychological, social, economic and technological. However, I believe that the answers that arise offer an overall, comprehensive picture of the subject being examined at least in this early fifty-year-old stage since its first appearance. Future studies and new applications will delve into the matter and will provide directions which we cannot even imagine at present. I hope that my work will contribute towards developing the perennial study and better understanding of the subject and towards facilitating the progress made by management training in my country and further afield.

2.4. Literature review

This chapter deals with the bibliography of the research project and its contribution to the interpretation of training and development.

I have used a multi-faceted bibliography. Books written in Greek, both originals and in translation, books written in English, articles from special periodicals and specialized newspaper editorials, texts from specialized sites and webpages. I consulted my personal library which was enriched with a lot of up-to-date editions for the purpose of this project. To this end, I consulted my colleagues, University Professors, the Internet, as well as the shelves and databases of bookstores specializing in this particular subject.

I received significant help from the business administration lending library of the Hellenic Management Association which has more than 5,000 volumes on business administration and, generally, on economic and social sciences.

I must point out that the bibliography I have used is mainly concerned with three categories (the following references are indicative and typical since in actual fact the bibliography used extends to more works):

- All kinds of texts (books, articles, papers published on academic Internet sites) from the field of management and organizational behaviour. Naturally, the first among them are some classic works such as Peter Drucker's books, *The practice of management*, *Managing for results* and *Management Challenges for the 21st century*. The first one of these books is still up-to-date even though it is a few decades old since its first publication and has inspired this project because it points out the basic keystones of management that remain unsurpassed to this day. I have also used the thoroughly researched paper by Chris Argyris, *Organization learning: a theory of action perspective*

which is a point of reference to the theory of organizational behaviour and its relationship with the field of educational studies. The papers by De Geus *The corporation, a living organization* and the pioneers of human potential movement Abraham Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* and Douglas McGregor *The human side of enterprise* are on the same wavelength. The excellent manual by John Adair, *Leaders, not bosses* which revolutionized the process of transforming modern management from a dry manipulation tool used by organizations and people into an inspired leadership programme. The detailed studies by Daniel Goleman and Richard Boyatzis on emotional intelligence in the workplace regarding businesses which develop human resources instead of being exclusively oriented to short-term profit-making, thus mortgaging their long-term survival. I should not leave out Peter Senge's revolutionizing work *The fifth discipline: the art and practice of the learning organization* which takes the studies carried out by Argyris and McGregor a step further since it considers the modern business to be like a sponge that absorbs learning from its environment and that it does not only systematize it through knowledge management but also spreads it to human resources through training and development. I could do no less than draw ideas from the synthesizing study by P. Montana and B. Charnov entitled *Management* which is continuously being enhanced from one publication to the next with new data, as well as from the practical skills manual by R. Heller and T. Hindle, *Essential manager's manual*. This manual focuses more on manager behaviour issues and provides a framework-guide for training since it has proved useful to many professional management trainers as a tested signpost. From the Greek bibliography available, I distinguished the books written by the University Professors of the University of Piraeus, Leonidas Hitiris *Organizational Behaviour* and H. Kanellopoulos, *Management, effective administration*, and the Professor of Athens University of Economics and Business and Head of the Executive MBA programme, Dimitris Bourandas, *Management*. I have also used my own book *The Art of Management, sixteen simple lessons*, which was published at the end of 2006 and is updated with the most recent developments in the scientific field of business administration and the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes of middle and higher executives. In addition, I found some interesting papers for my project on www.managementhelp.org and www.hr-guide.com.

- Relevant texts from the field of training and development of the human resources, as well as, other general educational papers. A special place in this unit is reserved for the work by Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright, *Human Resource Management*, in its Greek edition edited by the Panteion University Professor, K.G. Athanassopoulos, especially the chapter of the first volume that deals with training and development. Also, the book by L. Rae, *Be the best trainer*, the book by Sophie Courau, *The basic "tools" of adult trainer* and the book by D. Noyé et al, *A practical guide for trainers*, which are all practical manuals for new trainers. The classic work by Reg Revans, *The Origin and growth of action learning*, which is itself a starting-point for action learning and the relevant action research. With regard to training evaluation, the books by P. Bramley, *Evaluating training effectiveness*, C. Hamblin, *Evaluation and control of training*, D. Kirkpatrick, *Evaluation of training, training and development handbook* and R. Boyatzis et al,

Innovation in professional education: Steps on a journey from teaching to learning which introduces the concept and significance of emotional intelligence in management training. From the Greek bibliography available, I also distinguished the book by Antonis Katsalis, *Trainers' Training*, a practical guide on how to train the trainers. The Internet sites on www.tcm.com and www.astd.org were also particularly helpful.

- Texts that are concerned with the methodology of research in the educational environment and the methodology of research for writing doctorate theses. A work that merits special reference in this case is the voluminous research edited by Eleni Katsarou and Vassilis Tsafos, *From research to teaching, the educational action research*, which is concerned with a host of action research applications in the context of the Greek education system that have taken place in the last ten years. In particular, the chapter “The educator as researcher” provided me with useful information and ideas. I can also say the same about the books of Argyris, C. Putnam, R. & Smith, D., *Action Science: Concepts, methods and skills for research and intervention*, and Lewin, K., *Field Theory in Social Science*. In addition, I have used information from the books written by the Professor of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Petros Gemtos, *Methodology of Social Sciences*, volumes 1 and 2. In particular, his remarks concerning the difficulties and opportunities of the participant observatory during my research were useful as a guide for my entire project.

Here is a remark I think to be necessary: Since bibliography on management is driven to a great extent by intense orientation towards action and by facile “prescriptions”, I have tried to remain unbiased and keep a distance from all formulas in order to assume a critical stance and ensure the project’s reliability.

2.5. Work – based documents review

I tried to find as much representative material from the work environment as possible for the needs of the project. I contacted the main educational organizations and companies I refer to in my project, as well as state organizations supervising professional adult training. I also tried to find, and in many cases it proved useful for comparing and for new ideas, relevant material from the Internet, mainly on British, European Continental and American sites of educational organizations which are somehow involved in management training. The material I collected can be divided into the following categories:

- Printed matter from educational organizations and companies. This includes information and promotional leaflets, as well as, information from the respective sites of the Hellenic Management Association, Primus / Business and IT Training, Anaptyxis / Vocational Training Centre, Global Training, the Athens Laboratory of Business Administration, Athens University of Economics and Business / Executive MBA programme, University of Indianapolis / Executive MBA. I should also point out that I have found a very well tested questionnaire about broadening business training needs on the website of the Hellenic Management Association at www.eede.gr.

- Printed matter from state supervisory and certification organizations of professional adult training. This category includes information leaflets and additional application and evaluation material of OAED's training programmes, leaflets, books, CDs and DVDs by EKEPIS, leaflets and educational material from the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government, leaflets and educational / research books from the Greek Productivity Centre, as well as, legislative material that has been published in the Hellenic Government Gazette. For all the above institutions, I searched for web-based material either from official sites or from other research sites. In addition the site by EKEPIS (www.ekepis.gr) contains useful information about the current situation in the field of vocational and professional training in Greece.
- Information on management training from the webpages of the British Institute of Management, the British Institute of Sales and Marketing Management, the Chartered Institute of Marketing, the European Marketing Confederation, the American Management Association and other educational organizations. Finally, the material collected from printed matter and websites of British and American Universities running courses in Greece that offer training programmes in business administration proved particularly helpful.

Work – based documents function in the context of this research project as supplementary material to the main bibliography, the case studies and action research. They are significant because they provide revealing evidence about the institutions they represent and the way they understand management training.

In particular, the documents of the educational organizations and companies have contributed towards an important part of the research and provide hard, comparative evidence regarding the application of management training.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. The methodological questions

The methodological question has preoccupied scientists, especially scientists from the social sciences, because it has to do with the validity and reliability of the scientific approach and, therefore, with the value of findings, conclusions and possible suggestions arising from research. When talking about the validity of research, we mean that what needed investigation has been properly and lawfully investigated, indeed. Reliability means that we are capable of reaching consistent results that arise from the application of research methods.

In order to define the methodological question, we shall use simple interrogative wording in the way that a primary school teacher would use in order to ask his pupils to identify the best route for going from point A, the point where we are now, to point B, which we have defined as our destination point.

The central question for a research at doctoral level is:

- What is the most suitable methodology for this particular research project?

Thereafter, individual questions arise which depend on the central question. Some of these questions may have to be answered first in order to help clarify the main question properly:

- What are the available, distinguished research methods that are used in the field of work based learning studies?
- Why have I chosen this particular methodology for my research?
- What combination of methodological approaches does the selected methodology afford me?
- What opportunities and obvious risks are associated with these approaches?
- What collecting data techniques will ensure that I have used the approaches described above correctly?
- How will I explain / interpret the findings of the research so that I can reach synthetic conclusions and possibly proposals for improvement?
- How shall I include the necessary moral / legal limitations regarding personal data and other ethical factors in my research project?
- How shall I ensure the participation of people and organizations deemed necessary for the realization of the research?

In this way, research is invested with the characteristics of deliberate scientific activity so that it can be regarded as a piece of the wider cognitive corpus of this particular discipline or an interdisciplinary field which is the point where two or more disciplines meet successfully.

3.2. General methodological observations

*Theory without experience is empty,
though experience without theory is blind.*

Immanuel Kant

*The owl of Minerva spreads its wings
only with the falling of the dusk.*

G.W.F. Hegel

According to modern epistemological perception, the classic concept of science as certain knowledge is gradually being replaced by the idea that science is a hypothetical-productive activity which pursues truths that are not self-evident and clear but depend on the empirical confirmation of their respective predictions. This new view about science excludes the old idea of a continuously increasing knowledge which does not challenge the established foundations and leads to a constant review of the foundations and hypotheses in the context of a dynamic cognitive process. It was Karl Popper (Popper, 1977) who moulded a creative methodology based on the universal application of the principle of criticism both on theoretical structures and on the discussion concerning axiological-deontological principles and rules. In this way, science is seen as a rational activity which advances on uncertain foundations increasing our information potential and eliminating our erroneous ideas about the world.

The idea of cumulative knowledge and even of the view of science as a rational activity were challenged by T.S. Kuhn (Kuhn, 1962) who maintained that cognitive progress could exist only within the context of an established temporary paradigm (of normal science). He also asserted that the various paradigms are incompatible between one another and show an inconsistency that does not allow us to conceive science as a process converging towards the truth. A more extreme position was maintained by P. Feyerabend in his last works: Science “is an ever-increasing ocean of mutually incompatible – and perhaps even incommensurable) alternatives. Nothing has been finally settled and no point of view can be eliminated from all-inclusive theorizing” (Feyerabend, 1975). Rationalism is only an intellectual tradition among a host of other traditional types of human thought.

It can be said that Kuhn’s and Feyerabend’s views consist the very opposite of the Platonic-Aristotelian ideal of science as certain knowledge of unalterable truths. They may be also explained as a reaction against the extreme rationalism which seemed to dominate the investigation of the foundations of sciences in post-war years which limited the role of creative imagination and the importance of social and cultural factors in the shaping of scientific activity through the formulation of strict methodological rules (Gemtos, 1986).

The methodology of scientific research programmes, especially in the field of social sciences (even though my intention was not limited to those) owes a lot to Popper’s student, I. Lakatos. According to him, core elements of science are not individual cases, but fully-blown scientific-research programmes. These programmes include a hard core that is made irrefutable by a methodological decision and a protective zone which includes reviewable hypotheses. The history of science is a story of rival programmes. The idea of a scientific programme may be regarded, as Lakatos explicitly points out (Lakatos, Musgrave, 1970), as a rational reconstruction of the notion of Kuhn’s paradigm.

The scientific programme must not be regarded as a kind of Weltanschauung (cosmic theory) like Kuhn’s paradigm turns out to be. From this point of view, normal science is in reality a scientific programme that has acquired monopolizing power (Gemtos *ibid*). However, in the history of science exclusive prevalence of a paradigm has hardly occurred and when it did it was only for very short periods of time. Lakatos’s

view is deontological in character. “Wherever Kuhn sees paradigms, I see rational scientific programmes” (Lakatos, *ibid*). However, when does scientific progress exist for Lakatos? In the context of a scientific programme, we have an increase of information regarding reality if there is progressive shifting of problems either in theory (prediction of new circumstances that had not been foreseen up to now), or empirically (de facto discovery of new circumstances). In any case, experience remains the “impersonal referee of scientific debate” (Lakatos, *ibid*).

3.3. Contemporary methodology of social sciences

The idea of a special methodology of human sciences which focuses on the understanding of human undertakings runs across the entire history of civilization starting from G. Vico’s work who observed that human society and its institutions are accessible to human thought because they are man-made (Gemtos, *ibid*). Hermeneutics took shape in the nineteenth century and prevailed in the field of sciences mainly through Dilthey (Gemtos, 1987), who established hermeneutic understanding (*Verstehen*) as the basis of relative cognition theory in contrast to explanation (*Erklären*) which prevailed in the field of physical sciences. The so-called hermeneutic circle was regarded as the cornerstone of this methodology. The inclusion of the researcher-observer in the context of the subject being researched equips him with a pre-conception of this subject, which is an integral part of cognition. In addition, the researcher’s prejudices are, for the supporters of hermeneutics, inherent in the hermeneutic process and are positive to a great extent. For the older generation hermeneutic methodologists, the content of the hermeneutic circle is a fundamental rule: As the whole is understood by its parts, so the parts themselves can only be understood by the whole. However, this line of thinking produced a logical cyclic problem. More recent views consider the hermeneutic circle to arise from the preconception of the researcher which is due to the fact that both the researcher and the subject under examination belong to the same traditional relationship. The researcher engages in a traditional message on the basis of a horizon of expectations shaped by tradition itself (Gemtos, *ibid*).

During the latter half of the twentieth century many efforts were made to blunt the contrast between understanding (*Verstehen*) and explanation (*Erklären*), and to conceive the process of understanding to some detail. G.H. Wright reminds us that Aristotle had developed the idea of practical syllogism (Wright, 1957). According to that idea, action is the type of human behaviour with the internal characteristic of expediency and the external characteristic of muscular activity and its consequences on the external world; this is to say that it is neither a purely inward activity nor a purely reflex behaviour.

Wright divides the consequences of action into results which have a purposeful content and consequences which are the lateral consequences and side effects of that action. Wright’s methodology puts the teleological explanation, a form of justified explanation based on the goal set by practical syllogism, in the centre of its attention. However, after a while he accepted the criticism exercised by W. Stegmüller, who pointed out that practical syllogism does not explain the action itself but brings it under a system of objectives and pursuits that makes it “understandable” (Gemtos, 1987). Thus, the hermeneutic-perceptive method finds its way back into the methodology of social sciences.

How does this affect modern research? We could say that it puts in the centre of attention the **qualitative** characteristics of a phenomenon pushing the **quantitative** characteristics into a secondary role, as supporting evidence of the findings rather than as an explanation. Qualitative characteristics can be understood and interpreted rather than explained.

As regards the consequences of actions that arise after practical syllogisms, it is particularly difficult to impute intentions and actions to only a few certain reasons. These are, therefore, multi-factorial phenomena and nobody can ascribe to them a deterministic relationship and, therefore, an explanation.

Let's take an example from the field of business. A company's commercial manager finds out that there has been a decline in sales and seeks to find out the reasons why this is so. The salespersons point out to him that the product (a cool air electric fan) is not known to people and shop-owners refuse to take supplies because they are afraid that it will remain unsold, since consumers look out for products that are already well known. So the commercial manager proposes that higher executives should hold a meeting in order to decide on an advertising campaign. The general manager asks the opinion of the financial manager. The financial manager then asks the commercial manager what it is going to achieve, and when, in relation to the cost of the advertising campaign. In other words, he looks into the Return On Investment (ROI)⁵ of this particular action. However, despite the fact that the cost can be evaluated, the benefit is only expected and, for this reason, the commercial manager cannot give any guarantees. The production manager counter-proposes to improve the product's packaging to make it more attractive to consumers. The human resources manager then proposes a training programme on sale techniques for salespeople which, in his opinion, will make them more effective in selling. The general manager decides to split the available budget between all three. So, some money is given for limited duration television advertising, some money for putting a notice about the product's benefits on the packaging and collaboration with a training company is also agreed upon for the salespersons' short-term training. Summer is drawing near and all the media focus on the oncoming heat wave. The product sells like hot bread. The commercial manager rejoices and says that his prediction has been confirmed. The production manager maintains that the success made is the result of his idea. The human resources manager says that the training programme made the salespersons more able to overcome their problem. Finally, the general manager says: No matter what you say, had it not been for the heat wave, we wouldn't have made that success...

3.4. Methodology of work based learning studies and research

*If the only tool you have is a hammer,
you tend to see every problem as a nail.*
Abraham Maslow

Talking about the methodology of work based research, it is necessary, first of all, to point out its principal characteristic, which is the researcher's double identity: On the one hand, he is an active employee in a particular field of activity, with previous experience that he cannot possibly ignore; on the other hand, he is a researcher in the same field of activity which, in this way, is being transformed into a special discipline of cognition in which he is obliged to carry out his research while complying with the

relevant necessary scientific specifications to the letter. In this way, two attitudes are shaped towards the object of work and research.

As an employee he has developed a whole series of relationships and associations with people, groups and organizations of this field of activity. He has also been influenced by the dominant culture in his work environment and has possibly adopted some mentalities and attitudes. He has his own likes and dislikes. Perhaps he is not aware of it, but, through the years, he has built a particular framework, a pattern through which he looks at things, interprets them and evaluates them. Like the passing of time that furrows the face with wrinkles, serving a particular work object shapes abilities, determines the type of acquired knowledge and labels things, signposts our course and focuses the eyes. However, it also favours the creation of selective preferences, prejudices or even stereotypes which prompt the worker to perceive his subjective views as objective reality.

As a researcher he looks for that evidence in his sources that will lead him to interpret dispassionately and thoroughly the parameters of the phenomena and may even propose unbiased conditions and ways to improve the operation of his field of work and its relevant tasks. He organizes his material in such a way as to highlight the crucial parts that will lead to productive results. He selects his tools and the proper research techniques that befit the cognitive field and the particular conditions of the environment under investigation.

He browses through the bibliography in order to discover references that will shed light on the object of the research and will place it within a wider context in order to become more easily understandable.

In the light of the above double capacity, it becomes obvious that he is an insider researcher; therefore, participant observation is one of the basic characteristics of the methodology, a method of data collection and analysis that involves a researcher joining, and becoming immersed in a social situation. This participation in everyday life provides an opportunity to observe, experience and describe actions, interactions and cultural patterns.

The researcher observes a phenomenon in which he actively participates. He is not simply near the situation being investigated but inside it and is a component part of its operation. This means that special effort and constant awareness is needed in order to avoid any prejudices and be able to sufficiently detach himself from the situation. On the other hand, he enjoys the privilege of having easier and more direct access to resources, people, situations and cases that will positively help him in his research.

3.5. The insider researcher

My personal case has all the characteristics described above (3.4). My work experience includes both work in an organized business environment and many-year educational work with business and organization executives.

From 1977 until 1990 and from 1995 until 1996, I worked as an employee and executive in various fields and in different positions; in a multinational company environment, in publishing companies, in the media and in business consulting.

From 1990 to this day (2007), I have uninterruptedly worked as a training and development consultant throughout Greece, and also in Cyprus, Romania, Italy and England and collaborated with big educational organizations and companies, but also directly, with all kinds of businesses from different fields of activity.

Apart from the above, I have participated in Greek and European research programmes in the past fifteen years and have presented economic and business issues especially in the field of Human Resources Management at Greek and international conferences.

Furthermore, my studies in economic sciences and organizational behaviour and also my participation to a “train-the-trainer” programme by EKEPIS, have also helped me decisively in my research objectives.

As an insider researcher, I should therefore admit that I am influenced and interact with the following:

- Educational organizations, institutes and companies with which I have collaborated in the past or with those that I am still collaborating.
- The companies whose executives I train, their policies and their procedures.
- Public supervisory organizations.
- The organizations of vocational accreditation for trainers.
- Direct colleagues and education designers from educational organizations.
- The forces and trends on the training and development market.
- The existing professional ethics in the field of training and development.
- The expectations of the clients of affiliated companies which train their executives.
- My colleague trainers.
- My overall working and teaching experience.
- The content of my studies and my research projects.
- My family.



Figure 2. Insider researcher interactions.

3.6. Research approach

An effective research design for the practitioner researcher usually starts both from a qualitative and a quantitative point of view. This research deals with the field of social sciences. We could also say that it is concerned with the intersecting area where two different fields meet one another: The field of business studies and the field of education studies. This is clearly shown in figure 3. We can see the common ground

that is formed by the intersection of the two disciplines of cognition. Management training requires an interdisciplinary approach. However, these are two different disciplines of cognition of the wider field of social sciences.

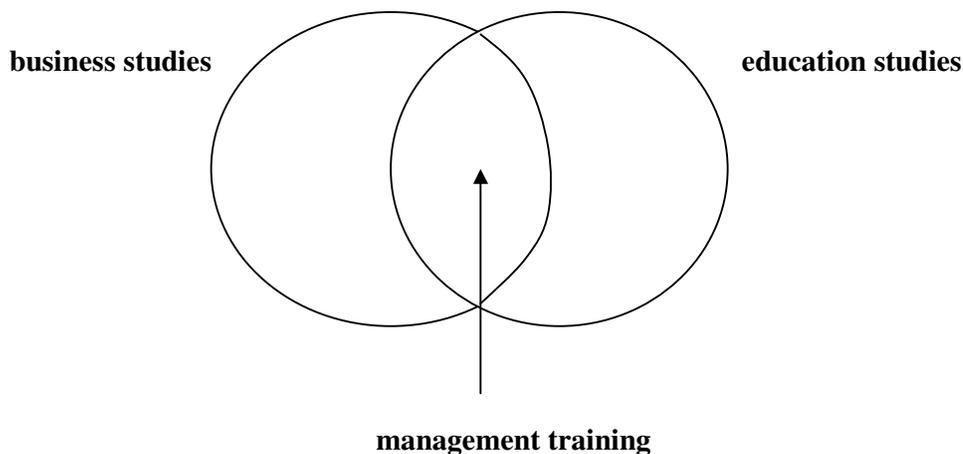


Figure 3. The interdisciplinary character of the research

We have already seen that in the field of social sciences, research is mainly concerned with qualitative characteristics. Any quantitative characteristics that may arise play a secondary, auxiliary role and help to understand qualitative characteristics further. This research follows precisely this rationale.

The orientation of research is mainly **qualitative**, because management qualifications don't refer to measurable, quantitative standards. Management ability has to do with the way managers can apply their knowledge and skills. If the aim of the research were to investigate management efficiency, then the orientation would be more quantitative. In addition, evaluating the effectiveness of training programmes has a long tradition of qualitative approach, even though questionnaires which could lead to a statistical survey of quantitative answers are used in some of its stages. However, these are based on personal, subjective opinion (Alexakis, 2006).

This research has been carried out both in the field of action and at the office.

Research in the field of action is used in order to find out what happens in the real field where events associated with the object being investigated actually take place. The data collected in this way are regarded as primary and are of an experiential nature. In particular, in work based studies, field research takes place in the researcher's work environment. I have complied with this principle, but I have also visited many other institutions, companies and organizations of the education sector, interviewed field "specialists" and handed out questionnaires to a selected sample of trainees.

Research at the office means all those research activities which do not necessitate a visit to the field of action. These are carried out when we are at our office. I, therefore, worked on the administration and analysis of the trainees' survey, the analysis of the documents I collected from various organizations, the study of bibliography and, finally, the composition of this dissertation.

3.7. Research methods

Various distinguished research methods are used in the field of work based learning studies. The six most widely known among those are action research, case study, survey, ethnography, experiments and soft systems.

Action research aims at applying research on practical matters that take place in the everyday work environment. It brings change to some variables and results in the monitoring of the consequences of that change.

Case studies focus on some examples from the work environment being investigated. These examples are examined in detail and in depth.

Surveys are usually associated with putting forward a number of questions to groups of people; sometimes, however, they are also associated with research on objects, materials or constructions. Questionnaires and interviews are the techniques that are usually employed.

Ethnography places the researcher in the position of an observer who participates in the study group at the same time.

Experiments refer to the creation of a simulated, controlled situation and to monitoring the consequences brought upon through the changes made by some variables that are changed.

Soft systems aim at realizing changes that are desired by the existing system and the work / business culture or by the culture of the groups being affected. Action research methods, a case study and a survey have been used in this project.

Action research is a proper method for such a project. Action oriented research is intended to increase knowledge in order to improve professional performance or some other field of action (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). This method has already a rich tradition of implementation in education and training, so I felt that the ground was solid enough and I would not lose myself in dangerous improvisations. Action research was focused on the implementation of extended management training programmes and the possible improvements and / or changes that could happen. An action plan that I made in collaboration with some of my colleagues in a train – the – trainer certification programme of EKEPIS, was a product of this action research.

Essential element of the research is the major **case study** of the Hellenic Management Association (HMA), which completes 45 years of operation in the management training and consultancy field. I have the opportunity to be a trainer in HMA for the last 14 years. I teach Management in the HMA MBA programme (Organizational Behaviour I & II, General Management, Human Resources Management, Total Quality Management, Corporate Social Responsibility), in the Diploma in Marketing (granted by the European Marketing Confederation), in the Diploma in Sales Management (granted by the British Institute of Sales and Marketing Management), in the Basic Management Programme and in open and in-company seminars, so I am a practitioner – researcher in my own working field.

Complementary elements of the research are the minor case studies of ALBA (Athens Laboratory of Business Administration), a non-for-profit foundation of management training that grants Executive MBA and specialized MSc degrees to experienced managers and other professionals, and the Executive MBA programme of Athens University of Economics and Business Studies. Both organizations have international reputation and their competitiveness is broadly recognized.

Statistical data of the last decade contribute in the minor but indispensable quantitative part of the research. I have full access in the databases of HMA and good cooperation with the relevant department. I investigated thoroughly the available

bibliography and the whole documentation from current and past training programmes. The last include promotional material, procedures rules (including ISO 9001 standards), assessment tools and instrument papers, as well as training notes and additional presentation material. As a trainer I have full access to the HMA special business library (5,000 of business and economic books and magazines – Greek and English).

A **survey** is included in the research in order to be more inclusive with the participation of trainees, trainers, training coordinators, human resources managers and training and development managers / supervisors.

For the needs of the project it was required to be involved and interviewed:

- Trainees, in long – term training programmes. 122 trainees were involved in the project. They were selected from the Hellenic Management Association courses.
- Trainers, full – time and part – time. 15 trainers (specialists in general management, marketing, sales, human resources, production, finance, accounting) were interviewed.
- 10 Training coordinators of degree – granting courses, open seminars and in – company training
- 10 Human resources managers or training and development managers / supervisors

Reviewing in my past working experience helped with the interpretation of results and the formulation of proposals. Personal case studies, assessment papers, notes and memories were useful and illuminated unexpected aspects.

The research was completed by questionnaires of training needs and evaluation of training courses. These questionnaires and other documented material are included in special appendices at the end of the project.

What about the other three research methods, which I didn't use?

I did not intend to use any experiments in my research, since the social sciences context does not usually indicate such approaches (though in some cases they could be helpful). Soft systems methodology and ethnography could be closer to my perspective. Somehow, I am a participant observer, but only during the training sessions, and not in the trainees “real world”, I mean the everyday business. Well, I could pick some ideas, but I preferred and chose action research as the main research method for the project.

Summarizing and clarifying the research approach, I guess that the project coped successfully with three basic questions: **what**, **so what** and **now what**? What, refers to the observed phenomenon. So what, tends to interpret the problem and suggest the way out. Now what, leads to an integrated action plan with specific proposals and applicable and valid activities.

Now, let's examine the three research methods that are used in this research.

3.8. Action research

In its simplest form: action research is a way of generating research about a social system while simultaneously attempting to change that system. While conventional social science aims at producing knowledge about social systems (some of which may eventually prove useful to those wishing to effect change), action research seeks both to understand and to alter the problems generated by social systems.

One of the best ways to understand the world is to try to change it.

Kurt Lewin

Action research as a research method was developed in post-war years mainly in Anglo-Saxon countries. In the last few decades scientific communities in many other countries adopted this method as well. In Greece this method has been extensively used from the beginning of the 1990s, especially as a method of educational research in the field of primary, secondary and tertiary education. As far as I know, it has been applied in the field of adult training over the last few years in the context of the Master's in Education offered by the Greek Open University.

There are several good definitions of action research. Janet Masters (Katsarou, Tsafos, 2002) describes four types of action research: technical action research, practical action research and emancipatory action research, and most definitions fit one type of action research better than others.

- **Technical:** Action research is a scientific method for solving practical problems. The action researcher test an intervention using a pre-specified theoretical framework (Lewin, 1951). Action research is one of many research approaches. It results in the accumulation of predictive knowledge and the refinement of existing theories.
- **Practical:** Action research is research into current and ongoing practice by practitioners for practitioners. Action and research are combined in a single process that involves repeated cycles of planning, acting, observing reflecting, re-planning and so on (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1981).
- **Emancipatory:** Action research is a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in pursuit of worthwhile human purposes grounded in a participatory worldview [see below]... It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally, the flourishing of persons and their communities. (Reason & Bradbury, *ibid*).

All definitions have some elements in common, including emphasis on human values and worthwhile pursuits, seeking practical solutions to pressing human concerns, and processes that are cyclical and reflective.

Let's move back for a while to the time when the application of this research method first appeared and decisively changed the way we carry out scientific work putting work based learning studies in the foreground.

Action research as a research method was created along and through the action learning educational method which was proposed by the British professor, Reg Revans in the 1930s.

Action learning and action research are closely related processes and also related to experiential learning and change. Action learning can be defined as a process in which

a group of people come together more or less regularly to help each other to learn from their experience. (Revans, 1994).

As Reg Revans used and described it, it was mostly used across different organisations. That is, the participants typically came from different situations, where each of them was involved in different activities and faced individual problems. Most commonly the participants have been managers. The current practice more often now is to set up an action learning programme within one organization. It is not unusual for a team to consist of people with a common task or problem. There may or may not be a facilitator for the learning groups which are formed. Revans mostly avoided them. Current practice is mostly to use them.

Action research is a process by which change and understanding can be pursued at the same time. It is usually described as cyclic, with action and critical reflection taking place in turn. The reflection is used to review the previous action and plan the next one. It is commonly done by a group of people, though sometimes individuals use it to improve their practice. It has been often used in the field of education for this purpose. It is not unusual for there to be someone from outside the team who acts as a facilitator.

A useful distinction could be made between action learning and action research. In action learning, each participant draws different learning from different experience. In action research a team of people draws collective learning from a collective experience. More recently, the introduction of in-company action learning programmes has begun to change this. The use of a team with a common project or problem leads to an action learning programme which looks remarkably like action research.

There were also some differences, on average, in field of application. Action learning was more often used in organizational settings. Action research more common in community and educational settings. This distinction, too, is beginning to blur.

Both action research and action learning may be compared to experiential learning.

As usually described, it is a process for drawing learning from experience. The experience can be something which is taking place, or more often is set up for the occasion by a trainer or facilitator. Clearly, both action research and action learning are about learning from experience (Revans, *ibid*). The experience is usually drawn from some task assumed by a person or team.

All are cyclic. All involve action and reflection on that action. All have learning as one of their goals. We could say that experiential learning is the basis for the learning component of both action learning and action research. We could also say that both action learning and action research are intended to improve practice. Action research intends to introduce some change; action learning uses some intended change as a vehicle for learning through reflection.

In action research, the learners draw their learning from the same change activity. All are stakeholders in this activity. In action learning, the learning and the activity used to be unique to each learner. With the increasing use of project teams in action learning programmes, this is no longer true.

The most interesting element in action research, action learning and experiential learning is the learning cycle. At its simplest, it consists of two stages: action and reflection:

action → reflection

in an ongoing series of cycles.

However, the reflection gains its point by leading to learning, which in turn leads to changed behaviour in the future:

action → reflection → action

We can therefore expand the reflection component. We want to take into account that it is partly a critical review of the last action. It is also, partly, planning for what will happen next.

action → review → planning → action

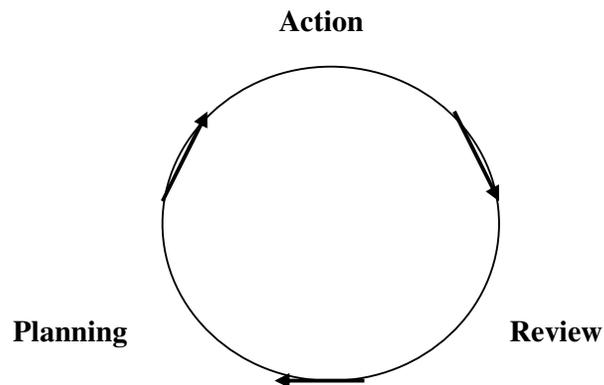
We can now add "theory" or principles to this. In our review, we can only make sense of the world in ways, which build on our prior understanding. In enhancing that understanding, we become better able to act on the world.

When we are acting, we often don't have the time to be deliberate about what we are doing. The "theories" we draw on are intuitive theories. In reviewing and planning our theories can be made explicit.

In other words, action is informed by intuitive theories. Critical review and planning are informed by conscious theories and assumptions. These theories are derived deliberately from recent experience, and used to plan the next experience.

You could say, then, that action research functions by a dual alternation: between action and reflection; between unconscious and conscious theories. By engaging with both of these in a cyclic procedure, we integrate them.

To return to action research and action learning: In each, action informs reflection and is informed by it. The reflection produces the learning (in action learning) or research (in action research). Think of both learning and research as understanding. In both, the action is changed as a result of the learning / research, and leads to more learning / research.



Σχήμα 4. The action research cycle

3.9. Case study

The case study is an ideal way of doing work based research. Rather than using large samples and following a rigid protocol to examine a limited number of variables, case study method involves an in-depth, longitudinal examination of a single instance or event: a case. It provides a systematic way of looking at events, collecting data,

analyzing information, and reporting the results. As a result the researcher may gain a sharpened understanding of why the instance happened as it did, and what might become important to look at more extensively in future research. Case studies lend themselves to both generating and testing hypotheses.

Robert Yin suggests that case study should be defined as a research strategy, an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context. Case study research means single and multiple case studies, can include quantitative evidence, relies on multiple sources of evidence and benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions. He notes that case studies should not be confused with qualitative research and points out that they can be based on any mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence (Yin, 2002).

The case study is effective for generalizing using the type of test that Karl Popper called falsification, which forms part of critical reflexivity (Popper, *ibid*). Falsification is one of the most rigorous tests to which a scientific proposition can be subjected: if just one observation does not fit with the proposition it is considered not valid generally and must therefore be either revised or rejected. Popper himself used the now famous example of, "All swans are white," and proposed that just one observation of a single black swan would falsify this proposition and in this way have general significance and stimulate further investigations and theory-building. The case study is well suited for identifying "black swans" because of its in-depth approach: what appears to be "white" often turns out on closer examination to be "black."

As a distinct approach to research, use of the case study originated only in the early 20th century. The use of case studies for the creation of new theory in social sciences has been further developed by the sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss who presented their research method, Grounded theory, in 1967.

The popularity of case studies as research tools has developed only in recent decades. One of the areas in which case studies have been gaining popularity is education and in particular educational evaluation. Some of the prominent scholars in educational case study are Robert Stake and Jan Nespore (Katsarou, Tsafos, *ibid*). Case studies have, of course, also been used as a teaching method and as part of professional development. They are well-known in business and legal education.

3.10. Survey

Statistical surveys are used to collect quantitative information about items in a population. Surveys of human populations and institutions are common in political polling and government, health, social science and marketing research. A survey may focus on opinions or factual information depending on its purpose, and many surveys involve administering questions to individuals. When the questions are administered by a researcher, the survey is called a structured interview or a researcher-administered survey. When the questions are administered by the respondent, the survey is referred to as a questionnaire or a self-administered survey.

The questions are usually structured and standardized. The structure is intended to reduce bias. The questions should be ordered in such a way that a question does not influence the response to subsequent questions. Surveys are standardized to ensure reliability, generalizability, and validity. Every respondent should be presented with the same questions and in the same order as other respondents.

In organizational development, carefully constructed survey instruments are often used as the basis for data gathering, organizational diagnosis, and subsequent action

planning. Many organizational development practitioners even consider survey guided development as the sine qua non of organizational development. The advantages of survey techniques include:

- It is an efficient way of collecting information from a large number of respondents. Very large samples are possible. Statistical techniques can be used to determine validity, reliability, and statistical significance.
- Surveys are flexible in the sense that a wide range of information can be collected. They can be used to study attitudes, values, beliefs, and past behaviours.
- Because they are standardized, they are relatively free from several types of errors.
- They are relatively easy to administer.
- There is an economy in data collection due to the focus provided by standardized questions. Only questions of interest to the researcher are asked, recorded, codified, and analyzed. Time and money is not spent on tangential questions.

Disadvantages of survey techniques include:

- They depend on subjects' motivation, honesty, memory, and ability to respond. Subjects may not be aware of their reasons for any given action. They may have forgotten their reasons. They may not be motivated to give accurate answers, in fact, they may be motivated to give answers that present themselves in a favourable light.
- Structured surveys, particularly those with closed ended questions, may have low validity when researching affective variables.
- Although the chosen survey individuals are often a random sample, errors due to nonresponse may exist. That is, people who choose to respond on the survey may be different from those who do not respond, thus biasing the estimates.
- Survey question answer-choices could lead to vague data sets because at times they are relative only to a personal abstract notion concerning "strength of choice". For instance the choice "moderately agree" may mean different things to different subjects, and to anyone interpreting the data for correlation. Even yes or no answers are problematic because subjects may for instance put "no" if the choice "only once" is not available.

Advantages of self-administered questionnaires include:

- They are less expensive than interviews.
- They do not require a large staff of skilled interviewers.
- They can be administered in large numbers all at one place and time.
- Anonymity and privacy encourage more candid and honest responses.
- Lack of interviewer bias.
- Speed of administration and analysis.
- Suitable for computer based research methods.
- Less pressure on respondents

Disadvantages of self-administered surveys include:

- Respondents are more likely to stop participating mid-way through the survey (drop-offs)
- Respondents cannot ask for clarification
- Low response rate in some modes
- No interviewer intervention available for probing or explanation
- Often respondents returning survey represent extremes of the population - skewed responses
- Respondents can read the whole questionnaire before answering any questions

Advantages of researcher administered interviews include:

- Fewer misunderstood questions and inappropriate responses.
- Fewer incomplete responses.
- Higher response rates.
- Greater control over the environment that the survey is administered in.
- Additional information can be collected from respondent

3.11. Research techniques and tools

Research is supported by data collection techniques which are thoroughly analyzed in the following pages. There are specific tools that can be relevant with the spirit of a given research. Essential tools for my research project are the following:

- In – depth interviews with key – people (trainees, trainers, training coordinators, human resources managers). These focus to their experiences, preferences and opinions.
- A questionnaire, especially designed for the trainees. This is quantitative, measurable, with multiple-choice questions and agree – disagree scale questions.
- Documentation (relevant statistics, promotional material of the training providers etc). Past researches were useful, but not essential. Search in bibliography (mainly English, French and Greek) and relevant web pages. I must note here that the problem with the web was not the availability or the ability to find sources. The real problem was to distinguish between the authentic and the fake, between the scientific and the arbitrary or subjective.

Beyond all these, constant, non-judgemental observation. I had to be a full – time detective, a witnessing reporter of my own training programmes. I had to keep notes, estimate and analyze my experience and feedback that I received from my trainees. This was one of the most important parts of my research. The demand for objectivity is a top priority for the whole project. Nevertheless, objectivity is ideal. The real struggle in a project like this is to eliminate the possible causes of subjective preconception.

The combined use of the preferred research techniques (interviews, questionnaire, documents – bibliography) results in the effective triangulation of the research, as

shown in figure 5. The aim of triangulation is to enhance the reliability of the research.

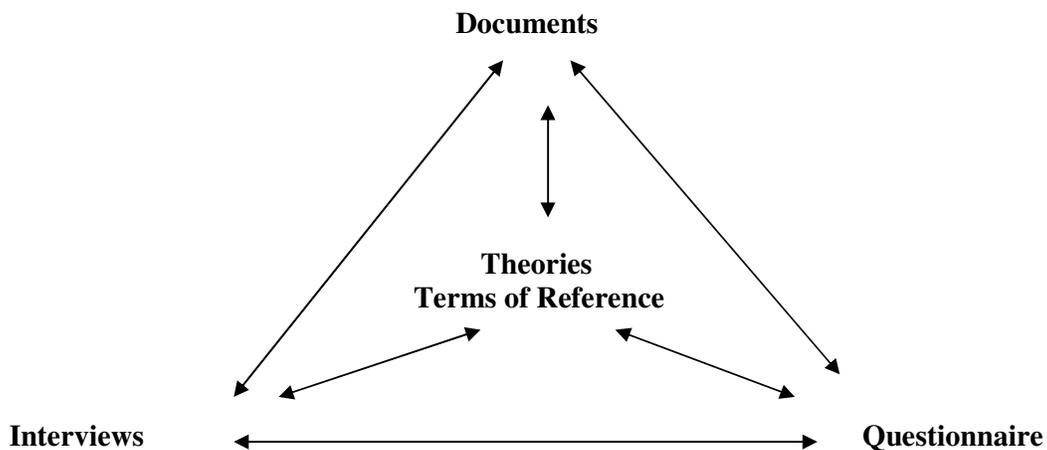


Figure 5. The triangulation of research

I received help in the application of these techniques from the people I collaborated with, the access I had to the resources of the affiliated organizations and, of course, the network resources that were widely available. Their participation and contribution was, however, unequal. I found direct and sincere support from my close associates, while I was faced with indifferent attitudes and, in some cases, with distrust from representatives of various organizations. Fear associated with “not letting competition know” seemed to me unreasonable and I must say that there were occasions when I felt as if playing in a movie on industrial espionage.

Grouping and tabulating the findings was a particularly hard task because I had to sort out the contributing factors and highlight those points that described the object of investigation better. Tabulation was imperative in the findings yielded by the questionnaire and the interviews.

Special care was required when I came to reach conclusions and shape proposals. I tried to avoid the “self-fulfilled prophecy” phenomenon, i.e., to evoke any desirable results – consciously or unconsciously – through directed questions and selective focusing. I have taken into account the viewpoints and the objections put forward by modern methodology. Objectivity is a goal nobody can ever reach. Constant effort to eliminate errors so that one can be in continuous pursuit of that goal and direct his activities to this end is what matters.

Throughout this research I have complied with all the necessary legal commitments to the letter even though the greatest part of the procedure did not require this formality. Ethical restrictions were far more numerous and had to do with confidentiality as regards the operation of certain organizations. I have respected this part, even though I was not put under great pressure to do so.

Chapter 4: Project Activity

4.1. Study of the wider context

The study of the wider context of management training in Greece includes all those social, economic and political factors that affect the shaping of a training policy for businesses and organizations of the private and the public sector that operate in the training of executives.

In the beginning I thought that the subject had clearly fixed boundaries set by the two dominating ideas that define it, i.e. management and training.

However, I soon realized that when we talk about management we refer to a social stratum of business and organization executives, who although still being employees themselves, they are, nonetheless, different as regards their ability of social mobility and progress. In this respect, we talk about employees who have special qualifications beyond their purely professional skills that are inextricably linked with the accomplishment of objectives of the field of activity and responsibility of each one of them. Someone may be exceptionally good in his work as a salesperson, accountant or labourer. However, this does not mean that he can be a good head in the same field. We have had cases in which a very good professional in his own field of activity – e.g. salesperson – became a sales manager. His business lost a very capable salesperson and won a mediocre manager. This is due to the fact that there is asymmetry between the skills in a work sector and the ability to manage and be in command of that sector (Kantas, 1993). A good employee does not mean a good boss. The necessary qualifications for these two different positions are diverse. A good salesperson, for example, is someone who is talkative and extrovert, a shrewd streetwise person. A good manager is someone who is organizational, systematic, organized and stimulating. Of course, if we can find both these categories of qualifications in the same person, then we have an ideal manager. This is so because apart from his qualifications in management, he will also have the sensing ability of the salesperson. This skill will be extremely useful in his job as manager because he will be in a position to understand the needs, the priorities and the problems of the salespersons in his work group a lot better. The subjective specifications and the social reasons that make some employees claim high rank positions have led me to the study of all those factors that shaped the stratification of Greek society in post-war years.

It was, therefore, necessary to trace back the bibliography that tries to interpret the changes that took place in the Greek society during a fifty-year period and to draw information about the role of managing executives, their training opportunities and the transfer of knowledge to their work environment.

This investigation is concerned with the manager's significance in the business and the factors inside and outside of the business that shape his actions.

In addition, it is concerned with the highlighting of the role of management training stakeholders. I used my personal contacts with training executives as much as I could both from the environment of trainers and the field of training organization executives, the companies which train their staff and the public supervisory authorities. I investigated both their current situation and the trends that lead business training to a more professionally defined path.

4.2. Investigating the history of management training in Greece

Aiming at investigating the history of management training in Greece, it was necessary to visit the National Library and look for relevant book titles and other publications that cover the period of time from the mid-1950s to the present.

I also consulted the Hellenic Government Gazette in order to find out the relevant legislative decrees that are concerned with the founding of establishments which are run by the State.

Another library that was particularly useful in my research project was the library of the HMA which specializes in business administration.

I could not omit contacting those people who have been serving various posts in this field of activity for a number of years now, in order to have a full picture of the history of management training.

I had a long talk with the general manager of the HMA, Mr Roulias, who has been its executive for the past twenty-five years, about the history of the Association. As regards the long-term training programmes of the HMA, I turned to the respective manager, Mr Vlassopoulos, who was the person who started the Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration in 1989, an exceptionally successful course which has been a basic choice of business executives for eighteen years now.

Furthermore, as regards short-term training programmes of open participation I turned to the manageress, Mrs Moschopoulou, who gave me a picture of the institution through time and helped me understand its individual features. Regarding in-company training, I was given the opportunity to speak to the Manager, Mr Gropas, who supplied me with additional material that was useful in reaching conclusions.

As regards the history and the role of Athens Laboratory of Business Administration, I turned to Dr Economides, a colleague of mine in the Executive MBA Programme since its first appearance.

As regards the presence of Primus / Business & IT Training executives on the Greek educational market, I turned to the company's general manager, Mr Tzouros, an old executive of a number of companies and organizations of the field. He gave me a lot of information about the progress made in this field in the last fifteen years.

As regards the history of the Executive MBA by Athens University of Economics and Business, I talked with Dr Karathanassis, the financial management professor on this programme from its start to this day.

4.3. The research field of the project

The location where the research was conducted was mainly, but not exclusively, the city of Athens which is the city with the greatest educational activity, especially in the field of activity under examination, i.e. management training.

In particular, I had to monitor the parameters that concerned me at the HMA which is the main case study of the research project.

I also visited the premises of ALBA, my second destination and supplementary case study. The case of the Athens Laboratory of Business Administration is peculiar. It was founded on the initiative of the Hellenic Management Association and the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises as a specialized management training centre. It later assumed an independent status and is now a quality competitor of the HMA. As a researcher-trainer coming from the environment of the HMA, I found, on the one

hand, open doors and willingness for collaboration and, on the other hand, a snobbish attitude and at times, even suspicion.

Quite a few times I visited the Athens University of Economics and Business and its updated library.

I also visited the training company Primus / Business and IT Training which has managed to establish itself as a quality management training institution.

I did not forget to visit the training company Anaptyxis which is trying to establish itself among the main players of the field having in-company training as its main advantage.

In addition, I looked for OAED's officials, the organization that supervises the field of employee training and EKEPIS, the organization which provides official recognition to trainers and educational organizations.

However, apart from the establishments that are located in Athens, I also had the opportunity to visit big country branches of the HMA, i.e. in Thessaloniki, Patras and Heraklion (Crete). I had extensive talks with the local officials of the training programmes there about the issues dealt with in this research project. In all these branches they run long-term courses, i.e. Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration and Diploma in Sales Management.

Finally, I should not forget to point out that the field of research was supported and enriched by the Internet since apart from the resources which are concerned with the subject matter; I also had very good contact with a number of officials via e-mail. I also had the opportunity to visit the websites of institutions which provide executive management training services both at a seminar level and full-degree level.

4.4. Looking for administrative capacity

This project focuses on three aspects of the work of executives, the people who spend a large part of their life trying to maximize the profits of the companies and organizations where they work. These aspects are as follows:

- **The science of management:** From the beginning of the twentieth century to this day, from Taylor, Fayol and Mayo to Maslow, Herzberg and Drucker, management theoreticians have made their own suggestions for solving the intractable problems of business reality. The necessary **knowledge** is a component part of administrative capacity and, therefore, of this project.
- **The practice of management:** Contact, group work, leadership, negotiations, decision-making, conflicts, changes, time and stress management and other work issues that executives are concerned about. All those **skills**, both personal and interpersonal that are necessary in the multi-faceted managerial role.
- **The responsibility of management:** The range of influence exercised by multi-national companies, environmental impact, work issues, consumer protection, and executive duties and responsibilities that derive from those duties are some of the issues being dealt with. The imperative **attitude** of executives is defined by their being aware of the consequences of their actions and omissions.

I wonder whether clear and definite answers to these questions are possible. It is obvious that they are not possible since the environment and structure of

organizations are constantly changing; however, the way we manage them each time promotes the operation of people in them and determines the roles and the duties of the executives.

These roles may be **executive**, i.e they may be concerned with the execution of the particular work as defined in the description of their work position. However, they may be **managerial** and, therefore, they may have to do with certain supervision duties and group management duties, departmental management duties or duties relating to the management of the entire economic unit. They may be even **headquartering** duties or duties relating to a sector's high supervision and the design of proposals and applications to further its development.

We should not forget that: businesses are not the buildings, the machinery or the corporate names but the people who work and collaborate for themselves, their families and the entire community.

At this point it must be clear that the science of management has to do with knowledge about the conditions of businesses and organizations (know what), the practice of management has to do with the skills for tackling various situations (know how) and the responsibility of management has to do with the moral attitude of executives (know why) (Alexakis, *ibid*). Consequently, knowledge, skills and attitudes comprise a single educational object which I had to investigate in modern Greek reality approaching it from a systemic perspective in connection with modern developments.

Consequently, I could not ignore the immense changes that have taken place in the modern social and physical environment; changes that are:

- **Economic.** The transition of the Greek economy from a protective environment with intense state intervention to an increasingly economically liberal environment with an increasing emphasis on the private sector. In addition, the transition from an economy that depended more on agricultural production and less on industrial production to a servicing economy.
- **Social.** The new consumer standards. The prevalence of life style. The social revolution of the sixties. Alternative cultures and the ever more intense impact on the social model. Impoverishment of large population groups in the Third World. Mass immigration instigated by economic reasons.
- **Political.** The predominance of the western model. The replacement of the Cold War with the conflict of cultures. Islam's radicalization. The phenomenon of terrorism. The new imperialist and regional wars (Vietnam, Africa, the Middle East, Afghanistan, Iraq). The emergence of new powers (China, India).
- **Work related.** The course of the pendulum. From the absence of work rights to the protection of trade union interests and then to the intensification of work and the promotion of a "flexible" work environment which favours overtime work and overexploitation (Rifkin, 2004).
- **Technological.** The intense development of certain fields of high technology (telecommunications, computers, molecular biology, mechanical engineering, media) and their imposition on kindred and affected fields.
- **International.** The phenomenon of globalisation⁶. It is mainly concerned with the transfer of capital, products, services, culture, investments and human capital throughout the planet. Mass immigration is, therefore, a consequence and a component part of this phenomenon.

- **Environmental.** The universal environmental crisis which all of us have been experiencing in the last few decades. The greenhouse effect. The dramatic climate change and global warming. Extreme weather conditions. Water shortage. The extinction of species. The spreading of contagious diseases.

While studying the impact of the changes mentioned above on the role of the modern manager in Greece, I analyzed the training programmes of the most important long-term courses for executives available in order to find out whether and to what extent the new trends have been incorporated, as well as, whether and to what extent the mix of executive knowledge, skills and attitudes has been influenced.

4.5. Examining the educational institutions and the programmes of study

The educational organizations I dealt with were those organizations that provide courses intended for adult business executives. Some of these institutions deal with the above subject only, while some others that have a more academic character attract younger students and also offer Executive MBAs to young people and ambitious managers.

The main body of the research revolved round the educational activities of the HMA which is the greatest organization of these programmes in Greece.

The research project comes now to a crucial point which is no other than the training courses themselves. I collected all the necessary material, visited the relevant websites and held discussions with the coordinators and the academic heads. From the point of view of methodology, I divided these courses into:

- Short-term in-company courses
- Short-term open participation courses
- Certified courses leading to title award

The first category is short-term in-company courses. These are usually seminars running for one or a few days. They can be from 4 to 60 hours long with the exception of some long-term foreign language courses.

They are carried out at the client's premises, at the educational organization or some other location – usually a hotel with a suitable hall. The HMA, which is the main case study, carries out these seminars through its affiliated trainers and is the biggest organization of in-company training. In addition, the company Primus / Business & IT Training, which specializes in in-company seminars, was particularly useful in the research project.

I asked some of my colleague trainers and seminar coordinators while I naturally looked through my personal library and my long experience in such seminars.

The HMA absolutely dominates the second category which includes short-term courses of open participation. Due to its infrastructure and its long-standing association with the field and the people of business, it enjoys people's trust which is reflected in the diverse timetable of seminars that are carried out on its premises. Individuals from various businesses, who usually hold work positions, illegally nonetheless, participate in these seminars which make up specialized subject units. These usually run for 4 up to 70 hours. I contacted the person in charge of these seminars and was supplied with all the material that could be useful for my research.

In addition, I was supplied with evaluation material from older seminars in order to have a comparative picture from various types of seminars through time. The third category is the most interesting one. It is concerned with long-term certified courses leading to the award of titles. They are carried out in the premises of the educational organizations and last from six months up to three years depending on the type of the title to be awarded. The programmes run by HMA prevail in this category as well. These programmes are as follows:

- University of Bath Executive MBA
- Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration
- Executive Master's Programme in Financial Management (for financial directors)
- Professional Diploma in Human Resources Management
- The Chartered Institute of Marketing Professional Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing
- European Marketing Confederation Diploma in Marketing
- Graduate Diploma in Logistics Management
- Diploma in Environmental Management
- The Institute of Sales and Marketing Management Diploma in Sales Management

In addition, I also researched in a comparative mode the Executive MBAs run by ALBA, the University of Indianapolis / Athens Campus, and the Athens University of Economics and Business.

4.6. The main case study of the research project

As already mentioned above, the main case study of this research project is the HMA, a training organisation that has been continuously operating and collaborating with the business community at training, consulting and scientific research level for forty-five years today (2007)

I chose this particular organization mainly for the following four reasons:

- It is the most representative organization in the training of executives both as regards its continuous operation for almost five decades on the Greek market and from the point of view of quantitative and qualitative participation.
- It recruits the most dynamic trainers.
- It trains executives employed by the most important Greek businesses.
- It has been my main professional associate during the last fourteen years and I can, therefore, have direct access.

My investigation regarding the HMA, as already mentioned in the previous chapters, focused on the current phase of the organization's development, i.e. on recent years, especially after the dissolution of the other greatly revered organization, the Greek Productivity Centre in 1998. I examined all the programmes that focus on management training both the long-term programmes of open participation and the short-term open and in-company programmes.

I sought information from people who participate in the management of the organization. This information had to do with the organization's past, present and future. In addition, this information had to do with the evaluation of its executives and their critical viewpoint regarding the wider problems of management training since it is a fact that these viewpoints shape the character of the training to a great extent and influence developments in the field.

I observed and recorded the operation rules of the organization, took down its comparative advantages and its weak points, its relationships with training stakeholders and its potential. I examined its programmes, the teaching methods and the techniques of imparting knowledge and looked through the evaluation material of the courses.

In my effort, I realized that there were some contributing and assisting factors, but I also faced some intrinsic problems and difficulties that were sometimes unexpected.

On the one hand, the people at the HMA helped me and offered me their time, their thoughts and the material they could provide.

On the other hand, they projected in their interviews all those positive and negative prejudices regarding the organization, the field of training and the work they and their affiliated organizations carry out. In many cases, I was under the impression that they "smoothed things out" leaving important aspects unmentioned or whitewashing all the dark spots and the grey zones.

4.7. The HMA trainees' survey

A very important part of the research and the HMA case study, indeed, was the survey with the questionnaire I designed and handed out to graduates of the Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration and to graduates of the Diploma in Sales Management. Why did I choose these particular programmes among others that are available at the Organization? Very simply, because they are far more popular among trainees who have a long-standing presence on the Greek market and are widely recognized by businesses.

The questionnaire is in one piece and was given to the trainees shortly after their graduation via the respective programme they had attended and had successfully passed its graduating examinations. The trainees on the Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration had also submitted their written assignments as required.

The questionnaire was handed out to 75 individuals and was e-mailed to another 97 people rising the number of recipients to 172 individuals. The number of completed questionnaires that were returned rose to 122 (69 in handwritten form and 53 via e-mail). The response rate was 71%, a quite large percentage for this type of research. In particular: 122 individuals answered the questionnaire in total; 86 (52 men and 34 women) of those were graduates of the Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration and the remaining 36 individuals (29 men and 7 women) were graduates of the Diploma in Sales Management.

| | Men | Women | Total |
|------------------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Postgraduate Progr. in B.A. | 52 | 34 | 86 |
| Diploma in Sales Management | 29 | 7 | 36 |

Table 1. Composition of respondents who answered the questionnaire.

The respondents come from five different entry sessions of the Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration and two entry sessions of the Diploma in Sales Management. All these sessions were completed in Athens from 2004 until 2006. The average number of participants per session was 25 individuals (maximum 30, minimum 21).

Now let's turn to how the questionnaire was designed. Thinking about the objectives of the research and the main questions, I designed a questionnaire that could primarily investigate the subject matter of questions 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

In order to design a comprehensive and functional questionnaire, I found it necessary to consult the following two sources from my files:

- Questionnaires for the investigation of educational needs, and
- Questionnaires for evaluating training programmes

I included both personal questions seeking to establish trainee profiles and to-the-point questions aiming at evaluating the opinion of the trainees regarding the training content and procedures. I finally produced twenty questions which I think examine all those issues which the trainees can shed light upon regarding these two programmes.

This survey was carried out during the second semester of 2006 and its analysis lasted until March 2007.

4.8. Conducting interviews

The needs of the research made it necessary to hold talks with some distinguished individuals from the field of management training. Each interview had its own character and content. Some of them were perhaps grouped together and the questions were more structured. The basic points of this very important part of the project are given below:

The interview with the HMA general manager

Athanassios Roulias is an HMA born and bred individual. He started working at the organization from a very young age as an employee in the in-company training department and was later put in charge of that department; afterwards, he became training manager, deputy general manager and, from 1995, general manager. Consequently, his experience in the field is substantial and his contribution to this research project was deemed necessary. I prepared a group of questions which investigate the history of management training, the presence of the HMA, the educational needs of today's executives, the contribution of the State and the future of training and development. Our discussion moved beyond my initial intentions and revealed invisible aspects which, I think, shed light on the subject matter.

The interviews with trainers

Fifteen trainers were questioned, all of whom were experienced with a long-standing career in the field. Five of those trainers are full-time trainers whose only professional activity is training and development. Four of those are University or Technological Educational Institute Professors, while they also train executives in seminars or long-term vocational courses. The remaining six trainers are managers who are also engaged in training. They teach different subjects: General management, marketing, sales, human resources, production, finance, accounting. Their common characteristic is that all of them have attended the train-the-trainer programme by EKEPIS and that they are all HMA associates. The questions put forward to these individuals focused more on the training content, the procedures and the training methods, as well as, on the experience they had gained from the train-the-trainer programme by EKEPIS and their association with the HMA. The interviews were semi-structured with certain questions that functioned as an introduction to each unit. Depending on the interesting points that arose during the discussion, I delved into greater depth accordingly.

The interviews with the training coordinators

Ten training coordinators of degree-granting courses, professional courses, open seminars and in-company training courses were asked. Six of them belong to HMA's managerial staff (three in Athens, one in Thessaloniki and one in Heraklion); one of them was from ALBA, one from the Athens University of Economics and Business, one from the company "Primus" and one from the company "Anaptyxis". All these interviews were semi-structured: They had a central core of common basic questions which were then differentiated depending on each particular individual and their work position. The questions focus on the structure of the training courses and the trends that are shaped.

The interviews with the people in charge of business training in various companies

Ten human resources managers or training and development managers / supervisors were asked from an equal number of businesses. These individuals were employed by the following companies:

- Piscines Ideales (construction company)
- Egnatia Bank
- Euler Hermes (insurance company)
- Pharmanel (pharmaceutical company)
- Casino Regency – Mont Parnes
- Dur (clothes industry)
- Super Markets Veropoulos
- Goody's (fast food)
- Cretan Ceramics
- 3E – Coca Cola

The questions intended to investigate the role of businesses in management training and the training needs they deem important. The questionnaire was strictly structured and common for all the respondents.

All the questionnaires used are appended unabridged in the appendices of this study.

4.9. Action research with the trainers group

In 2006 I had the opportunity to attend the train-the-trainer programme by EKEPIS which was organized to run in the premises of the HMA with twenty-two of my colleagues. Five of those people also teach in the Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration (MBA). I, therefore, asked them to work together and design an action plan aiming at the qualitative upgrading of this particular programme on the basis of the material we were taught while attending the train-the-trainer programme and on the basis of our experience as trainers. Apart from myself teaching the units of management and organisational behaviour, the following individuals agreed to participate in the group: Ilias Kapareliotis (marketing), Kostas Garoufalis (financial management), Christos Mavros (production, logistics), Odysseas Kollias (customer service) and George Bouas (HR management).

We held a number of meetings and in the meantime the group members stayed in touch with each other by e-mail through me, the group coordinator.

The group worked according to the action research model:

action → review → planning → action

- In the first stage (action), we recorded our experience from our teaching on the MBA course.
- In the second stage (review), we evaluated the programme and our involvement in it and carried out a SWOT Analysis⁷, pointing out the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the MBA.
- In the third stage (planning), with the train-the-trainer experience under our belt, we designed the changes required for its improvement. We divided these changes into two categories: Changes in teaching and organizational changes. We decided to put the former into practice and suggest the latter to the programme coordinator.
- In the fourth stage (action), we attempted to put into practice the changes in teaching, while we proposed some organizational changes to the programme coordinator.

Our six-member team worked in coordination in order to carry out the action research; the activities involved in each stage were as follows:

First stage (action)

Our recorded experience seemed to converge in quite a few respects, while there were other points where our experience seemed to be complimentary. We found out that:

- We adapted to the programme gradually from the first day we were asked to teach to this day. Three of us have more than ten years' experience while the experience of the remaining members of the group ranges from three to seven years.
- The subjects we teach make up the backbone of the programme and represent all the basic subjects.
- Four out of the six members are from time to time asked to teach some secondary subjects of their field of expertise.
- Five members have taught at HMA branches, mainly in Patras, Heraklion Larissa and less in Thessaloniki.
- The student-centred training methods we were taught on the train-the-trainer programme are for three of us common and well-tested practices, which we had the opportunity to improve now. Three members of the group found these practices to be new challenges they still have to tackle.
- For four of us, our relationships with other trainers ranged from being very good to excellent while the remaining two trainers had problems which caused them anxiety and a sense of insecurity.
- All six of us complained about not getting paid on time.

Second stage (review)

The critical thinking of the group unfolded at a meeting we held all together, where each one of us gave an account of the matters we were concerned about. We, therefore, applied a SWOT Analysis regarding the MBA which is included in the following table:

| Strengths | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Long-term presence on the market✓ Reliability and recognition on the market✓ Recommended by trainers✓ It is well-structured✓ Most of the trainers are very good✓ The days and times when the programmes are taught are convenient for the trainees✓ Comfortable classrooms and auxiliary facilities✓ The books given are quite good✓ Inexpensive fees when compared with other MBAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Recognition by the State if article 16 is reviewed and amended✓ Collaboration with foreign university for academic recognition✓ Enhancement of available teaching subjects with more "popular" modules (personal skills, corporate social responsibility, public relations)✓ Educational visits✓ Organization of lectures by market specialists and businessmen✓ Operation of Alumni Club✓ Arrangements made to run the programme in Cyprus |

| Weaknesses | Threats |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lack of State recognition due to article 16 of the Constitution which does not allow the operation of non-state controlled universities ✓ Trainees are given the lessons timetable every month ✓ Trainees are dissatisfied due to organizational problems ✓ Trainers are dissatisfied because they are not paid on time ✓ A lot of quality trainers cannot teach many different groups because they are taught on the same days ✓ Limited promotional activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Intense competition by ALBA (which was founded by HMA!) ✓ If article 16 is reviewed and amended, more Business Schools may be founded making competition more intense ✓ The quality of the various training sessions of the programme is not standardized because good trainers do not have the time ✓ Organizational problems remain unsolved ✓ The ravaging power of time and the life cycle of the “product” ✓ Complacency |

Table 2. SWOT Analysis of the HMA MBA

Third stage (planning)

When we met for review, we also planned the changes we proposed. The changes were as follows:

Organizational changes

- The position of the scientific coordinator (which existed in the past) should be reinstated.
- The organizational coordinator should meet with the trainees more frequently but not only at the start of the course.
- Modern training equipment (data display projectors, DVD players, modern training films) should be bought.
- Damaged items (damaged door handles, windows that do not open, dripping ceilings) that spoil the overall impression should be repaired.
- Better meals on Saturdays, automated vending machines on each floor.
- Strict warning to switch off mobile phones during lessons.
- Students running late should enter the classroom during the first break to avoid interrupting.
- A lot of syndicate rooms, which have now been relegated to storing rooms, should be reopened for team projects.
- All trainers should meet with the coordinator twice a year to discuss various matters.

Changes in teaching

- Proposals should be enriched with directed questions and discussion.

- The use of case studies should be extended to the subjects in which they are not currently used.
- Individual presentations made by trainees on matters of their experience should be encouraged.
- Team projects should be established followed by a presentation of their findings.
- Short non-assessment tests should be introduced as a training stimulus.
- Role playing should be introduced in subjects which aim at skill development.
- Individual projects should be assigned in some subjects that could connect the subject matter taught with the job of each particular executive, where possible.
- A ten-point check list should be drawn to facilitate annual self-assessment.

Fourth stage (action)

The application of the plan up to this point was quite interesting.

As regards, organizational changes, the following have been achieved:

- More frequent contact between the coordinator and the trainees.
- Warning regarding mobile phones.
- Latecomers enter the classroom during the break.
- Some syndicate rooms have reopened.
- The trainers meet all together with the coordinator.

As regards changes in teaching, the following have been achieved:

- Proposals have been enhanced with discussions.
- A lot of case studies are produced and taught.
- Four trainers assign team projects.
- Individual assignments are given.
- Check list facilitating self-assessment.

4.10. Designing a model management training basic programme

During the past seven years, the HMA has shifted its attention to the provision of long-term courses that meet the training needs of professional posts. However, it has not developed a comprehensive programme on General Management that would focus on basic knowledge, skills and attitudes for managing executives. Of course, this is covered to a certain extent in the context of the Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration.

There is a small-scale “Basic Management Programme”, 56 hours long, that was designed on the model of a relevant course run by the American Management Association that is used to cover the absence of a self-sufficient General Management course.

I contacted the person in charge of this programme and we held a long discussion about the need and the possibility of developing a self-sufficient programme of this type.

We studied the structure of the existing course during the last few years and we found out its strong and weak points. We, therefore, agreed to develop a program of a longer

duration in the context of this research that would be enhanced to include basic competency skills for managing executives as well as the more recent developments made in the science of management. We provisionally named the programme that is being designed “Management Diploma” and agreed to examine it again as soon as I complete my research project.

Afterwards, I began to research the Internet and chose relevant programmes offered by various training organizations.

I reviewed their subjects, the target group of executives they are intended for, their duration and cost.

I also looked into some practical management workshops and the content of management and organizational behaviour units offered on academic programmes at Bachelor’s or Master’s and, especially, at MBA level.

I focused my research on Greek, British and American Universities, while I also sought to find information about distance learning in order to examine the possibility of providing a distance learning programme.

I also discussed this matter with trainees attending the seminars and the long-term courses I teach.

Finally, I raised this matter in question form in the interviews I carried out for the needs of this research project.

Another consequence of this stage of the research was the fact that I started to write a book on “The Art of Management” to use it in my courses, and I adapted the contents of this book to meet the needs of this prospective model management training programme.

Chapter 5: Project Findings

5.1. The wider context

In a ten minutes walk, from Omonia Square to Syntagma Square, through Stadiou Street, you meet the three classes of the Greek society and you can understand its structure.

V. Hatzakis (theatre director)

During the 1950s it was attempted to reconstruct the business community in an atmosphere of disintegration following the tragic experiences brought on by the War, the German Occupation and the Civil War. A large and vigorous part of the manpower started emigrating in search of a better fortune. A lot of people embarked on ships in a period when the ship-owning field was being reconstructed. Those who decided to stay behind sought to work as civil servants under the safe umbrella of the State which increased its influence year after year and started to lead sectors of huge economic and social interest, such as power, telecommunications and banking. At the same time, difficulty in finding work pushed a considerable part of the population into entrepreneurial activities in the form of small family companies, which were very often staffed by the family members themselves. The building site became the steam engine of Greek economy. The policy of valuable consideration provided shelter to a large part of the population which started crowding the big cities. Furthermore, companies with the prospect of development started to operate in order to take advantage of the opportunities that emerge in periods when the cards are dealt gain. Such companies started operating in the field of industry, commerce, transport and the emerging tourist industry.

In 1967 a military coup enforced dictatorship which lasted for seven years up to 1974 when it collapsed. During the junta, certain families and companies, which dominated the domestic business scene, were favoured.

From 1974 to this day the country has been politically and constitutionally stable. In 1981 the country was admitted into the European Community which was later developed into today's European Union. In 2002 the country adopted the Euro as its currency and in 2004 the Olympic Games were held in Greece. In the meantime from the beginning of the 1990s, the country has received a huge wave of economic immigrants and, therefore, cheap labour.

The stratification of society during this period of time is mainly made up of three levels with the corresponding cultures, mentalities and habits. The lowest stratum of the rural class with the small allotments, industry labourers, construction labourers and the remaining fields of secondary production, as well as, toiling traders are at the very basis of society. Then, there is the main bulk of the middle class consisting of employees of the private and the public sector, shop owners, craftsmen, independent workers and the majority of scientific staff. At the top, there is the highest stratum of businessmen, the higher scientific establishments and the big fund-holders.

At this point, we should mention the dynamic role of education in the social mobility seen in the top two levels. Indeed, educational qualifications have become a powerful tool for the development of talented children both from the low and the middle class.

We should also point out that from the 1970s Greek society, following the development of economy, has entered a mass consumerist phase and become a consumer society similar to the corresponding societies of the developed countries.

5.2. The Greek economy today

The dawn of the twentieth century found the Greek economy in a phase of development which was characterised by an effort to control inflation and de-escalate deficits, a relatively high growth rate of the Gross National Product, the implementation of big public works and a convergence trend towards European economic integration. At the same time, growth has been accompanied by considerable unemployment rates, difficulty in the adaptation of some productive fields, faltering operation of the money market, a problematic social insurance system, as well as, expanding and intractable social and environmental problems.

To be more precise, the **public sector** is characterised by an irrational organisation, bad management of resources, scandalous and crude party favouritism, blatant government interventions, low sensitivity in servicing citizens, widespread corruption, bureaucracy, inflexibility and low productivity. Of course, new modernisation and improvement pockets are also being developed but they are not always able and enough to reverse the overall picture. However, we must acknowledge that the public sector maintains a particular sensitivity – and at least – complies with the existing legislation in labour issues.

On the other hand, the **private sector** appears to be dynamic and develops its work range, incorporates partial use of new technologies, and assumes extrovert attitudes, customer-centred orientation, horizontal and vertical trends of collaboration, and efforts to apply the principles of modern management. However, negative phenomena such as improvisation in the administration of business, excessive intensification in the rate of work, violation of working hours, compressed wages, fraudulent profiteering, close interrelation with certain interests from the public sector, social and environmental indifference and shameless and uncontrolled promotion of products and services of doubtful use and quality prevail in many fields of activity.

These remarks lead to the conclusion that apart from the need for legislative regulation and political interventions, it is possible and imperative that the role of management in the effort of businesses and organisations to improve the way they operate, their economic effectiveness and the quality and international competitiveness of the products and services they provide should be decisive, indeed.

5.3. Studying the business environment

We understand businesses to be organisms that interact in a changing environment through the scientific model of open systems. Businesses operate within a broader social and physical environment. They receive inputs in the form of capital, manpower, technology, raw materials, products and services. These inflows are transformed inside the companies through the intervention of management. They are then forwarded to the external environment as business outputs in the form of products, services and some environmental impact (externalities)



Figure 6. The open system model

However, what does the business **internal environment** consist of? It consists of all the economic, technological, physical and human resources it has accumulated. (Montana & Charnov, 1998).

- **Financial** resources are monetary funds that are invested. Businesses are financed by their profits, their owners, their shareholders, loans and subsidies.
- **Technological** resources consist of the equipment, vehicles and machinery, materials and management information systems (MIS).
- **Physical** resources are the land and the premises of facilities and the raw materials that are used.
- Finally, **human** resources consist of the personnel with its knowledge and skills. This is the so-called “human capital” of the company.

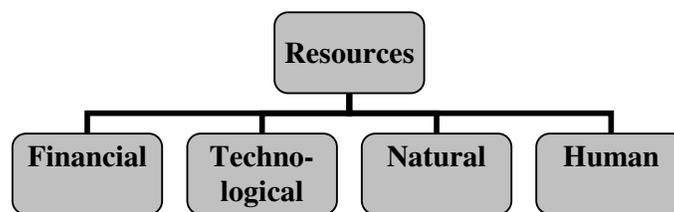


Figure 7. The internal environment of the company

The **external environment** of the company is particularly complex (Montana & Charnov, *ibid*):

- The **economic environment** is concerned with the local, national and international economic situation. Deindustrialisation of an area leads to a wider slowdown in economic activity. The economic development of a country attracts investments. Fluctuations in the international price of oil have a bearing on business turnover down to the last neighbour kiosk. The analysis of the economic environment includes the study of the rate of growth, investments, imports and exports, Gross National Product (GCP), inflation, unemployment and other economic sizes.
- The **political** context influences the decisions and movements of companies. Democratisation or the declaration of dictatorship, the coming into power of a certain political party, rumours about an imminent war, political instability and international political relations are all crucial indicators of business activity.
- The **social** environment includes the manners and customs of a given population, social stratification, religious traditions, culture and civilisation. Innovations and initiatives flourish in open societies while, on the contrary, business activities must be very careful not to offend traditional values and local customs in closed, conservative societies.
- The **natural** environment provides raw material, products and energy to businesses, while at the same time climatic conditions and geomorphology determine the type of demand and consumption to a considerable extent.
- The **legal** framework regulates the conditions of the business game. Consumer protection, protection of competition and antitrust legislation, operating hours of retail outlets, compulsory quality specifications, and tax systems are only part of regulatory interventions made by the State.

- The available **technology** has a bearing on business decisions both as regards what will be produced and how it will be produced. A large part of business-to-business services is concerned with provisions made for state-of-the-art technology.
- Finally, **market** analysis includes research on consumer purchasing behaviour, research on competition and competitive products, as well as, the relationship with banks, suppliers and direct customers.

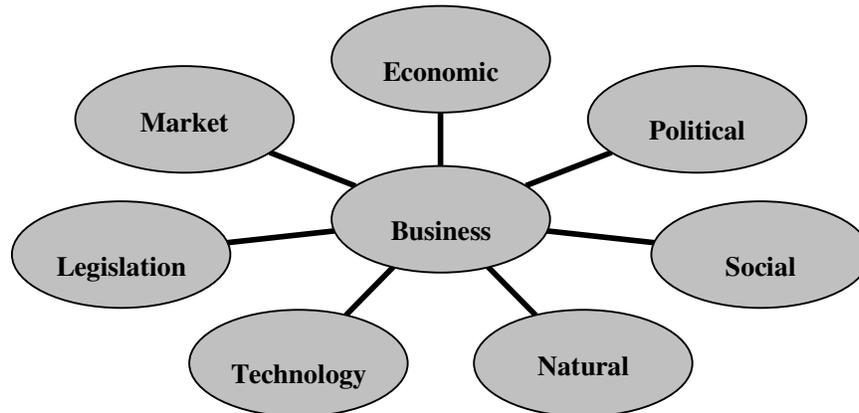


Figure 8. The external environment of a Business

5.4. Administration tasks and skills

According to the analyses of most business and organisation researchers (Drucker, 1982, Hitiris, 1997, Katsalis, 1997), there are four classic administration tasks:

- **Programming,**
- **organisation,**
- **management** and
- **control.**

These tasks are sequential but they conceal two more sequential tasks which are constantly carried out and make up the heart of the administrative process. These are **decision-making** and **communication**. Managing executives are required to make small and big decisions relating to his field of responsibility but also communicate with people who have to do with his job.

In order to tackle the aforementioned tasks, business executives must have three types of skills (Hitiris, *ibid*):

- **Intellectual** ability for making calculations and decisions.
- **Interpersonal** skills necessary for their transactions.
- **Technical** skills relevant to the object of their work.

Higher executives use their intellectual skills more, middle-rank executives their communication skills and lower executives their technical skills. In any case, interpersonal communication skills seem to be necessary at all levels.

Skills: Intellectual Communication Technical

| |
|--------------------------|
| Higher executives |
| Middle executives |
| Lower executives |

Table 3. Executives’ skills

Administration tasks apply on **business** functions (production, provisions and supplies, commercial function and sales, department of finances and accounts, personnel and administration department, etc). They are also adapted to the particularities of each business function.

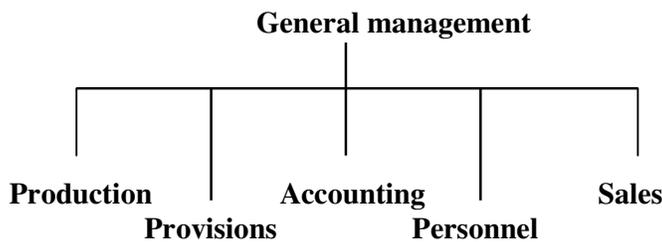


Figure 9. Business functions

5.5. Adult learning and management training

*Where is the Life we have lost in living?
 Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
 Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?*
 T.S. Eliot's *The Rock* (1934)

Never get tired of learning
 Heraclitus

Adult learning is different from the way children learn. Adult employees have behind them a more or less significant social experience and “build” their learning on that experience. They are not satisfied by passively listening but want to actively participate and act either on their own or in groups. Besides, the most interesting part of the learning process for minors is break-time, while adults find learning itself a break from their job. For this reason, they usually respond positively to it, unless they are forced to receive that education, in which case, it increases their workload and weariness. Finally, their expectations are particularly concrete and have to do with the fields of application of their learning (Kokkos, 2005).

Continuous learning aims at acquiring social, technical and administrative **abilities**. These abilities are the result of cultivating knowledge, skills and proper attitudes for carrying out duties that are necessary in work, family and social life.

The process of adult learning can be divided into the following four typical stages:

- **Unconscious inability.** Many times we act without questioning our efficiency. We may also be wondering why things do not work out as planned. Naturally, what is wrong with it is that we are not able and we do not know it. We tend to blame our failures on others, the existing circumstances, the weather, etc.
- **Conscious inability.** According to Lao Tse, to think that you know something is an illness, while to realise that you do not know is prudence. Sometimes something happens and we realise that we are not as capable as we thought. That is the right moment to seek help and start learning.
- **Conscious ability.** This is the result of our effort to improve our abilities. Practice gradually makes us more efficient in our work. We perform various tasks being fully alert and paying attention to everything.
- **Unconscious ability.** When we have reached the desirable level of ability after long practice, this ability becomes our second nature and we perform tasks by turning on our automatic pilot...⁸

The training of employees who work in a company consists of the initial training of settling down and continuous training, either in-company training or open participation programmes. The second one of those is usually assigned to external specialised trainers, either directly or through educational companies.

The management of training includes the following stages (Halas, 1994b):

- Exploration of training needs
- Training design
- Organisation of stakeholders
- Implementation of programmes
- Evaluation of training

The person responsible for employee training is usually the human resources manager or the head of training in bigger companies. He is the person who collaborates with the heads of the various departments in order to note down the training needs of the individuals that are related with departmental objectives, or generally, the objectives of the company itself. He ensures that training space is made available and that the relevant equipment is sufficient. He contacts external associates (educational companies and trainers) and edits the printed matter for financing the programmes. He assigns secretarial support and discretely monitors the implementation of the programmes.

In the long term, he connects training with the development of the employees and the organisation and is kept informed about the degree employee training needs are covered through their files.

Employee training in Europe

At this point, it is worth comparing the emphasis on employee training in European countries. The evidence below shows us the percentage (%) of 25-64-year-old individuals who took part in at least one vocational training programme in 2003. This research was conducted among the 15 member states before the enlargement of the

European Union. Our country, which is in so great need of employee training, is last on the list.

| | | | | | |
|-------------|----|-----------|---|----------|---|
| UK | 22 | Austria | 8 | Ireland | 5 |
| Finland | 19 | Belgium | 7 | Italy | 5 |
| Denmark | 18 | Luxemburg | 5 | France | 3 |
| Sweden | 17 | Germany | 5 | Portugal | 3 |
| Netherlands | 16 | Spain | 5 | Greece | 1 |

Average in the 15 member states of the European Union: 8

Table 4. Employees % who were trained in 2003 (source: Eurostat)

5.6. Three contemporary approaches

I believe it is worthwhile to examine three basic ideas that were developed and have been dominating the sensitive field of professional and business training in the last two decades. This will help us shed light on the findings of the research that follow. They are concerned with the way Reg Revans approached action learning, the way Peter Senge, Chris Argyris and other researchers questioned learning organisation and with the more recent studies by Richard Boyatzis and Daniel Goleman on emotional intelligence in the work environment.

Action learning

According to Reg Revans (Revans, *ibid*), what we mean by learning is the ability of the individual to respond effectively to the demands of a given situation. In this sense, learning is the sum of two factors: programmed knowledge and knowledge we acquire through suitable questions we raise. Programmed knowledge is condensed scientific experience that is recorded in books, manuals, articles, etc creating a “common ground” for the particular field of cognition. Questions are put forward by interested parties through their experience from being involved in the particular field of cognition (work experience). Therefore, action learning combines theory with practice, gives theory the opportunity to be tested on the arena of everyday life in the business world and be enhanced with real data that are valid at the moment of application. Revans also formulated a simple equation which represents the method he proposed:

$$L = P + Q$$

i.e.:

$$\text{Learning} = \text{Programmed Knowledge} + \text{Questioning Insight}$$

The obviously practical orientation of action learning makes this method ideal for business training. Focusing on real problems is what connects business and work goals with the targets of training programmes. Consequently, the resulting learning (L) is the synthesis of pre-existing knowledge (P) around the issue and knowledge

acquired through raising suitable questions (Q) leading to practical solutions. This kind of learning makes the trainee able to respond to demands made in certain situations. It is, therefore, a method which engages trainees in active participation. Studying real cases, solving business problems, undertaking duties, connecting in-company seminars with company objectives are all essential reasons for action research.

The learning organisation

This approach is interesting because it seeks to trace the positive results of our personal learning on a business level.

Theoretical processing by Argyris and Senge put a lot of emphasis on the company's ability to learn, i.e. on its ability to know its environment (external and internal) and to adapt and respond positively and systematically. Consequently, the learning gained by executives is more effective when it is transformed into learning gained by the organisation.

The pioneering studies by Chris Argyris during the 1970s (Argyris, 1978) detected the need of modern businesses operating in a rapidly changing environment to learn and adapt to circumstances. Even more so, to predict developments and lead changes.

Peter Senge is the person who established the theory of the learning organisation. Senge (in the beginning of the 1990s) perceives learning, not simply as the acquisition of knowledge and experience but as a steady change of opinion, thinking and behaviour which is the direct or indirect result of knowledge and experience. In this way, learning is achieved when knowledge (know what) leads to the acquisition of skills (know how) and a different attitude (know why) and behaviour which is stabilised and repeated. Organisational learning is the constant improvement in the operation of a company through the knowledge that permeates all levels and fields.

- A learning organisation is an organisation / business which learns continuously through the transformation of accumulated experiences into knowledge and makes improvements that promote its efficiency (Senge, 1990).

The basic tool of an organisation that learns is the training of its staff, the successful transfer of learning and the monitoring of the course of on-the-job learning and the administration of the total knowledge that is produced (knowledge management) According to T. Stahl, B. Nyhan and P. D' Aloja (Stahl et al, 1994), the combination of work and learning increases the level and the availability of qualifications leading to a renewal of procedures and work forms, which results in an ascending spiral of training / improved work.

Training in soft skills

This refers to emotional intelligence and its application in the work environment of modern businesses as pointed out by D. Goleman and R. Boyatzis⁹. The field of business is not considered as a place of supposedly strictly rational decisions, but a field where human relationships and behaviours develop. Consequently, writers have pointed out the need to train employees in the so-called soft, personal and interpersonal skills irrespective of their studies and their field of specialisation.

The writers consider self-consciousness, self-regulation, behaviour motives, empathy and social skills as **soft abilities**. They also support the view that there is a need to train personnel in these skills which are indicators of success and efficiency in most jobs of the modern business environment, whether these jobs are managerial or executive.

Goleman (1999) criticises the usual design and the implementation of business training because he often does not take into consideration the development of soft skills or he uses them as a light issue that is complimentary at best to the hard skills which consist of curriculum studies, technical know-how and specialisation in a particular professional field.

Trends in management courses today incorporate matters of emotional intelligence so that trainers can develop these soft skills which had been neglected in the past.

5.7. Exploring training needs

Employee **training needs** are at the centre of training programmes.

As a professional trainer for more than fifteen years, I have found out from experience that training needs are systematically explored only in very few cases. In some cases, this is carried out on the basis of subjective and fragmented views espoused by departmental heads without harmonising them in the framework of a general strategy concerning the company's training policy.

Exploring HMA's training needs

During 2001-2002, the HMA carried out an extensive research concerning training needs among its clients (businesses and organisations). 108 companies doing business in industry, trade and in the provision of services were used as samples. The average number of employees per company was 465 individuals. This research showed that training depends to a great extent on seminars subsidised and sponsored by employer contributions. However, confidence in training and its ability to yield positive results for the company and its activities was nearly universal among interested parties.

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Organisation of training | A sufficient number of companies have a training infrastructure. However, a lot of them make no effort. |
| Policy of subsidies | Almost everyone seeks to find financing. Some of them put in more money for training. |
| Training character | Short-term programmes are popular. People are becoming increasingly interested in certification and postgraduate courses. |
| Training subjects | Administration, sales, customer service, quality, marketing, computing, accounting, financing. |
| Knowledge application | Agreement on the potential and efficiency of the application. |

Table 5. Research conclusions regarding HMA's training needs

5.8. Design, organisation and implementation of programmes

*I hear and forget,
I see and remember,
I do and learn.*
Chinese proverb

Based on the investigation of training needs, we can move on to the next stage, i.e., the design of a training programme. The objectives, methods, stakeholders, cost and technical specifications of the seminar are stated. We can distinguish three categories of training objectives:

- Cognitive (knowledge)
- Psychomotor (skills)
- Thymic (attitudes and behaviour)

Accordingly, seminars are organised focusing on the provision of knowledge (informational), the development of skills or the shaping of attitudes.

The design of a course includes the following units:

- Objectives
- Who it addressed to
- Duration
- Subjects
- Training method and means
- Cost of the programme
- Trainer's curriculum vitae

Certain resources are necessary for the smooth implementation of training programmes: financial, technical and human.

First of all, the budget of the programme is roughly set. This budget may be altered if it turns out that essential factors had not been taken into account in the initial prediction.

Next we find a suitable classroom for the lessons. We check if it has enough seats and desks and arrange the space available according to the needs of the programme. Do we need any syndicate rooms to divide trainees into groups? Do we have the necessary equipment? Where are the toilets? Where is the emergency exit?

In addition, we may need a photocopier, paper and slides.

A comfortable room for breaks is necessary.

A quality training programme is also in need of secretarial support.

Finally, the trainer: Is he/she the most suitable person for the particular programme? Has he/she been informed in good time? Is he/she on time? Does he/she comply with the programme and all his/her obligations?

The implementation of a training programme is always a challenge and a bet, even for the most experienced trainers. Nowadays that secretarial support is always provided, all the weight of the programme's success is shifted onto the trainer's shoulders.

In a model training presentation we focus on the trainees and their training needs. Our approach must be learner-centred.

- **Learner-centred** is a training method which puts the trainees in the centre making them participate actively in the lesson, contributing and discussing

their previous experience (reviewing), undertaking **team work**, studying real or hypothetical **case studies** and playing work and social **roles** (role playing) (Anagnostelis, ibid).

Learner – centred principles for training

Learning does not occur in a vacuum. Learners discover and construct meaning from information and experience based on their unique perceptions, thoughts and feelings. More information doesn't necessarily mean more learning. Learners seek to create meaningful uses of knowledge regardless of the quantity and quality information presented.

Learners link new knowledge to existing information in ways that make sense to the learner. The remembering of new knowledge is facilitated when it can be tied to a learner's current knowledge.

Personality influences learning. Learners have varying degrees of self-confidence and differ in the clarity of their personal goals and expectations for success and failure.

Learners want to learn. Individuals are naturally curious and enjoy learning, but personal insecurity and fear of failure often get in the way.

Learners like challenges. Learners are most creative when learning is challenging and meets their individual needs.

Learners are individuals. Not all learners are at the same stage of physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development. Learners also differ in their cultural backgrounds. Although the basic principles of learning apply to all learners regardless of these differences, trainers must take into account such differences between learners.

The learning environment is important. Learners learn best in a friendly, socially interactive and diverse environment.

Learners like positive reinforcement. Learning environments that support the self-esteem and respect of the individual learner tend to be more successful.

Past experience matters. Personal beliefs and impressions from prior learning colour learners' worldviews and their approach to learning.

5.9. Training methods

*Let's resist the impact
of traditional trends
that dominate initial education:
we give as much knowledge as possible
and then we wash our hands.
Sophie Courau*

Presentation with projector and PC

- This application has a lot of potential. The overhead projector has been established as an essential presentation tool for decades now. The use of PCs upgrades the method of presentation and provides some novel facilities.

Work in groups

It is an excellent training method for adults, especially for business executives. The class is divided into small groups of 3-8 individuals who agree to cooperate on a problem or a case study. Each of these groups appoints a coordinator who undertakes the following responsibilities:

- To give group members the opportunity to speak.
- To keep notes or assign note-taking to someone else.
- To finally present the conclusions reached by the groups to all the trainees.

Discussion – exchanging views

A wide creative discussion led by the trainer or a trainee. Its characteristics are as follows:

- The trainer puts the matter under discussion in question form, either his question or a question asked by someone else.
- A lot of people are given the opportunity to express themselves.
- The lesson is enhanced with personal experiences, views, examples, queries, creative ideas.
- The trainer can write some key words on the whiteboard.
- At the end he/she sums up what has been said and presents the conclusions taking care not to “patronise” the trainees.

Activities – games

It is an excellent opportunity for “edutainment” (from the words “education” and “entertainment”). However, it should not be turned into an end in itself and lose the real meaning of the training programme. Experienced trainers combine the lesson with certain activities that are suitable in each case, such as:

- Question-answer game to allow the participants to introduce themselves to each other.
- Role playing with the use of a video camera
- Negotiations game with two groups
- Team synergy game in small groups
- Brainstorming on some problem / opportunity

Self-evaluation test

This is another training method that involves trainees and stimulates their interest. Of course, the tests used must be serious.

The trainer must be careful in case some of the trainees feel uncomfortable or in case personal data come into play in the test in an indiscreet way.

Playing educational films

Educational films are usually of short or middle duration (10-40 minutes) and focus on certain issues of occupational life.

The trainer can ask certain questions before playing the film and ask the trainees to keep notes. Discussion follows after the film.

Individual or group projects

Projects complete training units and give trainees the opportunity to examine a certain subject in depth. A project could be a case study followed by certain questions that relate to the training unit.

Presentation of a topic by a trainee

The trainer may ask a trainee who has knowledge of a topic or interesting personal experience to give a full presentation, even with the use of supervisory means, without however forcing him/her.

5.10. Training evaluation

A study of management training evaluation theories brings us to two approaches which appear to be more interesting in the real business environment in Greece and the particular conditions that shape training today.

The first one is **evaluation based on targets** by Donald Kirkpatrick (1992) which is concerned with a clearly business environment and relates the trainee's personal results with the results brought about in the company where he works.

According to Kirkpatrick's model (ibid), the training of executives is subject to four evaluation stages: The trainee's reaction to the training programme, the learning that is achieved after the completion of the programme, the change in the behaviour seen in the work environment after training and the results achieved in the business environment.

- **Reaction:** Recording the impressions of trainees upon the completion of the programme with the use of questionnaires or verbally.
- **Learning:** Appraisal of the knowledge and skills that trainees have obtained at the end of the programme; this is usually done with the use of tests or through observation.
- **Behaviour:** The trainees' ability to transfer their learning to their job where it is assessed a few months after the programme with the use of interviews, questionnaires or through observing their work.
- **Results:** The real contribution of training in the improvement of work and, therefore, in the realisation of the company's targets assessed at least one year after the end of the programme with the use of interviews, questionnaires and control groups.

↑
Training
Returns

Value

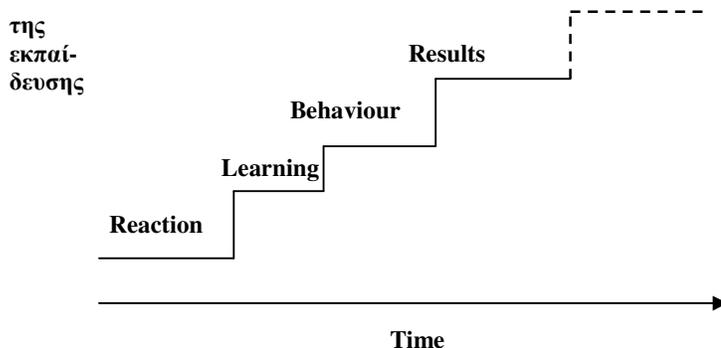


Figure 10. Training evaluation

C. Hamblin (2000) added a fifth stage in the evaluation as can be seen in figure 9: This stage is the stage of assessment of the value of training in the wider social environment (inside and outside the business environment), which can be assessed in the long term.

It should be noted that most training programmes finish their evaluation in the first stage, while some of them continue evaluation up to the second stage; finally, there are only a few that finish their evaluation at a further stage.

Evaluation based on targets is an objective method because it depends on the assessment of training targets. However, this is also its weak point because it is very difficult for training designers to express all the shortages in knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Despite the fact that we must seriously take it into consideration, it seems that in today's business reality in Greece, the approach that seems to prevail is based more on the consensus among the interested parties rather than on pinpointing targets.

The second approach is, therefore, that of **consensus evaluation** (Bramley, 2000). In this case, we are not interested in defining objective targets in detail and, therefore, in an accurate assessment of success in quantitative terms; we are rather interested in the stakeholders' cooperation and synergy to achieve a wider consensus in the overall operation and the efficiency of training.

At this point, we could naturally observe that the addition of Hamblin's value in Kirkpatrick's example is a bridge affording consensus evaluation.

5.11. The role of the Hellenic Management Association

In 1962, thirty dynamic business organisations which represented the most well-known progressive businesses of the time founded the HMA with the support of the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises. Their vision was to become the main vehicle for the study, promotion and dissemination of the principles and practices of modern thought in business administration in Greece.

In the forty-five years of its operation, the HMA has established the term management in Greece and its contribution to the improvement and recognition of professional management in business and organisation has decidedly helped to bring about the growth of economic units and, therefore, the Greek economy, supplying the market with specialised executives in all the individual business activities. At the same time, it has decisively contributed towards a wider acceptance of management as a

specialised field of scientific knowledge by higher education institutions and other organisations of educational activity.

The basic aim of the HMA is on a level of strategic importance and has to do with the shaping of the identity of management and managers in Greece and the recognition of their contribution in the effectiveness and output performance of a very collective effort. The second most important aim is to promote the application of modern management principles, methods and techniques and the individual functions in every collective effort made in both the private and the public sector in Greece, mainly through disseminating the necessary technical know-how and experience.

The educational mission of the HMA during the last five years can be seen in table 4 that follows. The table shows a relevant stability with small fluctuations as regards the number and the hours of training programmes. We can see that the number of trainers, trainees and the companies that participate has slightly decreased. This decrease is explained by the corresponding decrease in the programmes that are financed by the EU during the past three years.

| Training output performance | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Number of training programmes | 427 | 435 | 461 | 423 | 431 |
| Training hours in total | 19971 | 20536 | 20906 | 19853 | 20180 |
| Trained executives | 7561 | 9143 | 7830 | 7045 | 7237 |
| Trainers who have taught | 246 | 311 | 215 | 198 | 192 |
| Businesses which trained their executives | 889 | 1195 | 971 | 787 | 790 |

Table 6. The training performance output of the HMA during the past five years (2003-2006).

5.12. The training programmes of the Hellenic Management Association

This is the most important activity of the HMA in the realisation of its vision and its mission in the training of business and organisation executives. To this end, it provides a number of training programmes which are addressed to all ranks and can cover various company needs. These programmes are postgraduate programmes, vocational accreditation programmes, open programmes, in-company programmes and continuing vocational training programmes. The main programmes are as follows:

- **The Bath University Executive MBA in Athens**

It's a two-year part-time programme. According to professor Andrew Pettigrew, "the part-time MBA degree is both academically rigorous and highly practical programme, designed to meet the needs of both participants and their sponsoring organisations".

Aim: The Bath MBA is designed to broaden and deepen general management knowledge and skills, whilst furthering the executives' careers, enabling them to add value to their organizations.

The degree is accredited by the Association of MBAs (AMBA).

The programme is taught over two academic years. Teaching takes place Friday through Sunday.

The aim of year one is to give an intensive grounding in the key business disciplines.

The units are: Competitive Environment, Financial Management, Marketing Management, Operations Management, Organising and Managing People, and Information Systems Strategy.

The emphasis in year two shifts to the cross-functional and strategic areas of management, and the development of transferable managerial skills.

The second year will involve three compulsory units emphasising the strategic areas of management, a choice of three elective units to be taught in two 2.5-day blocks, and a two-day workshop on research methodology to prepare you for the dissertation / project.

Teaching methods: Teaching and learning on the Bath MBA are highly interactive processes. Course members are expected to draw on their own experiences to inform the discussion and debate, and to comment on the management and strategic processes they observe in their own organisations. Learning is stimulated through a mixture of formal lectures, case studies, videos, visiting speakers, and syndicate group work.

Assessment methods: Assessment is by a combination of assignments and examinations. The final project/dissertation must also be passed in order to qualify for the award of the MBA degree. It is normally expected that assignments will be based on the student's organisation or business sector.

- **The HMA Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration**

This is the most popular training programme taught by the HMA and is very much appreciated by companies which send their executives and often pay their tuition fees or participate in OAED's financing projects.

The first session of the Programme started in Athens in 1989. Its success and the response of executives led to the establishment of branches in fourteen other towns. Each year, more than twenty sessions are materialised throughout Greece while 2,400 executives have graduated to date.

The aims of the programme that highlight its practical value are as follows:

- To teach the principles and methods of modern scientific management.
- To renew and modernise the professional knowledge of executives.
- To develop their ability to cooperate effectively with individuals coming from a different social, educational and vocational background.
- To systematically update them with regard to the trends that are being developed in business activities on a European and international scale in a multinational environment and the impact these trends have on the operation of businesses and organisations in Greece.

Graduates from Tertiary Education establishments with three years' work experience can attend this programme or executives who do not hold tertiary education qualifications but have a proven eight-year work experience.

The teaching staff consists of University professors and experienced managers, distinguished trainers and personalities from the business world. Various teaching methods are used such as counselling, simulation games, case studies and group projects.

The **programme benefits** for the participants are:

- It is taught in Greek
- It utilises real case studies
- It identifies and analyses needs based on their work
- Lessons are structured in such a way so as to introduce participants to modern developments in management step-by-step.

The programme lasts for one and a half years and consists of three phases comprising the following teaching units:

- Unit A: Organisational Behaviour, Marketing, Production, Financial Management, Management Information Systems, Total Quality Management
- Unit B: Managerial Accounting, HR Management, Logistics, Sales Management, E-Commerce
- Unit C: Business Strategy and Policy, Business Game, Project Management

Participants are assessed through a combination of projects and examinations. A thesis is required to complete the programme.

- **The Executive Master's Programme for Financial Directors**

The HMA has been offering this Postgraduate Programme since 2003. It **aims** at providing high level specialisation to executives wishing to be promoted to Chief Financial Officers in the basic sectors of Financial Management. Candidate trainees must be holders of a degree in administration or economics and have at least three years' work experience.

The training programme consists of two modules which cover all the specialised needs for updating and developing today's financial directors:

- Core subjects: Management Accounting, Management Costing, Tax Control, Credit Control, Financial Planning, Cash Flow Planning, Financial Banking, Risk Management, Capital Structure, Internal Auditing, International Accounting Standards, Administration of Real Estate, Management Information Systems, Legal Support, Quality Management of Financial Services.
- Elective subjects: Taxation, Investment Evaluation, Supplies Management, Supply Chain Management, Business Statistics with P/C use.

High-rank executives of Greek and multinational companies teach in the Executive Master's Programme for Financial Directors.

- **The EMC Diploma in Marketing**

This programme is recognised by the European Marketing Confederation, which consists of 17 member states and represents more than 150,000 professional marketers in Europe. It is intended for Lyceum Graduates with at least three years' work experience and for University Graduates who wish to acquire specialised knowledge. The programme offers candidates the opportunity to:

- Be taught a full training "package", which combines theory and practice in the field of marketing.
- Become aware of new trends in the field of marketing in Europe.
- Find work opportunities if they are graduates from other disciplines who wish or have already started a similar career.

The programme's trainers are distinguished market executives in the field of marketing and Greek academics.

The one-year programme includes: Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Finance, Introduction to Marketing, Consumers' Behaviour, Marketing Research, Advertising, Public Relations, Sales and Sales Management, Product Management, Services Marketing, Industrial Marketing, Logistics, International Marketing, Retail Management, Strategic Marketing.

The qualification is awarded to trainees who pass the examinations and submit their personal project.

- **The CIM Professional Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing**

The Chartered Institute of Marketing (founded in 1911, over 60000 members in 130 countries) is the largest professional body of marketing and leads the development of professional marketing standards and practice, championing the big issues and new ideas in the marketing world.

Course Objectives: This qualification incorporates the knowledge and skills, required by marketing professionals who aspire to work, or who need greater awareness of working, at the strategic level. Being the most advanced qualification that CIM offers, it focuses not just on marketing strategy, but its role in general business – as well as the ability to make marketing accountable in the organisations.

Course structure: Analysis and Evaluation, Strategic Marketing Decisions, Managing Marketing Performance, Strategic Marketing in Practice.

Entry criteria: Any undergraduate or postgraduate degree with significant marketing content, or a non-marketing degree plus three years marketing management experience, or six years' marketing management experience, three of which should be at a senior level.

The course is taught by both academics and professionals, trained by CIM for the delivery of this level of training.

Examinations take place at the end of the course.

- **Graduate Diploma in Logistics Management**

This is a specialised course in the field of the rapidly developing logistics. It aims at disseminating applied knowledge of integrated techniques and practices. The programme's professionals and academics focus on selected case studies and accompany trainees to selected logistics work environments.

The programme gives candidates the opportunity to:

- Become aware of organisational and technological changes that their company may need in the field of organisation and logistics.
- Propose reliable solutions to business problems or situations that their company has to deal with.
- Approach issues relating to the organisation and restructuring of the departments that are associated with logistics activities practically and efficiently.

The programme is intended for employees in the field of logistics who hold a secondary education qualification and two years' work experience in this field.

The programme includes the following subjects: Organising Logistics, Inventory Management, Procurement Management, HR Management, Managing Warehouse, Transportation and Distribution Management, Logistics Systems, Contract Management, Maintenance Management, E-Commerce, Financial Management, Logistics Outsourcing.

- **Professional Diploma in Human Resources Management**

Having established the increasingly important role that human resources play in the development of companies, the HMA started in May 2006 the first session of this new programme with the aim to contribute to the shaping of a new generation of specialized executives in this particularly sensitive field.

The programme consists of two modules:

- Core Modules: Strategy in Human Resources Management, Evaluating Work Positions, Performance Management, Policies regarding Salaries and Benefits, HR Information Systems, Training and Development Methodologies, Personnel Selection Procedures, Labour Law and Industrial Relations, Corporate Governance and Business Ethics.
- Elective Module: Conflict Management or Diversity Management.

Academics, professional work psychologists and a specialist doctor teach on the programme. The qualification is awarded after examinations.

- **The Institute of Sales and Marketing Management Diploma in Sales Management**

This is the second most popular training programme by the HMA. It has been on offer during the past five years and is accredited by the British organisation with international recognition in the field of sales.

It is intended for employees in the field of sales who wish to pursue a managerial position. The trainers are all people who know the market with long experience and professional knowledge. Diverse educational material is provided and a lot of role playing activities and case studies are used.

Course structure: Communication Techniques, Management and Development of Human Resources in Sales Management, Decision-making and Negotiation Techniques, Marketing Basics, Strategic Sales Planning and Market Analysis, Commercial Law Basics, Key Account Management, Sales Management, Basic Principles of Business Economic Sizes, Customer Service.

Written examinations are held at the end of the programme on all the material taught and are marked by a four-member commission consisting of two trainers and two high-rank market officials.

- **Diploma in Environmental Management**

The environmental crisis and the role of companies in that crisis led the HMA to start this pioneering programme in 2005. It gives participants the opportunity to create a suitable company control and improvement system in the field of environmental protection.

It is intended for MA or MSc holders in relevant specialities with two years' work experience, or young managers who are degree holders with four years' work experience, especially for employees working in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility, Environmental Management, Quality or Corporate Communication, as well as for employees interested in Environmental Management Systems ISO 14001: 2004 or EMAS.

The course consists of eight units: Introduction, General Environmental Issues, Company and the Environment, Environmental Management, European and Greek Law regarding the Environment, Inspection Techniques for Environmental Management Systems, Environmental Consequences and Results, Dealing with Emergencies.

Trainees are assessed through written examinations. Trainers consist of both academics and experienced executives in environmental management issues.

| Course title | Prospective participants | Duration | Evaluation | Cost |
|--|--|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| The Bath University Executive MBA in Athens. | Middle-level executives, fluent in English | 24 months | Exercises and thesis | £11,000 |
| The HMA Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration | Middle-level executives | 18 months | Exercises and thesis | €7,000 |
| The Executive Master's Programme for Financial Directors | Qualified professionals | 18 months | Exercises and thesis | €6,500 |
| The EMC Diploma in | Employees in Marketing | 12 months | Exercises and project | €5,500 |

| | | | | |
|--|--|-----------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Marketing | | | | |
| The CIM Professional Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing | Qualified professionals, fluent in English | 8 months | Exercises | €4,800 plus £400 |
| Graduate Diploma in Logistics Management | Employees in Logistics | 12 months | Exercises and project | €5,000 |
| Professional Diploma in Human Resources Management | HR executives | 14 months | Exercises | €5,500 |
| The Institute of Sales and Marketing Management Diploma in Sales Management | Salesmen | 8 months | Exercises | €2,400 |
| Diploma in Environmental Management | Qualified professionals | 6 months | Exercises | €2,000 |

Table 7. Long-term programmes offered by the HMA

- **Short-term Basic Management Programme**

The Basic Management Programme is a special course that is provided by the HMA. It began thirteen years ago and is according to the coordinator's confession "copied" from the corresponding programme of the American Management Association.

The **aim** of the course is to initiate participants into the philosophy of modern management and to underline the role of professional managers. To present in detail management functions and propose modern methods and techniques for its effective application. To introduce the basic theories regarding human behaviour and propose ways to manage human resources better.

It is **intended** for middle employees who are not specialised in management and for young and future managers.

Duration: 56 hours. Mondays and Wednesdays, 5-9 p.m. The cost of participation amounts to €900.

It comprises the following **units**:

- Introduction to Management
- Programming
- Organisation
- Control

- Evaluation and Performance Models
- Motivating Human Resources
- Group Collaboration
- Communication
- Leadership
- Problem Solving

From 2006 I am one of the three trainers on this particular programme. I believe that this programme has serious problems. It attempts to squeeze the entire management curriculum into very few hours. As a result, trainees can only grasp a general idea of each unit without being able to delve into each unit, not to mention acquiring those skills which are necessary in exercising their duties.

5.13. The Professional MBA of Athens Laboratory of Business Administration

ALBA was founded in 1992, through a joint initiative of the Federation of Greek Industries, the leading Employers' Union in Greece, and the HMA; both the preparation for the creation of ALBA and its operations until the end of 1993 were funded by the European Commission and by contributions offered by its Corporate Members. In February 1995, the Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry joined the Federation of Greek Industries and the HMA to become the third collective body of Greek businesses under whose auspices ALBA now operates.

ALBA is a not-for-profit educational association of more than 60 Greek corporations. It operates outside the Greek formal (state) educational system as a Laboratory of Liberal Studies. Its operations are funded by tuitions and fees, contributions by employers' organisations and by corporate and individual donations.

ALBA's teaching faculty comprises a small nucleus of Resident Professors and Visiting Professors drawn from the best Business Schools around the world, including INSEAD, London Business School, Harvard Business School, Wharton, the Stern School of Business (NYU) etc. All ALBA Professors are leading management academics, with extensive teaching, research and consulting experience and a strong publication record in top-ranking international academic journals.

The Professional MBA Programme is a part-time programme tailor-made for the needs of working professionals who cannot take a full year off to attend it. It embodies the tight integration of an Executive MBA with the comprehensive coverage of a Full-Time MBA.

The manager is above all a decision maker and the fundamental quality of any decision maker is the ability to think and act strategically. ALBA has realised this need and for this reason has focused its professional MBA program on the development of relevant skills through courses on Strategy such as "Thinking Strategically" and "Strategic Management". These courses analyse models of decision making when interacting with other rational decision-makers with potentially conflicting interests, with a focus on the development of problem-solving skills in strategic situations. Moreover they put strategic analysis techniques and methods to work in practical situations including Greek and European firms. The latter is also achieved via the development and implementation of a business simulation framework whereby groups of students are called upon to take a real life situation at hand and act as strategists.

The first year of the Professional MBA programme consists of core (required) courses, that are designed to provide both the analytical tools required for complex problem-solving in functional areas, such as Finance, Marketing, Human Resources Development etc. and also the necessary skills for successful management (leadership, communication, negotiations). These core courses succeed each other starting in January and last until February of the next calendar year. The following period of 6 months is covered with a wide range of elective courses. Participants are required to select and attend a total of five full electives in order to complete the requirements of the Professional MBA Program. The course of studies culminates in the last period where the courses of Strategic Thinking (at the end of the previous period) and Strategic Management act as capstone courses and help students to revise and make use of all the knowledge gained throughout their programme.

The typical profile of an entering class is a group of highly motivated individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds with at least 5 years of working experience who are determined to work hard and excel professionally. The objective of the Program is for participants to learn from each other as much as possible and to that end we put a strong emphasis on class participation.

In March 2007 the MBA programme was accredited by The Association of MBAs (AMBA).

Student profile: Typical Professional MBA students fall into 4 categories:

- Lower and middle level managers, with 4-5 years of experience.
- Middle and upper level managers, who wish to make a career shift and improve their career options.
- Middle and upper level managers on their way to promotion, sponsored by their companies.
- Young entrepreneurs, who wish to acquire the necessary managerial skills in order to successfully manage their own company.

In terms of background, holders of engineering, economics or business administration degrees form the largest part of the class, while the rest come from disciplines as diverse as political science, social sciences, humanities, liberal arts, agriculture, biology, etc.

Tuition Fees: €18,900 payable in instalments.

The relationship between ALBA and HMA

ALBA was founded on HMA's initiative. However, their programmes function as competition today. It is also worth noting the fact that in the last few years the chairman of both organisations is the same person. Some people consider this to be an advantage because in this way there is collaboration and better focussing on the target groups of the two organisations. However, others find fault with it because they think that the principle of free competition is abused.

5.14. The Athens University of Economics and Business Executive MBA

The Athens University of Economics and Business was originally founded in 1920 under the name of Athens School of Commercial Studies. It was renamed in 1926 as the Athens School of Economics and Business, a name that was retained until 1989 when it assumed its present name, that is the Athens University of Economics and Business.

It is the third oldest Higher Education Institution in Greece and the oldest in the general fields of Economics and Business. From 1999 onwards, the University developed even further and nowadays it offers eight undergraduate programmes and twenty one postgraduate programmes.

The Executive MBA is intended for higher education graduates who already work and intend to develop their scientific background and their professional and managerial skills.

The basic elements which make up the philosophy and the character of the programme are as follows:

- Special emphasis on the development of the students' leadership skills.
- Emphasis on the development of the students' interdisciplinary knowledge and skills background.
- The students' ability to connect their learning from the programme with the professional needs of their career and the needs of the company or organisation where they work.
- Utilisation of the latest developments in the science and practice of Business Management worldwide and continuous adaptation to the circumstances and needs of Greek companies and organisations.
- Use of the most advanced training methods such as business games, case studies, multimedia, group and individual projects.

The programme runs for 24 months. Lessons are completed in the first three semesters and the fourth semester is reserved for the preparation and support of the thesis.

The programme consists of two subject categories, i.e. core subjects and elective subjects, and a thesis. Core subjects cover the following:

- Basic scientific background of all the individual sectors of Business Management (such as Marketing, Financial Management, Accounting, Human Resources Management, Computing, etc)
- General management skills such as leadership skills, decision-making skills, strategic thinking, etc.

Elective subjects give students the opportunity to specialise in a particular field of Business Management by choosing the subjects that are relevant in the field of their choice. These are:

- Marketing and Communication
- Financial Management and Accounting
- Human Resources Management and Organisational Behaviour
- Management Systems and Information Management

Requirements: University degree holders with at least three years' confirmed work experience may enrol on the programme.

The **cost** of the programme is €8,000.

The programme is recognised by the Association of MBAs (AMBA). It is considered as one of the top MBAs on the Greek market since it is internationally accredited and is not taught by Greek teachers, while it also includes a lot of case studies taken from the real world of the Greek market.

5.15. The University of Indianapolis Executive MBA

The University of Indianapolis is a private residential university established in 1902. It offers its diverse student body a comprehensive set of general, pre-professional, and professional programs grounded in the liberal arts. In keeping with its motto of "Education for Service," the University is committed to contributing to the quality of life in the community.

Founded in 1902, the University of Indianapolis is a not-for-profit, comprehensive, co-educational University located in the capital city of Indianapolis, Indiana. To facilitate the ever-growing global community, the University of Indianapolis offers courses leading to Bachelor and Master degree programs at the university's campus in Athens, thereby increasing students' exposure to cultural diversity through faculty and student exchanges.

The **Executive Master of Business Administration** Programme focuses on the decision – making responsibilities of the modern manager. The programme provides managers with the knowledge and critical thinking skills required to make decisions and formulate policies, taking into account external environmental pressures and constraints as well as the impact that these policies and decisions will have within the organisation. The MBA concentrations are in four areas of specialisation: Organisational Leadership, Technology Management, Marketing and Finance.

The duration of the Programme is 12 months for full – time students and 24 months for part – time students.

Objectives: According to the information provided by the University, the students have the opportunity to practice their newly acquired skills in doing all of the following:

- Developing the ability to think critically about various business situations
- Effectively utilising accounting and financial information to identify potential problem areas and propose efficient solutions
- Learning how to translate knowledge into particular ideas suitable for application in actual decision situations
- Becoming familiar with fundamental programming theories necessary to create solutions to an organisation's information systems needs
- Formulating strategic business plans that answer the demands of a rapidly changing environment
- Making the best possible use of the human and material resources of the organisation's disposal

An interesting feature of the specific Programme is that almost one third of the participants come from other countries. Yet, the total amount of the participants per year doesn't exceed the number of 30 – 35.

The **cost** of the Programme is \$11,700.

This particular programme has not managed to become established on the Greek market, at least to the extent that its officials would desire. Since the University has a

larger number of students pursuing postgraduate studies, it seems that it gives executives the impression of a youthful environment, not an environment of lifelong learning that would be more suitable to their age and work experience.

5.16. Public providers of management training

The Greek Productivity Centre (GPC)

The GPC was founded as a public organisation in 1960 and it was the first significant educational organisation for employees in Greece. Up to 1968, when it was dissolved by virtue of a ministerial decision, it served its objectives in various ways; as its name suggests, these objectives were to improve the productivity of Greek companies and organisations both in the private and the public sector: through training executives, employees and the unemployed, through researches and studies regarding the individual problems of various sectors and through publications which were particularly ahead of their time.

The Institute of Management operated in the context of the GPC from the beginning of the 1980s and specialised in management training. This caused competition with the HMA which offered executives the possibility to choose between two strong “players” and benefited training and development. Finally, a compromise was made: The HMA mainly undertook to do business with the private sector and the GPC with the public sector. The working trainers often exchanged positions between the “conservative” but reliable GPC and the more flexible and innovative HMA.

Personally, I had the opportunity to work closely with the GPC for five years. If I compare this with my collaboration with the HMA, I could say that the GPC had narrower horizons and that the public it addressed was less demanding. Besides most of them came because they were forced to join by the public services because they paid for their training or because they had certain preconceptions about initial vocational training since they were of a young age with limited work experience and without having been admitted into a higher education establishment.

In spite of all this, I believe that the GPC fulfilled its objectives and equipped generations of executives with the necessary qualifications for their professional career.

It prevailed in the field training especially during the 1960s and the 1970s, while the HMA had a smaller target group which was limited to some big private companies in production and commerce.

In addition, the GPC introduced computer programs for adults during the 1980s. The most important course that GPC offered during the past ten years of its operation was its one-year Business Administration Programme which had an MBA structure. All in all, this programme was attended by approximately 800 executives.

The National Centre of Public Administration (NCPA)

The NCPA was founded at the end of the 1980s and its main mission was to improve Public Administration through training and development. The improvement of the knowledge and skills of executives based on real needs and the progress made in our time, as well as the use of E-Government with the utilisation of new technologies are the main pursuits whose final aim is the provision of quality services to citizens.

The National School of Public Administration, the National School of Local Administration and the Institute of Training operate in the framework of the organisation. These institutions cooperate with the EU and absorb considerable funds for training employees and higher executives of the Public Sector.

NCPA has facilities in Athens and Thessaloniki.

NCPA's greatest advantage is the fact that it has been established as an official education provider for the executives of the Public Sector who are made to attend its programmes in order to achieve promotion to higher positions.

The organisation's disadvantage is the fact that it offers low wages to its affiliated trainers and, therefore, it attracts low-level trainers. Certainly, this has consequences in the level of training provided. In addition, among its trainers one can find middle and higher executives of the Public Sector who have not attended any trainers training course and believe that adult training is fully served by lectures only. Another disadvantage is the fact that its management changes frequently depending on political developments. Nevertheless, the NCPA is an institution in itself which has made relative progress through the years and contributes in the way the executives of the public sector are evaluated either through selecting participants or through final examinations.

5.17. Other management training providers

Apart from the aforementioned organisations there are lots of smaller training companies in the field of management training, as well as some accredited Centres of Vocational Training and a number of individual agents and independent trainers. All these people are mainly engaged in in-company training. From the various companies in this field we can distinguish Global Training, Compact and Primus / Business & IT Training. Their market share is a very small and their potential for further development is limited. The research I have conducted, but also my personal experience, leads me to the conclusion that these companies have the relevant advantage of being flexible in the way they approach customers. However, they also have some serious problems, such as:

- They pressurise trainers with low wages. This discourages good trainers and, in this way, the level of training is impaired.
- There are very long delays in the payment of wages which are, in any case, very low.
- They cannot design tailor-made programmes. This is very serious because this is exactly what someone would expect from small and flexible companies.
- There are limited facilities for the conduction of seminars in their premises.
- There is a limited communication and promotional budget.

The company that is somewhat different and is trying to overcome these problems is **Primus / Business IT Training**.

In its twelve-year presence in the field of vocational training, Primus has trained ten thousand people, both employed by the biggest companies in the country or unemployed and has implemented training programmes that cost approximately €5 million. Its programmes consists mainly of seminars for middle and higher executives in management, finance and marketing-sales. Its most successful programme is its Mini MBA which runs for 64 hours. It is designed for higher and top business

executives who are interested in acquiring a concise picture of the basic concepts, principles and procedures that apply in the management of modern businesses.

In the past few years, some efforts have been made for E-learning. The most typical of these efforts is that made by Compact. **Compact** was established in 1996 with the aim to offer innovative services in the field of vocational training. The most dynamic programme of the company is the result of its collaboration with Harvard University. To be more precise: **Harvard Business School Publishing** (HBSP) is dedicated to the development and improvement of business practices and management worldwide by strengthening developing and supporting managerial and leadership skills in business people through certain e-learning programmes.

The truth is that the programmes run by Compact, like many other e-learning programmes, have not been very successful in Greece, at least to this day. There is distrust as regards the potential of this tool. The traditional trainer-trainee relationship still functions to a great extent within the context of traditional lessons held in a classroom, or even in the case of on-the-job training despite the innovative forms of distance learning or E-learning. These programmes approach interested parties more easily when they have to do with the transfer of knowledge rather than the cultivation of skills, with the exception of PC skills where these programmes have been very useful.

5.18. The role of supervisory institutions

In a market economy which is regulated by legislation and the supervisory authorities of the state it is reasonable that management training should be controlled and evaluated by these institutions. In this particular case, the supervisory institutions are OAED and EKEPIS.

The Organisation for the Employment of Manpower (OAED)

OAED is the main instrument that enforces the government policy with regard to employment so that the necessary requirements for swiftly adjusting labour supply according to demand may be ensured. OAED operates under the supervision of the Ministry for Employment and Social Welfare.

In particular, the Organisation is involved in the Vocational Guidance, technical vocational training, establishing contacts between labour supply and demand, various benefits such as unemployment benefits, pregnancy and motherhood benefits provided by the Institute of Social Insurance, etc.

In order to fulfil its mission, the organisation materialises a large number of activities, such as:

- Coupling of Labour supply and Demand
- Employment Programmes (subsidising companies in order to create new jobs)
- Insurance Benefits (Unemployment Benefits, Family Benefits, Building Benefits, etc)
- Insurance Programmes for Special Social Groups
- Private Company Employee Training Programmes

OAED plays a key role in management training because it strives to finance business training programmes through the Fund For Employment and Vocational Training. More precisely: companies have the right to train their personnel by paying tuition

fees by using 0.45% of the employer contributions they pay to IKA. OAED monitors the training programmes in order to make sure that they are carried out in accordance with the terms and conditions that it lays down. However, from 2005 OAED obliges the companies that train their staff in this way to pay for overtime work if this training is carried out outside the working hours of the staff being trained. This regulation is the result of pressure exercised by trade unions and the money for overtime work could come from the 0.45% already mentioned. It could be said that this is fair with reference to in-company programmes. However, this regulation, apart from these programs, also includes long-term programmes that lead to the acquisition of certificates, diplomas and degrees. In this way, the possibility to finance training programmes is considerably limited and, in this way, this measure turns into a counter-motive for businesses and, therefore, for employees interested in their own development.

The National Accreditation Centre for Continuing Vocational Training (EKEPIS)

EKEPIS was founded in 1997 and is located in Athens, Greece. EKEPIS is a statutory body supervised by the Minister of Employment and Social Protection with administrative and financial autonomy.

The Centre's mission is to develop and implement the National Accreditation System for Continuing Vocational Training. This system aims at:

- Ensuring quality assurance in vocational training
- Improving effectiveness of training services
- Reinforcing reliability in vocational training
- Linking vocational training with employment and the demands of the labour market

The work of EKEPIS is:

- Accreditation of Vocational Training Centres and Special Centres for the Social and Vocational Integration of people with disabilities and ex-drug users.
- Monitoring and Evaluation of Accredited Vocational Training Centres and Special Centres
- Accreditation of Trainers of Continuing Vocational Training.
- Accreditation of Support Services Providers.
- Accreditation of Job Profiles
- Accreditation of Continuing Vocational Training Programmes
- Accreditation of knowledge, skills and competencies

As regards the accreditation of trainers, EKEPIS has instituted a complicated procedure leading to various levels of accreditation without anybody knowing where to stop. From various discussions I have had with my colleagues and also from their answers to the respective question put forward in the course of the interviews I conducted in the context of this research project, I found out a general mistrust as regards the aims and administration of European funds given to EKEPIS for the materialisation of its objectives.

During 2005-2007, an effort to train the trainers began by financing the whole project from community funds. During the application of the project, we witnessed a bureaucratic rationale which aimed at favouring each other (the people who were accredited through this programme) and at collecting an unacceptable fee amounting to €100 from each trainer from a total number of ten thousand trainers who applied (mainly employees of the public sector who wanted to increase their income by "teaching" in training programmes financed by the European Union...).

As regards the content of the programme, it consisted of the following five units:

- Introduction to adult learning
- Training management
- Training methods
- Written projects
- Individual presentations

The duration of the programme was 300 hours - 69 hours spent on seminars and 231 spent on distance learning (written projects in preparation of the individual presentations).

5.19. The results of the survey of the HMA trainees

The survey of the HMA trainees on long-term programmes brought about a lot of interesting results.

In the five questions that dealt with their impressions from the programme they attended, respondents expressed their general satisfaction as can be seen from table 8 that follows:

| Impressions from training | Excellent | Very Good | Good | Fair | Bad |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|------|------|-----|
| Quality of knowledge | 35% | 31% | 15% | 13% | 6% |
| Quality of presentations | 27% | 32% | 26% | 11% | 4% |
| Trainee participation | 25% | 37% | 28% | 7% | 3% |
| Training material | 11% | 34% | 38% | 14% | 3% |
| Supervision | 17% | 35% | 29% | 12% | 7% |

Table 8. The impressions of trainees about training at the HMA

The answers given to the question whether the subjects of the programme were adequately covered were more flattering: 33% replied "absolutely", 43% "to a great extent", 15% "fairly enough", 9% "little", and 0% "not at all".

As regards the question what new things they learned on the programme, answers focused on practical skills and the different philosophy of modern management in comparison with the conditions that prevail in their own jobs. A fair number of these people appreciated the management tools they learned.

Answers concerning the teaching units that merit more attention varied considerably among respondents. However, we could say that they are more interested in modern trends, such as e-commerce, logistics, Customer Relationship Management, and Crisis Management. The answers given to the question whether what they have learned can be practically applied in their job are as follows: 35% of the respondents believe that the things they have learned have an "extensive" application; 29% "fairly extensive"; 21% "medium"; 14% small and 1% none. Indeed, they believe that the value of the knowledge they have acquired will have a considerable impact on the interested parties. This impact is shown in detail in table 9.

| Impact | Very positive | Positive | Indifferent | Negative | Very negative |
|--------------------|---------------|----------|-------------|----------|---------------|
| On yourself | 37% | 45% | 13% | 5% | 0% |
| On your colleagues | 35% | 41% | 19% | 5% | 0% |
| On your customers | 30% | 42% | 26% | 2% | 0% |
| On your company | 31% | 33% | 29% | 6% | 1% |
| On society | 22% | 48% | 30% | 0% | 0% |

Figure 9. The impact of training

Respondents were particularly strict in their judgement about the organisational support of the programme they attended at the HMA. In particular: only 3% finds it excellent, 18% very good, 22% bad, 46% moderate and 11% bad. This question brought to the surface a sense of discontent that had been perceived by a number of trainers in the past few years even though no opportunity had arisen for it to be expressed in detail, as can be seen from the answers mainly to the next question of the research that is concerned with proposals made to the HMA aiming at the improvement of its services. Thus, respondents propose the following:

- **Information material:** Leaflets in English. Upgrading of the website to become interactive. Information about trainers.
- **Promotional activities of the programmes:** Direct contact between representatives of the HMA and companies giving information about their services/products and selling them. Sending registered mail containing printed matter to middle-rank executives. Personal e-mails with promotional material.
- **Contact with the programme coordinators:** Before Christmas holidays, Easter holidays, summer holidays and a meeting with participants before examinations in order to tackle any problems.
- **Training facilities:** The outside environment needs better cleaning. Plants and trees that should be taken care of. Better maintenance and noise insulation of classrooms. Window cleaning. Greater range of products available at the canteen. More seats in break time lounges. Separate spaces for smokers and non-smokers during breaks. Painting and colour renewal to give them a more joyous shade. Automatic vendors for refreshments, etc. Indoor plants. Wall decoration.

- **Training equipment:** Updating of audiovisual means (data display projectors, LCD-TV, DVD players). Clearer photocopies. Modern training films. Separate room with computer lab.
- **Type of training programmes:** Distance learning, E-learning, outdoor activities, personal development.
- **Content of training programmes:** More practical applications on financing. More training time on management, entrepreneurship and on corporate social responsibility. Workshops on homework for better assimilation of the material taught.
- **Trainers:** Better coordination to avoid repetition. Some trainers should attend the train-the-trainer programme.
- **Notes:** More detailed, not only photocopies of slides. More extensive bibliography. Distribution of material CDs and DVDs.
- **Programme secretary:** better coordination. We should not be looking round from floor to floor to find the secretaries.
- **Additional provisions:** better catering with a wider menu. Organisation of Career Week with the participation of companies. Educational excursions and visits. Free subscription for graduates who want to become members of the HMA. Creation of a job finding service. Creation of a discount card.
- **Trainees' continuing contact:** Alumni Club. Annual ball for graduates. Sending regular Newsletters via e-mail.

The question raised regarding what other subjects they would like to attend attracted varying answers. MBA trainees focus on more specialised subjects such as Customer Service, Logistics CRM, or Emotional Intelligence, while trainees following a diploma course focus on Marketing and Management.

The next question which is concerned with ranking among the various factors which foster administrative capacity is very interesting. Factors associated with learning (education, lifelong learning, learning ability) are at the highest positions (first, second and fourth), while personal acquaintances are particularly appreciated (ranking seventh above foreign languages and communication ability!). Appearance and technological skills come last.

| |
|---|
| 1. Education (vocational, degrees, postgraduate) |
| 2. Lifelong learning (seminars, on-the-job training, degrees, postgraduate) |
| 3. Leadership, inspiration, motivation |
| 4. Intelligence and learning ability |
| 5. Work experience in a similar position |
| 6. Work experience in the same field of activity |
| 7. Knowing the right people and building up relationships |
| 8. Languages |
| 9. Ability to communicate |
| 10. Ability to cooperate with others |
| 11. Self-confidence |
| 12. Organisational ability and orderliness |
| 13. Working hard |
| 14. Self-control (time and stress management) |
| 15. Taking initiatives and being creative |

| |
|--|
| 16. Integrity (honesty, sense of responsibility) |
| 17. Balance between “work” and “life” |
| 18. Physical stamina |
| 19. Appearance |
| 20. Technological skills (operation of machines, computers, etc) |

Table 10. Factors that foster administrative capacity

In the last question about who financed their training, 65% answered “on their own”, 24% “their company”, 9% “their company in part” and 2% “another source in part” (scholarship). I wanted to explore this last piece of evidence and I looked for the statistical data of the HMA during the last ten years. I found out that up until two years ago, companies contributed towards the financing of training up to a percentage of 45-50%. This percentage dropped considerably after the application of the new legislation which provides that overwork payment for employees who participate should also be paid out of the 0.45% of employer contributions, apart from training itself.

An interesting piece of evidence that arose from the research is that 73% of the participants are men while only 27% of them are women. Finally, the average age of trainees is 35 years old for the MBA and 30 years old for the Diploma, while their initial studies vary from economics and business management to physical education, theology, mathematics or cosmetology. However, most of the participants are at the so-called management threshold; those on the MBA are middle-rank executives aiming at a higher or better position at the same level, while those on the diploma course are first-line executives (mainly sellers) aiming at being promoted to the position of supervisor.

The fields of activity where trainees come from are various. However, a great number comes from banks, insurance companies, foodstuff and beverages, construction companies, retail outlets, telecommunications, pharmaceutical companies, the media, high technology companies, the industry, shipping and tourism. Big companies have a greater share in training while trainees from smaller and medium-sized companies are generally self-financed.

Differences among MBA and Diploma trainees as regards the percentage of the questions cited above and pointing out the need for improvements at the HMA are negligible. It was only the question about the suitability of trainers that attracted stricter answers from MBA trainees. Quite a few respondents distinguished between trainees and pointed out that excellent trainers coexist in the programme with mediocre or totally unacceptable ones, at least from the point of view of their ability to transfer knowledge. In this way, another weak point was detected.

5.20. The views of the general manager of HMA

Mr Roulias was enthusiastic about the contribution of the HMA in management training. At the same time he was very critical with the role of the Greek State and the bureaucracy which is an obstacle for the further development of the training industry. The interview with the general manager touched on the course of the HMA over the decades and the competition it dealt with successfully, first from the Greek Productivity Centre, and then from the Vocational Training Centres, and in the past

few years from foreign Universities that are affiliated with the so-called Centres of Liberal Studies on a franchise basis.

Mr Roulias stated in his interview eight competitive advantages of the HMA:

- First, its long-standing presence in the Greek market has established it as the main and most reliable management training institution.
- Second, its excellent facilities in Athens but also its decent facilities in other cities where it operates.
- Third, the high level of trainers who are associated with it.
- Fourth, its top international affiliations with educational organisations and professional bodies.
- Fifth, its close association with the stakeholders and its friendly collaboration with the State.
- Sixth, the tens of thousands of trained people who function as "mouth-to-mouth promotion" within the Greek society and the business community.
- Seventh, the fact that it has developed similar activities to support its main educational work (consulting, recruiting, awarding business and management prizes).
- Eighth, the managerial know-how it has developed through hundreds of projects that it has completed successfully.

He also mentioned four weak points:

- The lack of academic recognition from the Greek State.
- Its limited penetration in in-company training, especially in the last few years because it has lost a market share in this particular field to smaller companies and individual agents and trainers who target this kind of business on their own.
- Its relative inflexibility and some bureaucratic obstacles.
- Difficulty in paying trainers' wages on time, due to its long-term loaning for acquiring privately-owned facilities.

He also pointed out the main factors at work in the shaping of executives:

- Their initial education.
- Their work experience.
- Their personality.
- Continuing training.

When he was asked, "What kind of knowledge, skills and attitudes do you try to teach to the executives and managers through your training programmes?" he stated the following:

- General knowledge about programming, organisation, management and control
- Communication and group work skills
- Leadership ability
- Ability to negotiate
- Decision-making techniques

- Personal skills (time and stress management)
- Appreciating quality
- A sense of responsibility
- Customer orientation
- Specialised training in the particular field of each one.

The general manager of the HMA reported on the success of its training programmes by claiming that trainees seem to be highly satisfied in their evaluations of the institution (average 7.6 out of 10 and 7.9 in postgraduate programmes); he also stated the fact that graduates recommend the HMA programmes to a considerable degree (two thirds of the trainees on the MBA course come on the recommendation of a satisfied graduate) and that a lot of companies trust the HMA to train their executives. He also believes that HMA's ISO accreditation made its position a lot stronger and contributed towards the provision and control of reliable services.

As regards the future of management training in Greece, he predicted further specialisation in certain subjects such as service marketing, bank management, tourist companies, pharmaceutical companies, financing markets, and energy management. He also believes that the contribution of technology will gain ground and that mixed programmes will emerge consisting of a part that will be taking place in the classroom and another part that will be available through distance learning. He is also concerned about how training could be combined with entertainment and outdoor activities. As regards educational organisations, he believes that they must improve their training premises, invest in training equipment, and utilise the opportunities that are offered through new, innovative European programmes and also become partners in international organisations and recognised foreign schools.

As regards the trainers, he urges everyone to attend the train-the-trainer programmes organised by EKEPIS, keep sight of market developments and become "streetwise", study new management models and stop teaching outdated theories, as well as, to update their notes and apply new training methods.

As regards the State, he believes that it should stop setting up bureaucratic obstacles and that it should facilitate the spreading of European programmes. In addition it should: simplify the procedures of the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation, which supervises the field of employee training and changes its policy too often, thus influencing things adversely; recognise the degrees and postgraduate titles awarded by foreign universities in our country through affiliated colleges and Centres of Liberal Studies; proceed with a brave revision of article 16 of the Constitution which does not allow private Universities to operate. This would mean that the HMA could develop into a Higher Education Business Administration School and broaden its activities in the field of undergraduate management education.

5.21. The views of training stakeholders

The views of trainers

The fifteen trainers who were questioned gave the more or less consistent picture of management training as can be seen from their answers which are outlined in table 11. I believe that they "smoothed out" their answers at some points that also involve matters of their own responsibility.

It seems that most of them don't believe in the future of e-learning or distance learning (does this indicate a hidden fear for their role in such cases?). Their opinions on the quality of the EKEPIS train – the – trainers programmes and on the level of the executives – trainees in their seminars are controversial. All of them express some problems in payments with HMA.

| | |
|---|--|
| What knowledge, skills and attitudes do you try to develop in your programmes? | Management, personal & interpersonal skills, quality, responsibility, special knowledge (marketing, finance, HR management etc). |
| What training methods do you use in your job? | Presentations with overhead projector / data display, team projects, simulation games, role playing, exercises, dialogue |
| What do you think is the level of your trainees? | At this point, views differed and they rather represent the attitude of trainers. So, some of those believe that the level is adequate and others unacceptable. |
| Do you think they benefit from training programmes? | Everybody agrees that training is essential help for executives in their career and for businesses. |
| What are your predictions about the future of management training? | Many of them believe that it will be developed a lot more, since today only a few benefit from it. There are few of them who believe that e-learning and distance learning will be developed. |
| What is the general impression about the train-the-trainer programme run by EKEPIS? | Some of them really appreciated it and believe that they have benefited from it. Some others believe that it was rather a waste of time and that its level was quite low. Some of them said that they were having a “feast” that was paid with EU money. |
| Did you learn anything new in this programme? | Training methods, use of tools, adult learning theories, experiences from colleagues. |
| What is your experience from your collaboration with HMA? | Some of them stated that they were relatively satisfied. However, almost all of them think that the fact that they are not paid on time is a thorny issue. |
| What would you recommend for the improvement of HMA training programmes? | Respect for trainers and trainees. Better equipment. Taking better care of facilities. Lessons should be taught in mid-week, not only on Fridays and Saturdays. A greater sense of professionalism from secretaries. Better meals on Saturdays when teaching lasts for eight hours. Trainers must be paid on time. |

| | |
|--|--|
| What, in your opinion, are the qualifications of a good trainer? | Knowledge of his subject and general knowledge on business management, experience, ability to transfer knowledge and proper preparation, continuous learning, friendliness, self-control, self-confidence and good public relations. |
|--|--|

Table 11. Tabulated views of trainers

The views of HR managers / training supervisors

The ten company HR executives that were questioned, were so divided in their answers that they did not allow us to come to any single conclusions. However, they showed their appreciation about the role of training, either to a higher or a lesser degree.

The majority of them believe that training helps to the development of executives and companies, though some tend to underestimate or consider it as a waste of time.

All agree that the ideal trainer combines work and teaching experience.

Their answers are outlined in table 12.

| | |
|--|--|
| What is the role of training and development in the design of a HR plan in your company? | Seven of those said that it plays a central role because they take it into consideration and one of them said that it does not matter to them that much. |
| How do you diagnose training needs? | With the use of questionnaires to those directly interested and their superiors; through observation; through evaluation interviews; with the use of consultants; none. |
| Which are your basic training priorities? | Mainly subjects regarding management, sales, customer service, financial, special subjects. |
| What departments and what ranks do trainees come from? | Mainly from the Department of sales, production, marketing and HR who are (or are going to be) usually middle-rank executives. |
| What educational organisations do you prefer to co-operate with and why? | With the HMA because of its tradition and reliability. With Primus because of its flexibility. With smaller companies due to having made personal acquaintances or because of their flexibility. |
| What do you think about the level of trainers who are employed on the market? | Most of them agreed that it ranges from being "high" to "very high". One of them talked about "smarty-pants, windbags and theorists". |
| What, in your opinion, are the qualifications of a good trainer? | The work and teaching experience, prestige, knowledge, the ability to transfer knowledge, friendliness, time management. |

| | |
|--|--|
| How do you evaluate the results of learning and its transfer to the work environment? | With the use of assessment forms, follow-up after a few months, through observation, through the usual method of executive performance evaluation. |
| Do you use 0.45% of employer contributions for training? | All ten of them stated that they make use of it. Five of them said that in this way they find all the money required to finance training, while others said that they also use other resources from their budgets. |
| Do you send trainees on long-term programmes run by the HMA or other organisations? If yes, what do you think of them and what are your impressions? | Nine of them stated that they send them and that they are generally satisfied. Two of them said that they were really excited about it. Three of them had some reservations about maintaining the quality of the programmes. |

Table 12. Tabulated views of HR executives

The views of training coordinators

All of the ten training coordinators who were questioned had long experience in the field of training. It is my conviction that their position did not allow them to express themselves freely. Some discussions dragged on in an effort to reach the heart of the matter.

The investigation of training needs is not their first priority in scheduling training programmes.

Their collaboration with the people of the company HR departments is inadequate. They believe that they collaborate better with the trainers, yet some find them individualists...

There is one point that most of them agree: That the future belongs to programmes of vocational accreditation.

Their views are outlined in table 13.

| | |
|--|---|
| What do you think about the general situation in the field of training today? | In-company training is going through a crisis. Companies work very intensely and they cannot afford the time. They prefer to spend their executives to open centres and long-term programmes. |
| What type of training programmes do you promote on the market? | Vocational accreditation programmes, specialised courses, innovative programmes, "advantageous" programmes (e.g. emotional intelligence). |
| According to your experience, what are the subject units that are in greater demand and why? | Group work due to the fact that Greeks are individualists, sales and customer service due to company orientation, international accounting standards due to ignorance, computer skills (all time classic...). |

| | |
|---|---|
| Are you involved in the investigation of training needs and, if yes, how? | Three of them said that they are systematically involved; five of them that they send trainers; two of them that it is not necessary because the subjects are known and repeated, so a little chat with the HR officials is all that is needed. |
| How do you monitor the way training programmes are conducted? | By being physically present, through the secretary, through contact with trainers. One of them said that he uses informers! |
| How do you evaluate the results of training programmes? | Through evaluation forms, contact with trainers and HR officials; from the trainees' examinations which show what they have learned. |
| What is your experience from collaborating with trainers? | Generally speaking, it is good. Some of them complained that some people are individualists and do as they please. Two of them said that they were particularly happy. |
| What is your experience from collaborating with company HR departments? | Moderate. Some find them very insecure. Some think they are fastidious; some said that they keep in direct contact with managers in sales, production, etc. |
| What is your experience and/or your opinion about e-learning? | It is making its first appearance very slowly; however, the day that many companies will trust it is very far away. At present, it is reliable only for computing. |
| What future trends do you foresee in training as regards its content and the ways it is provided? | Most of them agree that the future belongs to programmes of vocational accreditation. Eight of them hope that there will be more EU-financed programmes. Four of them believe the distance learning will develop in the future. |

Table 13. Tabulated views of training coordinators

5.22. The conclusions of the action research

The action research of the group of six trainers managed, in a relatively short period of time, to note down a few changes in the MBA, which even though have brought about no revolution, nevertheless function in the right direction and manage to improve some aspects of the programme. Besides, the Japanese have a special word for the concept of gradual improvement: kaizen. It means "step-by-step introduction of small changes" which, in their entirety, have the power for considerable improvement. The way that we collaborated can be seen in table 14.

| Stages of the action research | Contents of each stage |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Action | Recording experience |
| Review | Evaluation of experience – SWOT Analysis |

| | |
|----------|---|
| Planning | Design of teaching and organisational changes |
| Action | Introduction of teaching and organisational changes |

Table 14. The application of action research

What did we discover on what did we achieve through this part of the research?

- We pointed out the comparative advantages of the MBA: its reliability and recognition on the market, its successful structure, its tested trainers, its facilities, its training material, its competitive price.
- We also pointed out the programme's "Achilles heel": the lack of academic recognition by the State.
- We noted down some weaknesses: organisational problems, inadequate maintenance of premises and equipment, complaints about finances made by trainers, limited promotion.
- We achieved some small, albeit necessary, organisational changes.
- We established regular meetings between trainers and the coordinator.
- We enhanced teaching with a variety of training methods. We discovered the benefits that arise from the application of these methods, both with regard to learning and with regard to the relationship formed between trainers and trainees.
- We invented a practical method of self-evaluation with the use of a checklist comprising ten points.

The form of this checklist is such that it can be printed on an A4 page so that trainers can use it easily. We also handed it out to the rest of our MBA colleagues. Table 15 that follows shows the checklist in its initial form. I call it "initial" because we have asked our colleagues to suggest possible changes and adjustments that would reflect their own circumstances.

| Ten-point Check list | Grading (0 – 10) |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. I know my subject | |
| 2. I keep myself informed of its relevant development | |
| 3. I participate in conferences, discussions, research | |
| 4. I keep detailed notes | |
| 5. I renew my notes | |
| 6. I have suitable supervisory material | |
| 7. I renew my supervisory material | |
| 8. I use a host of training methods | |
| 9. I keep track of developments in adult training | |
| 10. I receive satisfactory evaluations from trainees | |
| Total grading (0 – 100) | |

Table 15. The check list used for the self-evaluation of trainers

However, perhaps the most important finding of the action research was that the synergy of some individuals who are interested in changing some things in the field of management training is capable of producing such dynamics that can effect

improvements which a lot of people may be hoping for without, however, doing anything to that end.

5.23. The development of an Advanced Diploma in Management

Research regarding the self-existent programmes in General Management that are offered today in Greece and abroad has led to the following findings:

- Many Greek, British and American training organisations offer short-term seminars on special management subjects, such as teambuilding, leadership, communication skills, change management, etc.
- Some, mainly foreign, organisations offer full general management programmes that lead to a Certificate or Diploma in Management; some of them are also accredited by professional bodies.
- Some universities give the opportunity to people who want to attend an MBA, without holding a first degree in economics or business administration, to attend a Diploma in Management Studies (MS) which includes lessons in management, marketing, basic finance and business operations.
- There is a need at the HMA to upgrade the short-term Basic Management Programme which lasts for 56 hours to a middle-term full management programme running for at least 100 hours in order to include all the units of General Management, instead of just the very basic ones.

Thus, I was led to the design of a model programme from scratch, which I named "Advanced Diploma in Management". I think that a programme like this is necessary for the HMA, which provides a number of specialised vocational courses, while it does not have a self-existent programme especially designed for executives who are on the management threshold, i.e., for executives who are going to be managers in any department of any business activity.

The details of this programme are as follows:

Aim: the programme aims at cultivating administrative capacity in those executives who are going to undertake increased managerial duties and responsibilities.

Who it is intended for: business and organisation middle-rank executives who are at the management threshold and who are going to be promoted to higher managerial executives, irrespective of the Department or the field of activity they work in.

Curriculum: the training units of the programme are presented in table 16 below:

| Training units | Content |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Introduction to management | Enterprise and society. Internal and external environment. The role of management. The stakeholders concept. |
| 2. Managerial operations | Programming, organising, directing, controlling. SMART goals. Delegation. The art of coaching. |

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 3. Communication | Active listening. Oral communication. Body language. Transactional analysis. Written communication. Telecommunication. |
| 4. Teamwork | The ability to work co-operatively with others in a team, as opposed to working separately or competitively. Formal and non-formal teams. |
| 5. Leadership | The ability to lead others in order to deliver continuous performance improvement. Providing vision and strategic direction. |
| 6. Motivation | Motives and ways of motivation in the workplace. From Taylor and Mayo to Maslow, Herzberg and McGregor. The Japanese answer. |
| 7. Negotiations | The ability to obtain agreement between the divergent interests of two or more parties. |
| 8. Decision making | The ability to identify, analyse and solve problems. Creative techniques. SWOT Analysis. |
| 9. Management of changes | The reasons and categories of changes. Resistance to change. Unfreeze, change, refreeze. |
| 10. Conflict management | From disagreement to conflict. Acceptance, flight, fight. Assertiveness. The proactive manager. |
| 11. Time management | Time is money? The urgent and the important. The priorities list. Twelve ways to manage the time. |
| 12. Stress management | A disease of our time. Good and bad stress. Personality types. Twelve ways to manage the work stress. |
| 13. Quality management | A competitive advantage. Quality standards. From quality control and quality assurance to total quality management. Customer responsiveness. |
| 14. Social responsibility | Employees, consumers, society, environment. The responsible executive. Corporate social responsibility. |
| 15. Training and development | Adult learning. Training management. Training methods and techniques. The art of edutainment. |
| 16. Conclusions | The Janus metaphor. The principles of management. The science, the art and the responsibility of management. |

Table 16. The curriculum of the “Advanced Diploma in Management”

Material: Alexakis, G., (December, 2006). The Art of Management, sixteen simple lessons. Athens: Smili. Pages: 514.

Evaluation: Trainees are examined on the units of the programme with the use of multiple choice tests, case studies and creative projects.

Place of implementation: HMA Training Centre, Athens

Duration: 5 months (120 hours), every second weekend (Friday 17.30 – 21.30 and Saturday 9.00 – 17.00)

Price: €2,000

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. Management training in Greece and the role of stakeholders

In the preceding research we found out that management training in Greece developed in the post-war years in a particularly inhospitable environment in the beginning and that it was later promoted through various efforts made by pioneering organisations such as the Greek Productivity Centre, the Hellenic Management Association and the Athens University of Economics and Business. New motivation was given from the 1980s with the contribution of European financing, while today the educational work carried out by the HMA, ALBA, foreign University branches, Business Schools¹⁰ and smaller educational companies is widespread. To be more precise:

- The turbulent political life in Greece influenced the economy and the model of its development in post-war years.
- The Greek economy tried to find its pace after World War II, the German-Italian Occupation and the Civil War, and develop particular fields of activity, such as industrial production, construction and infrastructure, the banking system, telecommunications, energy, shipping and tourism.
- There was a gradual shift in the contribution of the Gross National Product from the primary sector to the secondary and finally to the tertiary (commerce and services), which seems to be prevailing today.
- For quite a few decades the public sector expanded and occupied a very important position in the total economic activity, while the private sector dynamically has gained ground in the past few years.
- With the development of the economy, the profession of managerial executive gradually earned a place next to the traditionally respectable higher professions of doctors, lawyers and engineers.
- In this framework the need for continuing training of business executives became an urgent need. In the beginning of the 1960s, the Greek State founded the Greek Productivity Centre, the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises supported the foundation of the Hellenic Management Association and the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB) starts the first postgraduate programme for business executives.
- The big organisations were imitated by smaller companies and in this way other companies which were struggling to win a share from the emerging market as best as they could, entered the field of management training.
- The race of European financing started in the 1980s and management training gained new dynamism. However, at the same time a lot of other enterprises entered the game just to grab some money without necessarily offering the level of training that is required. The Organisation for the Employment of Manpower (OAED) established in-company training programmes which are financed by 0.45% of employer contributions. The National Centre of Public Administration (NCPA) which addressed the training needs of the State started its operation as well.
- Vocational Training Centres (KEK) were founded in the 1990s and a stricter legal framework started being established in order to regulate their operation. The Athens Laboratory of Business Administration (ALBA) was established

on the initiative of the HMA and it later competed with the MBA programmes. Foreign university branches started to emerge with some of them providing management training. At the end of the decade the Greek Productivity Centre closed down after a lot of years of important contribution in the training of executives.

- The National Accreditation Centre (EKEPIS) which supervises the field of training and development started its operation in this decade. It also organises train-the-trainer programmes. The HMA is the most prevalent training organisation and it is followed by ALBA, AUEB, some foreign university branches and smaller training companies.

The Greek State supported management training with the foundation of GPC and NCPA, as well as, the foundation of supervisory organisations such as OAED and EKEPIS. However, quite often bureaucracy slows down rather than speeding up the growth of this field. At the same time, defective supervision on European financing raises a lot of questions.

Management training institutions comprise establishments such as serious and longstanding organisations, which give this discipline a good reputation, down to small companies which struggle to survive by being flexible, especially in in-company training and also individual agents and trainers who work on their own. Furthermore, KEKs aspire to be able to play a more important role in the future with the help of European programmes.

Foreign universities have also entered this field, mainly by providing executive MBA programmes and it is expected that they will continue their effort especially if article 16 of the Constitution is revised in the future and the degrees they award through their branches are finally recognised.

Companies which train their executives seem to be divided: on the one hand, some of them “build” on human resources and support in-company training and open long-term programmes by sending their executives to attend them. However, other companies believe that they do not have the luxury to spend time and money on training. The fact that Greece was last on the list of employee training among the 15 member states of the EU in 2003, according to research carried out by Eurostat, seems to mean a lot.

As time goes by, trainers become more professional, attend "train-the-trainer" programmes, gain accreditation by EKEPIS and become specialised in their field since the demand is now directed towards special courses of vocational accreditation.

Finally, trainees keep themselves better informed and become more demanding both as regards the content of the courses and the quality of training, as can be seen from their evaluations.

6.2. Cultivating administrative capacity

Managerial executives are required to apply four administrative functions: programming, organisation, management and control. In addition, they constantly keep in contact with their subordinates, superiors and peers, as well as, with external associates, customers, and suppliers of the companies and organisations they serve. By administrative capacity we mean a number of intellectual, interpersonal and technical abilities that are necessary in the administration of an organisation. The higher in the rank of the organisation an executive is, the more his intellectual abilities contribute in his work, followed by his interpersonal and technical abilities.

It is acknowledged that initial training contributes significantly in the adaptation of a new employee in the business environment and his career as an executive. However, this alone is not enough. His work experience in a similar position is equally important, especially if that was in the same field of activity. Furthermore, personality itself plays a decisive role in the individual's promotion to higher positions and his ability to cope with the increased duties and responsibilities that his position entails. In recent years, the so-called soft skills are particularly appreciated as personality elements of managers. These are: self-awareness, self-regulation, behaviour motives, empathy and social skills.

However, the administrative capacity is not a fixed size that is independent of the time and the environment where it is exercised. Nowadays, a number of phenomena have been observed that have a bearing on the operation and management of businesses, such as the rapid development of technology, globalisation, the entry of a lot of countries in the economic map which until very recently were not thought to exist, regional conflicts, as well as, the environmental crisis and the consequent climate change. The business environment is changing and it is trying to adapt to new circumstances. Executives do not only need to know about figures and management systems. They need a lot more, i.e. the ability to understand the changeable internal and external environment of companies; they need to keep themselves aware of current developments; they need to learn new skills made necessary by technology, and they need to take into consideration changes in legislation and develop a strong sense of social responsibility.

Furthermore, an increasing number of companies develop their human resources, "build" their future on individuals and seek to recruit and keep the best.

To this end, management training comes as an aid. It is a basic tool for developing human resources, which aim at cultivating the knowledge, skills and behaviours that will help executives become effective, responsible and well-balanced professionals.

- **Knowledge** (know that) refers to all business functions: management, marketing, sales, accounting, finance, human resources, production, logistics. They also refer to some special fields of activity and their particularities, e.g. banks, pharmaceutical companies, retail outlets, tourism, energy, telecommunications, etc.
- **Skills** (know-how) are the executive's ability to apply certain methods and techniques in each field that will allow him to bring about desirable results. Such skills include the ability to work out a budget, sales techniques or drafting a press bulletin for the needs of public relations.
- **Attitudes** (know why) in the cultivation of the executive's sense of responsibility and direction towards equally servicing the various stakeholders who are interested in the operation of the company and the positive and negative consequences of its operation. Corporate social responsibility or customer service are examples of these attitudes.

6.3. The management training organisations and their programmes

The field of management training in Greece today is as follows:

- The Hellenic Management Association has been playing a leading role, especially after 1998, when the Greek Productivity Centre closed down. The

HMA, after operating for more than forty years, has now overcome its financial problem of paying off its long-term loan for building its facilities in Athens and is the most reliable training programmes institution intended for business executives, an adult school with activities throughout Greece and the potential to expand to neighbouring countries. Its affiliations with British and American universities and other educational institutions, as well as, with international professional bodies, the successful Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration and its long-term accredited programmes make the association an indubitable leader in this field.

- The Athens Laboratory of Business Administration is a postgraduate studies institution which was founded on the initiative of the HMA and is the second leading organisation of management training. The main programme it offers is the Professional MBA which is recognised by AMBA and is distinguished for its very high level that gives it a top position among other programmes in this field. Unfortunately Greek legislation still withholds the recognition that the graduates of this programme deserve.
- The Athens University of Economics and Business created the Executive MBA at the end of the 1990s and dynamically entered the field of executive education. This programme is of a very high quality level and is recognised by AMBA, while it is implemented in collaboration with top educational institutions abroad. Even though it is strictly University-oriented with strong theoretical foundations, it is implemented on a 24-month basis, thus giving the opportunity to executives who wish to attend it, to do so, on a part-time basis. Its advantage is that it is recognised by the State.
- Some foreign Universities which have franchised the Centres of Liberal Studies have entered the field of management training. Among them, one can distinguish the American University of Indianapolis, which, after making a long-term strategic investment in Greece, is now providing a part-time Executive MBA programme. Even though this programme has not become an established one as yet, it could play an important role in the future, especially due to the very serious intentions of the University.
- The National Centre of Public Administration is a particular case of an educational institution which is privileged to have access to the vast public sector and have its position established through legislative regulations that give it a monopolistic right in the education of Public Administration executives. It often becomes the field of political favouritism and personal relationships with programme assignments and trainer contracts from the executive labour force of the State with people who do not have formal educational qualifications. In the last few years, some encouraging signs of improvement and organisational reconstruction have been observed.
- A lot of small training companies and Centres of Vocational Training provide management training services. These companies are surrounded by individual agents and trainers who struggle to win their share of the market, especially in order to take advantage of the 0.45% given by OAED. The company Primus / Business & IT Training with its host of training suggestions and its participation in in-company training is a separate case. In addition, Compact, the company which is affiliated with Harvard Business School Publishing and offers e-learning programmes, is trying to this day to earn the trust of business HR and training managers, albeit with a limited amount of success.

The training programmes of the training organisations mentioned above can be divided into four categories:

- Executive MBA programmes which are intended for working executives and, therefore, belong to the field of adult education. These programmes emphasise practice rather than theory and require that participants must have some relative experience in the work environment.
- Vocational specialisation programmes that are often accredited by professional bodies which aim at equipping trainees with special qualifications required for positions in relevant departments.
- Short-term open participation seminars which attract individuals from different companies and fields of activity in order to acquire knowledge and skills in a particular skill, e.g. in negotiations.
- In-company seminars which aim at providing for the training needs of business departments and are usually carried out at the facilities of the company that organises them.

6.4. Response from trainees

The conclusions of this chapter have arisen to a great extent from the HMA case study and the long-term programmes that were studied. However, they represent the greatest part of trainees and other organisations and are also indicative of short-term courses, as can be seen from the answers given by the respondents and my experiential remarks:

- Almost two in every three trainees finance their education themselves and this percentage seems to be increasing in the last few years. This is due to the fact that the motives that prompted financing by companies have been reduced as a result of a stricter application of the participation programme of employer contributions in training and development. There are almost no scholarships at all.
- More than two in every three trainees are male. It seems that women's professional expectations to achieve managerial positions are quite less frequent when compared to their male peers¹¹.
- The "Golden Age" for training is the age of 30-40. It seems that the management threshold involves people mainly of that age, who have a fair amount of work experience and feel they need further training support to develop further.
- These people join open participation seminars at their own free will and are even more willing to join long-term courses. However, they may be under pressure or even obliged to join in-company seminars. Therefore, psychological response in the former case ranges from being positive to enthusiastic.
- Most trainees come from big companies that manufacture consumer products or provide services or technology. Executives from small and medium-sized companies pay for their education from their own pocket. Civil servants prefer training programmes that are implemented by NCPA.

- Trainees are genuinely interested in training and this becomes obvious through their enthusiasm about the courses and their evaluations. Their material, intellectual and psychological investment in training touches the trainers and everybody else who is involved in the process. Their participation in the courses is suggested by modern theories on adult training and is promoted by professional trainers. Besides, the most interesting part of the learning process for minors is break-time, while adults find learning itself a break from their job¹².
- Trainees prefer long-term programmes from occasional accreditation and postgraduate programmes more than short-term seminars and in-company training. Exclusive programmes seem to give greater added value to participants rather than mini seminars which aim at achieving company long-term targets. Investing in human resources is not fulfilled by simply focusing on streamlined corporate horizons.
- The evaluation of trainees is strict and hard. They expect from trainers an educational relationship that will really benefit them instead of simply being limited to teaching itself. They do not come to the courses as school students but as experienced professionals who weigh everything and expect to get real learning.
- Their proposals are indicative of their own priorities. They demand more information about the courses that are on offer, professional attitude from officials, education premises that are properly looked after, modern equipment, greater variety in training methods with the introduction of flexible learning, more practically-oriented subjects, scientifically updated and upgraded trainer services, and more training and support benefits.

6.5. The role of trainers

Professional trainers are a component part of management training. These people are full-time trainers whose only or main work is training, or part-time trainers who work in managerial positions in companies and organisations at the same time, or professors from Universities, TEI, or other educational institutions which are also involved in adult training. They are selected on the basis of their knowledge, their work and teaching experience, their ability to impart knowledge and their assessment on management training programmes. In particular, the HMA, which has established its ISO accreditation, accepts people who achieve a high grade in their assessment according to the specifications that are laid down by ISO.

In recent years, trainers attend the train-the-trainer programme which is materialised by EKEPIS and is financed by the EU. This programme ensures that participants are kept informed of developments in the field and that they are taught using the most advanced training methods and techniques. However, it has come under a lot of criticism which has to do with both the programme's incomplete content and certain customer relationships that have been developed and are personally or politically favoured. In addition, criticism has touched on the deficient administration of the programme's resources.

This programme includes five main units: introduction to adult learning, training management, training methods, written projects and individual presentations. Participants are assessed by written projects and individual presentations and become certified trainers who are registered with EKEPIS; this registration is a requirement

for participating in European programmes and a very important advantage for their participation in other courses. There is no other accreditation authority for trainers apart from EKEPIS.

Adult learning theory has made considerable progress in becoming documented in the past few decades. The following are considered to be the most important:

- The **four-stage theory** of learning: From unconscious inability, we move towards conscious inability, which leads us to conscious ability before finally achieving unconscious ability, something like an automatic pilot, when knowledge is completely assimilated.
- The systematisation of **management training** in five stages: Exploration of educational needs, education design, organisation of the people involved, implementation of programmes and evaluation of education.
- The **learner-centric character** of training: We consider a training method to be learner-centric when trainees are at the centre of the activity and actively participate in the lesson so that they do not turn into passive recipients of knowledge.

The training methods preferred by adult learners and used in modern courses are as follows:

- Presentation with the use of a projector or computer.
- Group work.
- Discussion - exchange of views.
- Activities - games.
- Self-evaluation tests.
- Playing educational films.
- Individual or group projects.
- Presentation of a topic given by a trainee.

All these methods have one characteristic in common: they are participative and build on learning both as regards the processing of theoretical approaches and the work experience of trainees.

A thorny issue in management training is its problematic evaluation. What is interesting here is not if the trainees have learned something but whether they are in a position to apply their knowledge in their job. So, we do not only evaluate the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes but also the transfer of learning to the work environment and the results it achieves in the objectives of the job.

According to Kirkpatrick's and Hamblin's model, we measure the reaction of the trainees, the learning and the change in behaviour, the results achieved in the job and the final value that is added to society.

According to Bramley's model of consensus evaluation, we take into account the insight of stakeholders and the wider consensus for the operation of training.

Both of these models fail to document in measurable quantitative terms the contribution made by training in the development executives achieve in companies. This does not lessen the value of training. However, it makes its role and its contribution to the wider work and social environment a lot more complicated. New technology contributes to the work carried out by trainers with the use of innovative hardware and software, e-learning and lots of other distance learning methods. It has

been observed that new methods are relatively difficult to incorporate. I believe that this is due to the fact that they are insufficiently developed and the fact that the equipment of training organisations is lacking. There is, however, a tendency for experimentation on the part of training establishments and an increase in the demand for new methods which are expected to result in greater assimilation of technological innovations in the future¹³.

6.6. Proposals for improving management training

When we talk about improving management training, in reality we talk about increasing its efficiency. This is estimated as follows:

- Improving the work of trainers.
- Upgrading the services provided by training organisations.
- Better learning assimilation by trainees.
- Possibility to transfer learning to the work environment.
- Recognition of the contribution made to society.

With regard to all the above, proposals for the improvement of management training focus on trainers, training organisations, the heads of HR company departments and authorities of the State. These proposals are stated in table 17.

| Training factors | Proposals |
|-------------------------|---|
| Trainers | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attending train-the-trainer programme. 2. Coordination between trainers regarding the material to be taught. 3. Detailed notes with bibliography. 4. Monitoring market developments. 5. Continuing learning and scientific study. 6. Enhancing student-centric training methods and techniques. |
| Training organisations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offering accredited programmes of vocational specialisation in collaboration with universities and professional bodies. 2. Taking care of education premises. 3. Modernising training equipment. 4. Designing reliable and flexible distance learning courses. 5. Professional secretarial support. 6. Better catering. |

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| HR managers / training supervisors | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organising and upgrading the training and development department. 2. Systematic exploration of training needs. 3. Facilitating ways to monitor the transfer of learning to the work environment. |
| State | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Simplifying OAED's procedures. 2. Designing an effective train-the-trainer programme by EKEPIS and replacing its off-hand counterpart that is in place today. 3. Recognition of degrees awarded by foreign affiliated universities revising article 16 of the Constitution. |

Table 17. Proposals for improving management training

6.7. Proposal for a model management training programme

This proposal arose after a relevant exploration of the basic courses in management currently on offer. My intention was to collect all those elements that make up a complete diploma of middle term duration in an all-inclusive course that will be suited to the training needs of executives who are going to be promoted, or have just recently been promoted, to managers. I named this programme "Advanced Diploma in Management" and I intend to introduce it to the open participation programmes by HMA in the forthcoming 2008-2009 period. In reality this is an upgraded version of the short-term "Basic Management Programme" which is already offered in 56 hours, twice a year into a course consisting of a 120 hours which will add to the whole picture of vocational specialisation programmes on offer.

The diploma aims to become established as a higher qualification of vocational efficiency for managers in the private and the public sector.

It includes the following sixteen fundamental units:

- Introduction to management
- Managerial operations
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Motivation
- Negotiations
- Decision making
- Management of changes
- Conflict management
- Time management

- Stress management
- Quality management
- Social responsibility
- Training and development
- Conclusions

Trainees, after taking examinations and submitting individual projects, become accredited as suitable managers both from the point of view of knowledge and the point of view of skills and attitudes that are typical of a modern, efficient and responsible executive.

The training method used in the course is student-centric so that trainees can derive material and examples from their work experience and participate in the programme's implementation actively and creatively.

A special book is provided to the trainees:

Alexakis, G., (2006). *The Art of Management, sixteen simple lessons*. Athens: Smili.

In 514 pages are included gradually and in a logical way all the necessary parts of the course. The trainees have the opportunity to study the basic text and discuss the several cases, which reflect the contemporary situation of the Greek enterprises and the real managerial problems that face the executives.

This book was actually written as a tool for my management seminars and courses. Its contents include all the units of the “Advanced Diploma in Management”.

6.8. A few final thoughts

Coming towards the end of this work-based project, I came to realise a few things. I report these things without beautifying them or denouncing them.

Management training has developed and spread in the last four decades of the 20th century in Greece as an imported article which, nevertheless, corresponds with the real work needs of middle and higher executives in companies and organisations of the private and the public sector. The establishments that served management training had to improvise and copy training courses from foreign organisations since there was no domestic precedence in this field of activity. This tendency continues to this day and it is due to the fact that management has been promoted mainly in the developed economies of the countries of Western Europe, America, and to a lesser degree, Japan. Besides, countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Germany and the United States of America have a long and successful tradition in the training of employees and have organised relevant State authorities to supervise this activity.

For many decades, there was a balance in Greece between the Greek Productivity Centre and the Hellenic Management Association as prime providers of management training. This reflected the balance between the public and the private sector of the economy which prevailed in the country. Besides, a similar situation prevailed in most European countries as the result of post-war economic and social policy based on Keynesianism, rule of law and social welfare theories

The fact that the GPC closed down and the fact that the HMA consequently prevailed in the field of training in the past ten years is not at all independent of the change in the prevailing economic model and the decisive shift of the centre of gravity towards the private sector. In addition, the intrusion of foreign universities is one of the

symptoms of globalisation and the dynamics of international capital which makes investments where the opportunity arises, irrespective of the origins of funds. It is a typical characteristic, however, that most foreign Universities which opened branches in our country are public institutions.

Trainers employed in this field are a mixture of self-employed professionals, professors from Universities and other establishments, part-time instructors who are mainly employed in some higher position in the private or public sector. Besides, their aims and their interests sometimes converge or diverge depending on the orientation of the supervisory authorities and the policies that prevail in the field of training. These policies are determined to a great extent by the EU and its financing programmes.

The training of the trainers is a priority of the EU and domestic providers simply comply with the respective directives. This is what happens at best because there may be cases where community funds are wasted, at least according to those who criticise the programmes that are implemented in our country by EKEPIS, which was created in order to implement the European policy in the field of training.

Stakeholders (trainees, trainers, training organisations, enterprises, the State) place management training at the centre of their interests. However, in reality big companies are more interested in the development of human resources, while medium-sized and small sized companies are interested to a lesser extent. This is so because they cannot organise a separate department for training, or simply because HR officials, if there are any, do not believe that they need to “build” on their existing manpower¹⁴.

The trainer’s profession has entered, even in the way that EKEPIS has introduced it, the phase of State accreditation. This is necessary in order to upgrade the services offered, become adapted to the needs of adult learning and in order that trainers may acquire aptitude for teaching. Nowadays, a lot of teachers – even University professors – are lacking in their ability to transfer knowledge, even though they have all the knowledge; this is why they remain in the position of “instructors”. Learner-centred approaches are the future of training.

Training organisations are now steadily focusing on long-term programmes of vocational specialisation and on postgraduate programmes, often in collaboration with foreign institutions. If the State proceeds to revise article 16 of the Constitution, two or three of those will have the power to set up degree granting business schools and they may also extend their activity to pre-degree programmes without getting support from affiliations with other universities.

For the time being, the greatest part of trainees attend long-term programmes and they are self-financed. Only in in-company seminars is financing the exclusive responsibility of companies in combination with OAED or some European programmes. Nevertheless, trainees are obviously interested in this and we could say that their participation in management training is enthusiastic. There is thirst for learning and I think this is the best bet for the future of training and development.

My involvement in this research as an insight researcher and as action research coordinator gave me the opportunity to look at the problems and the opportunities in my job with a different eye. I found out the history of this particular field is not insignificant at all and that theories are collected in an extensive corpus both in Greece and abroad. I also came to realise that the biggest obstacles in the development of management training are three: Limited trust in institutions on the part of the companies, bureaucracy and obstacles that are due to Greek law, as well as, inadequate organisation on the part of training organisations. Future opportunities focus on enabling faster penetration of new training technology and innovative learning methods, on developing accredited programmes of vocational specialisation further, and on the possibility of having some training organisations that will comply with all the relevant requirements and become degree granting authorities.

My involvement in the project had also another significant aspect for me. From the very first moment I started to collect, organise and synthesise the notes I used to deliver in my seminars and to write a handbook on general management. After some months this material shaped an integrated study which was published (Alexakis, G., (December, 2006). *The Art of Management, sixteen simple lessons*. Athens: Smili) and now is delivered in bookstores, libraries and in several seminars and courses of the HMA and other organisations. The book is a major outcome of the action research of the project and I intend to use it as a basic text in the “Advanced Diploma in Management” course.

I believe that management training in Greece is now at a critical phase. It is shaking off its adolescence and is moving on towards adulthood while it is gradually being emancipated from the improvisations of the past. It is now acquiring the right to vocational accreditation and recognition from the general public. This transition is not easy. Some instances of regression into the past still exist. Nevertheless, the oncoming change has a very strong ally: the need of those who are directly interested to continually upgrade their professional knowledge and skills; not to mention their confirmed desire to develop and become responsible managers.

Notes

1. The objective of Human Resources Management: To maximize the return on investment from the organization's human capital. In the past, the contribution of human resources in the accomplishment of business and organisation goals had not been adequately evaluated. Many HR managers were former military personnel who were hired to "discipline" employees. This situation tends to be reversed in the past few years. Modern HR managers try to balance between the company's goals and the needs of employees.
2. According to the EU, businesses are categorised in accordance with the following sizes. Big: number of employees: > 250; annual turnover: > €50 million. Middle: number of employees 50 - 250; annual turnover: €10-50 million. Small: number of employees: 10-50; annual turnover: €2-10 million. Very small: number of employees: < 10; annual turnover: < €2 million.
3. Generally, we could say that training and education have some differences. College education should teach you how to think and how to learn. Corporate training, if done correctly, is all about performance competence (learning a job-specific competency or skill that is crucial to your job performance).
4. Occam's razor is a principle attributed to the 14th-century English logician and Franciscan friar William of Occam. The principle states that the explanation of any phenomenon should make as few assumptions as possible, eliminating those that make no difference in the observable predictions of the explanatory hypothesis or theory. The principle is often expressed as "Entities should not be multiplied beyond necessity". This is often paraphrased as "All other things being equal, the simplest solution is the best."
5. By Return on Investment (ROI), we mean the ratio between benefit and cost that is yielded by the fraction: $\text{performance-cost}/\text{cost}$. A positive ROI presupposes a fraction that is greater than zero.
6. The course of globalisation during the past fifteen years has had an impact on labour relations. The possibility to transfer funds almost immediately, the swelling wave of economic and illegal immigrants, and the gradual decrease in the influence of trade Unions signpost a new situation in labour relations whose significance we are not in a position to understand fully as yet. In the EU, in particular, we are witnessing a number of reforms which deconstruct in one way or another the far outposts of the welfare state which prevailed in post-war years.
7. The SWOT analysis technique is an evaluation tool which aims at identifying the Strengths and Weaknesses of the present situation, as

well as its future Opportunities and Threats. It is a method of analysis and decision-making that is widely used both in the field of management and in the field of marketing. It is an excellent diagnostic tool and a valuable aid in the process of decision-making carried out by business and organisation executives.

8. The last two stages remind us of learning to drive. When learning to drive and when driving on our own in the beginning we are focused on the steering wheel and try to do many things at the same time (e.g. turn the steering wheel, change gears, look through the mirrors). However, after a while, our mind and body becomes used to driving effortlessly without thinking about each movement we make.
9. The first people who elaborated on the theory of emotional intelligence were Peter Salovey and John Mayer in their book *Emotional intelligence, imagination, cognition and personality* (1990). Work carried out by Goleman and Boyatzis and all subsequent researchers undoubtedly owes a lot to them.
10. A business school is a university-level institution that teaches topics such as accounting, finance, marketing, organizational behaviour, strategy and quantitative methods. They include schools of "business", "business administration", and "management". Most of the university business schools are faculties, colleges or departments within the university, and teach predominantly business courses. The first such 'collegiate business school' is Wharton, founded in 1881. In North America a business school is often understood to be a university graduate school which offers a Master of Business Administration or equivalent degree. In Europe, although the Leipzig Graduate School of Management was founded in 1898, it initially taught at the undergraduate level as well. Most business schools are faculties, colleges or departments within a university, and teach predominantly business courses. In Europe and Asia, some universities teach business only. The oldest business school in the world, the Ecole Supérieure de Commerce in Paris, was founded in 1819.
11. Male dominance was absolute in business and organisation higher positions up until a few years ago. A relevant balance in the representation of the two sexes can be seen in middle rank staff in recent years. Men continue to dominate higher positions with the exception of the field of human resources, where women have started making a dynamic appearance and the field of marketing and public relations (which, in any case, is considered to be on the fringe).
12. This remark does not mean that all forms of training are acceptable by trainees. Compulsory participation in in-company or open seminars discourages participants and makes them negatively disposed. On the contrary, participants who join on their own free will express the desire to learn and improve both in their job and in their personal life.

13. Some EU-financed programmes, such as Equal, promote E-learning to some groups of employees, executives and small-sized entrepreneurs. The real potential of this method remains to be seen in the future with the help of technology and the dissemination of knowledge to wider population groups.

14. The managerial grid model by Blake and Mouton tends to prevail in management theory today. According to this model, managers need to share their interest equally between achieving the goals of the project at hand and continuously developing and satisfying their collaborators. In this sense, "building" upon the human capital means regarding these resources as component parts of the company's development and pursuing to contain them within its framework and elevate them to the position of chief vehicles of progress.

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Appendix I: Basic Training Terms and Definitions

Continuous Learning

Simply put, continuous learning is the ability to learn to learn. Learning need not be a linear event where a learner goes to a formal learning program, gains areas of knowledge and skills about a process, and then the learning ceases. If the learner can view life (including work) as a "learning program", then the learner can continue to learn from almost everything in life. As a result, the learner continues to expand his or her capacity for living, including working.

Development

This term is often viewed as a broad, ongoing multi-faceted set of activities (training activities among them) to bring someone or an organisation up to another threshold of performance. This development often includes a wide variety of methods, e.g., orienting about a role, training in a wide variety of areas, ongoing training on-the-job, coaching, mentoring and forms of self-development. Some view development as a life-long goal and experience.

Education

This term seems to be the most general of the key terms in employee training. Some professionals view education as accomplishing a personal context and understanding of the world, so that one's life and work are substantially enhanced, e.g., "Go get an education." Others view the term as the learning required to accomplish a new task or job.

Job

A job is a collection of tasks and responsibilities that an employee is responsible to conduct. Jobs have titles.

Information

At its most basic form, a piece of information about something is a "unit of awareness" about that thing. (A field of philosophy, epistemology, includes analysis of what is really information and what isn't. This field might visit the question: "If a tree falls in the forest, does it make a sound?") Some people think that this awareness occurs only in the brain and, therefore, usually comes from some form of thought. Other people also accept information as a form of realisation from other forms of inquiry, e.g., intuition.

Knowledge

Knowledge is gleaned by organising information. Typically, information evolves to knowledge by the learner's gaining context, perspective and scope about the information.

Learning

Typically, learning is viewed as enhancing one's knowledge, understanding or skills. Some people see learning as enhancement to one's knowledge, awareness and skills.

Some professionals view learning as enhancing one's capacity to perform. Some view learning as a way of being that includes strong value on receiving feedback and increasing understanding. It's important to note that learning is more than collecting information -- more than collecting unreferenced books on a shelf. Depending on the needs of the learner, knowledge is converted to skills, that is, the learner knows how to apply the knowledge to get something done. Ideally, the skills are applied to the most appropriate tasks and practices in the organisation, thereby producing performance -- results needed by the organisation.

Role

A role is the set of responsibilities or expected results associated with a job. A job usually includes several roles.

Skills

Skills are applying knowledge in an effective and efficient manner to get something done. One notices skills in an employee by their behaviours.

Task

A task is a typically defined as a unit of work, that is, a set of activities needed to produce some result, e.g., vacuuming a carpet, writing a memo, sorting the mail, etc. Complex positions in the organisation may include a large number of tasks, which are sometimes referred to as functions.

Training

This term is often interpreted as the activity when an expert and learner work together to effectively transfer information from the expert to the learner (to enhance a learner's knowledge, attitudes or skills) so the learner can better perform a current task or job. Training refers to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes as a result of the teaching of vocational or practical skills and knowledge that relates to specific useful skills. It forms the core of apprenticeships and provides the backbone of content at technical colleges and polytechnics. Today it is often referred to as professional development.

Training & Development

Training & Development is the field concerned with workplace learning to improve performance. Such training can be generally categorised as on-the-job or off-the-job. On-the-job describes training that is given in a normal working situation, using the actual tools, equipment, documents or materials that they will use when fully trained. On-the-job training is usually most effective for vocational work. Off-the-job training takes place away from normal work situation which means that the employee is not regarded as productive worker when training is taking place. An advantage of off-the-job training is that it allows people to get away from work and totally concentrate on the training being given. This is most effective for training attitudes, concepts, and ideas.

Appendix II: Typical ways of training and development

Training methods are either on-the-job, implemented outside the organisation or a combination of both. The following is a brief overview of rather typical methods of development (in alphabetical order):

Action learning

A process for bringing together a group of people with varied levels of skills and experience to analyse an actual work problem and develop an action plan. The ad-hoc group continues to meet as actions are implemented, learning from the implementation and making mid-course corrections. Action learning is a form of learning by doing. An approach to individual and organisational development. People learn from their attempts to change things.

Apprenticeships

For centuries, apprenticeships were the major approach to learning a craft. The apprentice worked with a recognised master-craftsperson. Particularly during times of low unemployment, businesses are eager to get any kind of help they can find. Seeking an apprenticeship may be a very useful and effective way to eventually develop a new skill.

Career Counselling

Hopefully, learners have the opportunity to work with their supervisors to develop career plans which identify areas for improvement or advancement, how those areas can be addressed and when.

Coaching

Coaching is becoming a very popular means of development, and often includes working one-on-one with the learner to conduct a needs assessment, set major goals to accomplish, develop an action plan, and support the learner to accomplish the plan. The learner drives these activities and the coach provides continuing feedback and support.

Continuing Professional Development

Many professions require verification of ongoing training to retain certification, e.g., social workers, some fields of law, nurses, etc. Professionals must stay up-to-date in the views and practices necessary to lead and manage in today's organisations. There seems to be an increasing number of universities, colleges and training centres associating continuing education units with their courses and workshops.

Continuous Learning

Continuous learning is learning how to learn. Typically, this involves developing skills in reflection, which is the ability to continually inquire and think about experience to draw conclusions and insights. It also involves the ability to conceptualise the learning process. Continuous learning is often associated with the concepts of systems thinking and organisational learning.

Courses

Universities, colleges and training centres often have a large number of courses in management, professional and personal development. If the learner is looking to build a skill, then he or she must actually apply new information from these courses -- otherwise, the learner is collecting information (hopefully, knowledge), rather than building skills.

Cross training

Cross training is training an employee to do a different part of the organisation's work. Training worker A to do the task that worker B does and training B to do A's task is cross training. Cross training is good for managers, because it provides more flexibility in managing the workforce to get the job done. However, done right, cross training is good for the employees too. It lets them learn new skills, makes them more valuable, and can combat worker boredom.

Distance Learning

Distance learning has become a mainstream approach in training and development. This typically includes learning by getting information and / or guidance from people who are not face-to-face with the learner, e.g., learning via satellite broadcast, broadcast over the Internet, e-mail or postal mail correspondence, etc. Some people consider online learning (e.g., information, tutorials, etc., available on diskette, CD-ROM, over the Internet, etc.) to be distance learning, as well.

Internships

Internships are offered usually by organisations to college students wanting to find work experience during the summer months. The internships offer precious, real-life job experience and the organisations often get skilled, highly dedicated service. Many times, interns go on to be hired by the organisations, as well.

Job Assignments

Job assignments are wonderful opportunities from which to learn. We just aren't used to thinking of them that way. To cultivate learning, consider having employees write short reports, including an overview of what they did, why they did it, what areas of knowledge and skills were used, how the job might have been done better, and what areas of knowledge and skills would be needed to improve the job.

Job Rotations

This can be one of the most powerful forms of development, allowing learners to experience a broad range of managerial settings, cultures and challenges.

Lectures

Lectures, or focused presentations by experts on subject matter, are held in a wide variety of locations, not just in classrooms. Professional associations often bring in speakers. Guest lectures are often sponsored by local universities, colleges and training centres, and announced to the public. Many times, the lectures are repeated over local radio and television.

Management Development Programs

Local universities, colleges and training centres usually offer these programs. Carefully review their program content and design to ensure that training includes real-life learning activities during which learners can develop skills for the workplace.

Mentoring

Hopefully, learners find experienced managers in the workplace who are willing to take learners "under their wing" and provide ongoing coaching and mentoring.

Online Training

There are an increasing number of approaches to online learning. Sources of online training include learning from computer diskette, CD-ROM, the Internet or Web-based training, etc.

On-the-Job Training

This form helps particularly to develop the occupational skills necessary to manage an organisation, e.g., to fully understand the organisation's products and services and how they are developed and carried out.

Other-Directed Learning

This includes having someone other than the learner identify the training goal, methods to achieve the goal, and approaches to evaluating the training and progress toward achieving the training goal.

Orientation to New Jobs or Roles

A carefully developed procedure for orienting new employees is very helpful for getting employees "off on the right foot" when starting their jobs.

Peer-Based Methods

This includes formats where peers focus on helping each other learn, e.g., by exchanging ongoing feedback, questions, supportive challenges, materials, etc. Perhaps the best example is the action learning process, originated by Reginald Revans.

Professional Organisations

A wide variety of professional organisations often offer courses, seminars, workshops and sessions from conventions.

Self-Directed Learning

Highly motivated learners can usually gain a great deal of knowledge and skills by identifying their own learning objectives, how to meet those objectives and how to verify they've met the objectives, as well.

Television

Various television networks often have a wide variety of very enlightening shows about basic job skills, such as computer basics, business writing, etc.

Tutorials

Tutorials include guidance to proceed through learning some technique or procedure, e.g., a tutorial on using a computer software package. There are an increasing number of online tutorials (tutorials available on diskette, CD-ROM, over the Internet, etc.).

Training Courses and Workshops

Workshops, seminars, convention sessions, etc. are useful, in particular, for highly focused overviews of a particular subject or training about particular procedures.

University and College Programs

Work based learning

Work based learning is a potentially radical approach to connecting work with learning. It means any learning which derives from the experience of engaging in work. It interfaces with other forms of learning such as campus based or on-line learning which provide a conceptual underpinning for the learning that derives from work.

Workshops

Workshops typically include some hands-on practice by the learner, and can be very practical means to learn a certain technique or procedure.

Appendix III: Emotional intelligence and soft skills

In the 1990s, Daniel Goleman and Richard Boyatzis developed the theory of emotional intelligence and extended it to the work environment.

The term refers to the so-called "soft skills": to be able to recognise our own emotions and other people's emotions, to create motives for ourselves and to use both our emotions and our relationships correctly. These skills vary but they also complement the purely cognitive abilities measured by the Intelligence Quotient (IQ).

According to D. Goleman, our soft skills are as follows:

Personal skills: These skills determine how well we handle ourselves.

1. Self-awareness: Being aware of your inner condition, your preferences, your personal reserves and being able to keep contact with one's own intuition.

- 1.1. Awareness of one's emotions: Being aware of one's emotions, your emotions' consequences and their results.
- 1.2. Accurate self-evaluation: Knowing one's own strong points and limitations.
- 1.3. Self-confidence: One's own confidence in one's worth and abilities.

2. Self-regulation: Being able to handle one's own condition, personal urges and reserves.

- 2.1. Self-control: Ability to handle distracting emotions and urges.
- 2.2. Reliability: Maintaining honesty and integrity.
- 2.3. Conscientiousness: Undertaking one's own responsibility for one's personal performance.
- 2.4. Adaptability: Being flexible when coping with changes.
- 2.5. Innovation: Feeling comfortable and open to innovative ideas, approaches and new information.

3. Behaviour motives: Emotional tendencies leading to the achievement or facilitation of objectives.

- 3.1. Inclination towards achievement: Effort for improvement or response to some perfection models.
- 3.2. Commitment: Alignment with the objectives of the group or the organisation.
- 3.3. Initiative: Being ready for action as soon as the opportunity appears.
- 3.4. Optimism: Insistence on the accomplishment of objectives despite impediments and setbacks.

Social skills: These skills determine how well we handle relationships.

4. Empathy: Awareness of other peoples' emotions, needs and concerns.

- 4.1. Understanding other people: Understanding the emotions and the points of view of other people as well as their active interest and concerns.
- 4.2. Being oriented towards the provision of services: Predicting and identifying customer needs and their satisfaction.

- 4.3. Enhancing other people's development: Being aware of what other people need in order to develop and enhance their abilities.
- 4.4. Handling diversity correctly: Creating and cultivating opportunities for various types of people.
- 4.5. Political acumen: Identifying the emotional tendencies of a group and strengthening relationships.

5. Social skills: Ability to make others react the way one wants.

- 5.1. Influence: Exercising effective convincing methods.
- 5.2. Communication: Expressing clear and convincing messages.
- 5.3. Leadership: Inspiring and guiding groups and individuals.
- 5.4. Decisive action in changes: Establishing and handling changes.
- 5.5. Handling disagreements: Negotiating and resolving disagreements.

Appendix IV:
Article 16 of the Constitution of Greece
(On education and training)

The Constitution of Greece
As revised by the parliamentary resolution
of April 6th 2001
of the VIIth Revisionary Parliament

Article 16

1. Art and science, research and teaching shall be free and their development and promotion shall be an obligation of the State. Academic freedom and freedom of teaching shall not exempt anyone from his duty of allegiance to the Constitution.

2. Education constitutes a basic mission for the State and shall aim at the moral, intellectual, professional and physical training of Greeks, the development of national and religious consciousness and at their formation as free and responsible citizens.

3. The number of years of compulsory education shall be no less than nine.

4. All Greeks are entitled to free education on all levels at State educational institutions. The State shall provide financial assistance to those who distinguish themselves, as well as to students in need of assistance or special protection, in accordance with their abilities.

5. Education at university level shall be provided exclusively by institutions which are fully self-governed public law legal persons. These institutions shall operate under the supervision of the State and are entitled to financial assistance from it; they shall operate on the basis of statutorily enacted by-laws. Merging or splitting of university level institutions may take place notwithstanding any contrary provisions, as a law shall provide. A special law shall define all matters pertaining to student associations and the participation of students therein.

6. Professors of university level institutions shall be public functionaries. The remaining teaching personnel likewise perform a public function, under the conditions specified by law.

The statutes of respective institutions shall define matters relating to the status of all the above.

Professors of university level institutions shall not be dismissed prior to the lawful termination of their term of service, except in the cases of the substantive conditions provided by article 88 paragraph 4 and following a decision by a council constituted in its majority of highest judicial functionaries, as specified by law. The retirement age of professors of university level institutions shall be determined by law; until such law is issued, professors on active service shall retire ipso jure at the end of the academic year at which they have reached the age of sixty-seven.

7. Professional and any other form of special education shall be provided by the State,

through schools of a higher level and for a time period not exceeding three years, as specifically provided by law which also defines the professional rights of the graduates of such schools.

8. The conditions and terms for granting a license for the establishment and operation of schools not owned by the State, the supervision of such and the professional status of teaching personnel therein shall be specified by law. The establishment of university level institutions by private persons is prohibited.

9. Athletics shall be under the protection and the ultimate supervision of the State. The State shall make grants to and shall control all types of athletic associations, as specified by law. The use of grants in accordance with the purpose of the associations receiving them shall also be specified by law.

Appendix V: OAED's role and activities

The international environment and the role of OAED in the Greek society

From the beginning of the eighties the unemployment has become one of the most oppressing problems for the most Member-States of the European Union. This problem becomes worse due to structural changes, technological development and the economical crisis. Benefits resulting from development of technology application, such as economic growth, rise of living standards, or new opportunities, intensify the problems of those who are deprived. At the dawn of the millennium the struggle against unemployment and specifically against long-term unemployment and this of the young and unskilled ones, has continuously consisted a priority target for the European Union. In this context, E.U. has decided to face the problem through the implementation of common actions undertaken by Member-States rather than national-level measures. According to these policies, the measures that are applied are of preventative and active character as well. So in the topic of the "White Book" which is called "Development, Competitiveness and Employment" it is emphasised that Vocational Training of the manpower will undoubtedly contribute not only in the restoration of a high level of employment, but also in the strengthening of the economic activity and the improvement of the competitiveness.

The complete strategy for Employment, which was approved by the European Council in Essen (December 1994) is implemented and led by the Multinational Programmes for employment of the State Members. It concerns the:

1. promotion of the investment in Vocational Training,
2. development emphasised on the Employment,
3. reduction in the non-wage Labour Cost,
4. improvement of the efficiency of the policy for the Labour Market,
5. enforcement of supporting measures for social groups on which the unemployment has the worst consequences.(Social Exclusion).

The above-mentioned Summit was followed by the Summits in Madrid (December 1995) where the results were assessed by the Committee of Economic and Social Affairs and then in Florence (June 1999) and Amsterdam (June 1997). In the latter, the promotion of the human centred attitude of the E.U. has been pursued as well as the approach with the European citizen. The high level of employment and social welfare and protection will be achieved by close co-operation and co-ordination of the actions of the national policies of the Member States, which will be resumed by the Counselling Committee for the Employment. The development and the protection of human resources and social rights have also been planned and will be put in action. After the Summit in Luxembourg (1998) the procedure aimed at the enhancement of the employment, which will be achieved by:

1. the adjustment of the Employment Services for the prevention of unemployment through Vocational training and "life long learning",
2. the strengthening of business spirit, through the facilitation of establishment (start-up) and operation of new enterprises,

3. Adaptability, through the organisation of employment (employment relations and production system) of employment and the development of human resources.(modernisation of professional skills),
4. creation of equal opportunities for men and women and as well as for disabled or handicapped people.

The final goal of the coordination of the above-mentioned policies is an essential increase of the employment rate in Europe. The Greek National Plan for Employment is oriented towards the achievement of this target.

During the Lisbon Summit held in year 2000, the leaders of 15 Member-States, decided to

- promote a knowledge based economy through Internet,
- enhance employment through growth of economy,
- protect and support low income groups of population.

Therefore, it takes care for the creation of the conditions, which are necessary for Employment and its actions aim at creating all the necessary presuppositions for immediate matching of Supply of Labour to Demand, according to the Economic Development Programme of the Country. The task of OAED is completed by a) the acquisition or/and improvement of the vocational skills of the manpower through training and its support with employment programmes, so that it will correspond to the continuously changing conditions of the Labour Market and b) the Social Security Benefits and Allowances granted to the social groups that have already been mentioned. The Organisation contributes with the best way possible, to the protection of the citizen's right for employment and social welfare given by the Constitution, contributing to the co-existence of development and social cohesion by taking care for finding the proper work placement for each unemployed person and by delivering Social Security Services to the various groups of population.

Fields of Activities

OAED takes action in the following sectors:

- the one of **vocational guidance** of the manpower by its specialized Executives and counselors about the professional alternatives offered,
- the one of **vocational training** of the manpower which aims at the
 - creation of specialized manpower,
 - transition from education and Vocational training to the production procedure.

This is how the encounter of the needs in professional qualifications that are caused by the continuously changing demands of the Labour Market will be accomplished, as well as the smooth accession and integration of young people to it. An extensive net of 57 Vocational Training Centres throughout the country is responsible for the accomplishment of this task. In order to fulfill its goals, the Organization participates in 15-member Organizations Network named EVTA (European Vocational Training Association) and among others it sets at Computer Network, Training Centres for young people who suffer from social exclusion. In this way an advantageous co-operation will be accomplished, for trainees (mutual contacts-exchanges of trainees)

as well as for trainers (exchange of training products, organization of common projects) enhanced by the participation in EVTA website.

OAED is also a member of CEDEFOP, an institution aimed at:

- Studying and promoting vocational training issues and
- Supporting European Commission, social partners and Organizations regarding the implementation of vocational training policies.

OAED provides Vocational Training with the following forms:

1. The Initial Training, which includes the following forms of training:
 - Apprenticeship and Technical-Vocational Centres
 - Institutes of Vocational Training
2. The Continuing Vocational Training which is consisted of :
 - Programmes for the Training of unemployed,
 - The In-work Training programmes of personnel according to the National Certification System (aimed at increasing productivity of employees and thereby of the competitiveness of the enterprises),
 - A Pilot programme for the Training of self-employed,
 - Programme enabling transition or unemployed people from training to Employment,
 - Programmes addressed at people facing/endangered with Social Exclusion,
 - Programmes in the framework of Social Exclusion,
 - Integrated innovative and pilot programmes according to the initiatives of the EU (Pilot programmes for unemployed who are registered in the Unemployment Live Register and young people who have dropped out of the Educational System),
 - Establishment of LAEK (Special Fund for Employment and Vocational Training) Employment and Vocational Training, which are strengthened through the implementation of specific programmes.

(Source: www.oead.gr)

Appendix VI:
Questionnaire for the Survey of the trainees

Programme title: MBA / Diploma (circle the right answer)

1. What is your impression of the quality of the knowledge you have gained?

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Unsatisfactory

2. What is your impression of the quality of the presentations given by the trainers?

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Unsatisfactory

3. What is your impression of trainee participation and exchanging experiences?

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Unsatisfactory

4. What is your impression of the books and notes you received?

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Unsatisfactory

5. What is your impression of the supervisory means used?

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Unsatisfactory

6. Do you think that the subjects of the programme were adequately covered?

Absolutely To a great extent Enough A little Not at all

7. What new things did you learn on the programme?

8. What subject units do you think should have been treated more carefully?

9. Do you think that what you have learned can be put into practice in your job?

Widely Sufficiently Fairly A little Not at all

10. If you put the things you have learned into practice, what impact do you think they will have on the following?

| Impact | Very positive | Positive | Immaterial | Negative | Very negative |
|--------------------|---------------|----------|------------|----------|---------------|
| On you yourself | | | | | |
| On your colleagues | | | | | |
| On your customers | | | | | |
| On your company | | | | | |
| On the community | | | | | |

11. The programme's organisational support was

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Unsatisfactory

12. Please make proposals for improving HMA training programmes. You are advised to focus on the following:

- Information material _____
- Promotional activities of the programmes _____
- Contact with the programme coordinators _____
- Training premises: Classrooms, syndicate rooms, break-time lounge, canteen

- Training equipment _____
- Type of training programmes _____
- Content of training programmes _____
- Trainers _____
- Notes _____
- Programme Secretary _____
- Amenities _____
- Continuing contact among trainees _____

13. Please, tick what other subjects you would like to attend

Management Marketing Accounting Finance Production Logistics Sales Customer Service

Other subjects (in detail:) _____

14. Rank (best 1, worst 20) the following factors in relation to their contribution in your ability to undertake duties and responsibilities in your job:

| | |
|--|--|
| Education (vocational, degrees, postgraduate) | |
| Languages | |
| Technological skills (operation of machines, computers, etc) | |
| Lifelong learning (seminars, on-the-job training, degrees, postgraduate) | |
| Work experience in a similar position | |
| Work experience in the same field of activity | |
| Knowing the right people and building up relationships. | |
| Working hard | |
| Self-control (time and stress management) | |
| Ability to communicate | |
| Ability to cooperate with others | |
| Organisational ability and orderliness | |
| Leadership, inspiration, motivation | |
| Self-confidence | |
| Appearance | |
| Taking initiatives and being creative | |
| Intelligence and the ability to learn | |
| Integrity (honesty, sense of responsibility) | |
| Physical stamina | |
| Balance between “work” and “life”. | |

15. Who financed your training on this programme?

| Yourself | Your company / organisation entirely on its own | Your company / organisation in part | Other organisation entirely on its own | Other organisation in part |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

16. Other comments or explanations _____

Full Name _____

Sex
 Male
 Female

Age _____

Education _____

Company / Organisation _____

Position in the company / organisation _____

Work telephone number _____

E-mail _____

Appendix VII: Material for the interviews

The questionnaires that follow were considerably helpful during interviews held with training officials. Some of these interviews were conducted face-to-face, some of them on the phone and some others through e-mail. Therefore, there was relative flexibility in the way each one of these interviews was conducted. Some interviews moved on to other issues which had not been initially predicted. This helped to investigate other aspects of the project.

Interview questions for the trainers (fifteen trainers responded)

1. What knowledge, skills and attitudes do you try to develop in your programmes?
2. What training methods do you use in your job?
3. What do you think about the level of your trainees?
4. Do you think they benefit from training programmes?
5. What are your predictions about the future of management training?
6. What is the general impression about the “train-the-trainer” programme run by EKEPIS?
7. Did you learn anything new from this programme?
8. What is your experience from your collaboration with the HMA?
9. What would you recommend for the improvement of HMA training programmes?
10. What, in your opinion, are the qualifications of a good trainer?

Interview questions for the HR managers / training supervisors (four HR managers and six training supervisors responded)

1. What is the role of training and development in the design of a HR plan in your company?
2. How do you diagnose training needs?
3. Which are your basic training priorities?
4. What departments and what ranks do trainees come from?
5. What educational organisations do you prefer to co-operate with and why?
6. What do you think about the level of trainers who are employed on the market?
7. What, in your opinion, are the qualifications of a good trainer?
8. How do you evaluate the results of learning and its transfer to the work environment?
9. Do you use 0.45% of employer contributions for training?
10. Do you send trainees on long-term programmes run by the HMA or other organisations? If yes, what do you think of them and what are your impressions?

Interview questions for the training coordinators

(ten training coordinators responded)

1. What do you think about the general situation in the field of training today?
2. What type of training programmes do you promote on the market?
3. According to your experience, what are the subject units that are in greater demand and why?
4. Are you involved in the investigation of training needs and, if yes, how?
5. How do you monitor the way training programmes are conducted?
6. How do you evaluate the results of training programmes?
7. What is your experience from collaborating with trainers?
8. What is your experience from collaborating with company HR departments?
9. What is your experience and/or your opinion about e-learning?
10. What future trends do you foresee in training as regards its content and the ways it is provided?

Appendix VII:

The interview with the HMA general manager

- **How was management training developed in Greece?**
- The whole story may have started in the beginning of the 1960s with the establishment of the Greek Productivity Centre by the Hellenic Management Association and the postgraduate programme by the Athens University of Economics and Business; however, for a number of years the entire field was quite closed and it concerned only a few executives from big companies or public organisations. In real fact, management training started to develop systematically from the beginning of the 1980s with the financing of European programmes. Even then, however, that field was exceptionally virginal and the result was that various "sharp-sighted" individuals benefited from it since they made a lot of money but provided a very low level of training. Of course, there were some people who were pioneers and worked with knowledge, ardent desire and dignity and, in this way, they managed to establish this discipline. From the beginning of the 1990s things changed dramatically. This field had by now attracted a lot of able trainers, either University professors or executives with long experience. At the same time, educational organisations started to increase and to organise themselves with regard to facilities, equipment and technical know-how. In the same period of time, a lot of small training companies appeared and even individual "agents" who started chasing companies in order to convince them to train their personnel mainly through the LAEK or OAED programme or through European financing projects. From the mid-1990s, the country became inundated by KEKs, i.e. Vocational Training Centres which were founded in order to exploit these European financing projects and carry out training programmes for the unemployed, for employees and for sensitive population groups. In the context of these programmes, a lot of managerial executives were trained in general management subject units or a special managerial subject such as accounting, financing, marketing, production issues, logistics, etc. In 1998, the public Greek Productivity Centre closed down by virtue of a ministerial decision and this was a severe blow for management training. As for the Hellenic Management Association, this particular event was a unique opportunity and was not left untapped. It offered the opportunity of collaboration to a lot of its capable trainers, it attracted a lot of its trainers and it very soon managed to become the first name in this field of activity. However, today it has to face a new field of competition. I'm talking about Greek and a lot of foreign Universities - mainly British and American Universities - which offer courses intended for mature company executives, such as executive MBAs.
- **What is the competitive advantage of the Hellenic Management Association and what is its weak point?**
- The advantage of the HMA is not just one but quite a few. First of all, its long-standing presence in the Greek market has established it as the main and most reliable management training institution. Secondly, its

excellent facilities in Athens but also its decent facilities in other cities where it operates. Thirdly, the high level of trainers who are associated with it. A fourth point is its top international affiliations with educational organisations and professional bodies. A fifth point is its close association with the stakeholders and its friendly collaboration with the State. Sixth on its strong-points list, you will find the tens of thousands of trained people who function as "mouth-to-mouth promotion" within the Greek society and the business community. Its seventh strong point is the fact that it has developed similar activities to support its main educational work (consulting, recruiting, awarding business and management prizes). Eighth on the list is the managerial know-how it has developed through hundreds of projects that it has completed successfully. I think that its main weak point is the fact that it lacks academic recognition from the Greek State. Another weak point is its limited penetration in in-company training, especially in the last few years because it has lost a market share in this particular field to smaller companies and individual agents and trainers who target this kind of business on their own. Finally, another weak point is its relative inflexibility and some bureaucratic obstacles. Of course, if you ask our associate trainers, they will add to the list of its weak points the fact that they are not paid on time; however, this is almost exclusively due to limited cash flow which was the result of its long-term loaning for building its expensive premises for a number of years.

- **What are the ways and procedures that shape today's business executives?**
- Naturally, initial education plays a role. What school you have finished and what you have learned there. If you have done any postgraduate studies. How these studies are connected to your first degree and your job. Even the grades achieved on the degree are an important factor, as well as, the prestige of the school you have attended. Having a degree from Harvard University is quite different from having a degree from the University of Angola. Next, work experience is also important: what is the field of activity you have worked in and in what positions? In every field of business activity there are some companies which are considered to be "schools" for executives. In the field of cars, there is Toyota; in the field of foodstuffs, there is Delta; in the banking field, there is Eurobank; in the field of insurance companies, there is Interamerican. A factor that is even harder to evaluate is the personality of the executive. Is he easy to work with? Does he learn easily? Does he like interacting with other people? Is he organisational? Can he handle pressure? Can he keep his cool in complicated situations? Can he concentrate on a particular cause? Can he analyse the situation and decide quickly and effectively? I believe that management training contributes a lot in the development of these skills, provided that the trainee himself also wants this and puts effort to this effect. At HMA, we provide opportunities for the development of executives but their own contribution is also necessary. Nobody learns anything just because someone else wants them to learn.

- **What kind of knowledge, skills and attitudes do you try to teach to executives and managers through your training programmes?**
- Naturally, the whole package of managerial knowledge, skills and attitudes. This means general knowledge about programming, organisation, management and control, communication skills, group work, leadership, negotiations, decision-making skills and personal skills such as time management and stress management. In addition, appreciating quality, having a sense of responsibility, customer orientation and the need to balance out different stakeholder interests. Is this enough? Of course not. Specialised training in each particular field is also needed. For this reason, apart from our postgraduate programmes in business management which are of a general character and intend to give trainees a general idea about the way businesses operate and an understanding of the existing interaction among the various business departments, we have also created specialised programmes for each field of activity such as, human resources management, financing, logistics, etc. You know, we have trainees who complete the executive MBA run by Bath University or some other postgraduate programme in Business Administration who continue their studies with the Diploma in Sales Management or pursue specialisation in logistics. However, the opposite also happens: Some people may complete a programme of vocational specialisation and then continue with their postgraduate programme in business administration in order to have a more general idea about the business environment.
- **Do you think that you fulfil your role as an institution of continuing vocational training for middle and higher executives?**
- This is a really difficult question because the messages we receive may be encouraging but we should not just rest on our laurels. On the one hand, we should examine this question from the point of view of trainees, and on the other hand from the point of view of the companies where they work. Trainees on long-term courses give us a satisfaction percentage that is on average 7.6 on a scale of 10. The corresponding rate in our postgraduate programmes is a 7.9. Is this enough? To put it differently, can we believe them? What I mean to say is whether their judgement at the end of the programme does represent in reality the added value that they have earned. It is not possible to have some measurable evaluation from companies about how much our objective has been achieved, i.e. about the transfer of knowledge to the work environment and the subsequent positive results. However, we have two very encouraging pieces of information: graduates heartily recommend us to their colleagues. Two-thirds of the new trainees on the Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration come to us because some satisfied graduate has recommended us. The indications we have gathered from personal conversations with human resources managers and training and development supervisors allow us to be optimistic. Finally, the image we present to society seems to be a positive one, or at the least we have not been accused of something

negative in all these years. So, to answer your question, it seems we're doing our job quite well!

- **What is the role played by ISO in ensuring the quality of your training services?**

- We decided to gain ISO accreditation for all our activities in the year 2000 and we have not regretted that. Indeed, we renew our accreditation because we believe that it helped us in the years that have gone by. What did ISO do? It organised us, it defined internal procedures which we try to comply with and improve. We now know who does what. That is not to say we were disorganised before that. However, the fact remains that things became more orderly, we drafted forms to monitor activities, we keep records, we know who is involved in what at any time. It has helped us in the production field, I mean in training, accounting and management. In any case, it organised us. However, it added a lot of forms and we ran the risk of slipping bureaucracy in through the back door. Now, it is our duty to benefit from the advantages of ISO without letting it become tyrannical.

- **Can you predict the future of management training in Greece?**

- Generally speaking, in a period of such swift technological - and not just technological - change, it would be risky to make any predictions. Nevertheless, I would say that the future of management training runs through the development of the organisations which provide this kind of training today, as well as, the challenges put forward by foreign University branches that can be seen in the horizon, but perhaps also by some new private Greek universities that could be founded. I don't think that this last possibility could happen very soon since there is intense reaction from the University community. As regards the content of the courses, I can predict further specialisation in certain modules such as service marketing, banking management, tourist companies, pharmaceutical companies, money markets and energy management. You see, there is demand for specialisation in each field of activity and this is not something that is catered for today, at least not to a satisfactory degree. As regards the way training services will be provided, I believe that new technology will gain ground. Mixed programmes may also emerge consisting of a part that will be taking place in the classroom and another part that will be available through distance learning. Another thing that we have not sufficiently tackled today is the trainees' need to combine training with entertainment. Today's executives are under extreme pressure in their jobs and they want to have some fun. Programs with outdoor activities, such as paintball or other group games that take place in the countryside and serve training purposes at the same time have been tried. At the HMA, we're thinking of introducing a three-day excursion to a luxurious hotel in the Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration at the end of the programme that will also include these kinds of activities or something else that we still have not decided upon.

- **How could educational organisations, trainers and the State contribute towards the improvement of management training?**
- As regards educational organisations, I believe that they must improve their training premises, which in many cases are colourless and inhospitable offices. They should also invest in training equipment, such as modern and functional projectors, educational films, and even desks and chairs which suffer wear and tear from too much use. They should also utilise the opportunities that are offered through new, innovative European programmes and also become partners in international organisations and recognised foreign schools. As regards trainers, they should all attend the train-the-trainer programmes organised by EKEPIS. They should keep sight of market developments and become "streetwise". They should study new management models and stop teaching outdated theories. They should update their notes and apply new training methods. As regards the State, it should stop setting up bureaucratic obstacles in our job and facilitate the spreading of European programmes. It should simplify the procedures of the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation which supervises the field of education and employees and influences our field adversely by changing its policy too often. It should recognise the degrees and postgraduate titles awarded by foreign universities in our country through affiliated colleges and the Centres of Liberal Studies as equal. Besides, our country is being dragged to the European courts for this very reason and the Greek State is always convicted. The State should bravely review article 16 of the Constitution which does not allow private Universities to operate. Of course, I understand that this presupposes political will and that part of the University community strongly opposes that. However, I do not see the reason for such prolonged opposition. The foundation of some higher private schools in a field where there is excessive demand does not mean that today's schools will shrink. Far from it, it will save our country all the foreign exchange that is lost in the countries where tens of thousands of our countrymen go to study. In addition, it will give them the opportunity to study the science they want in their own country without having to go abroad. This could mean that the HMA could develop into a Higher Education Business Administration School and broaden its activities in the field of undergraduate management education. Or at least, the Greek State should recognise the postgraduate degrees it offers today through the executive MBA programme of the internationally recognised British university, the University of Bath. Furthermore, in this way the qualification offered by the Postgraduate Programme in Business Administration, which is highly prized on the market, could be upgraded and become recognised by the State since it already meets most of the essential requirements.

Word Count: 39,944