

# Adaptation of Knowledge and Management in Social Welfare in Hungary



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Society, economic corporations and individuals face new challenges in terms of global competitiveness as well as the information revolution which means a new quality through automated decision arrangement and telecommunication, furthermore the requirement to guarantee the excellent quality of the products and services and to develop them continuously. Organizations all over the world feel in need to solve the problem of managing human resources in a way that they can provide quality products and services for each other and their clients. The solution has to be found by the management. Improving the professional knowledge and attaining the capability and the means („toolbar“) of conception-creation and changing the people’s attitude are needed for the requirements and would have to be realized by management on the basis of experience and reliable knowledge.

Therefore this study has three main pillars: management – knowledge – social work. The intention is to study a new aspect of a helping profession.

## Management

Management is a socially separated function which means the process of the planning and decision making, organizing, managing and controlling the human, financial, psychical and information resources for the sake of carrying out the purposes of the organization successfully and effectively (Gyökér, I., 2005).

Etymologically, the word „management“ that is used in the English-speaking countries originates from the Latin „manus“ (hand). So this word can be translated as leading by the hand. According to an earlier management conception the leaders reached their target by holding the assigned people’s hands. There is another conception whereas the word comes from the French „ménage“ that means „household“. The head of the household – menagere – is the organizer and the leader of the household at the same time, so he or she is the manager. Management is the skill and practice of supervision, control, leading and planning; it is a leading and controlling activity to reach a specific target. Management can also be defined as the following: Management means how to provide using resources in the most effective and productive way (Számadó R., 2006).

Globalization has speeded up the world. We can see that everything is changing around us in our everyday life. These changes are realized through projects. Projects have a fixed starting point and end. These make it possible for us to adapt ourselves to the changing conditions. Project-management has become a significant skill in accordance with the project oriented way of thinking. If you apply the technique of project-management it is assumed that you can keep the closing dates, calculate and keep the expense plans and you will learn how to manage resources. So team-work is bound to that as an accepted working style to assure the efficiency and success of the project.

The project is an idea, a plan whose attributes are: one-time, fixing in time, modernity, complexity and estimate on the cost. This idea will be framed into realizable schedules with thorough planning and then be accomplished. In order to choose a project you need to have sufficient information to analyse the information that is summarized in a project proposal. The proposal discusses the essential subjects only:

- target of the project

- defining the problem
  - A drafted target that needs to be reached in the future.
  - The target is what can be defined and operational (verifiable and measurable).
  - It has a subject (type), measure (range), extent (size) and time (duration, period/deadline).
- suggested solution
- choosing project and grading requirements
- expense – profit analysis
  - concrete advantages
  - concealed advantages
  - necessary resources (expenses)
  - financial refund
- expectable results
- range of function of the project
- obstacles and risks
- schedule estimation

The organization and the reorganization of the project will be examined during the processing of the project proposal. The project targets and the task structure will be co-ordinated. The next step is the planning, fixing the deadlines, determining the capacity, the expenses and the finances. The possibilities of the development and the possible effects and consequences of the project in the long run will be considered, and the process of the quality assurance will be thought over. There are four techniques applied in the course of the project-planning in order to assess the possibilities and the determinant parameters of the project. These techniques are continually spreading in all walks of life and science in the everyday routine.

1. SWOT (Strengths, weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis („what is the person like, who is doing it?”)
2. Problem-tree („for what sake is the project being planned?”)
3. Target-tree („for what result would the project be realized?”)
4. Logical frame-matrix („who is doing what?”)

To start a well-considered, planned work ten issues have to be considered:

1. target (why is it important, what can it help)
2. expected result (measurable)
3. starting point and duration of the project
4. subject of the project
5. who does it impact (what would happen if the project did not exist)
6. speciality (why is it unique and why is it new or modern)
7. keywords (values, typical characters, conception)
8. estimate on the cost
9. being verifiable

## 10. evaluation

The evaluation of the quality of the project proposal is accomplished on the basis of several aspects. The relevancy, the practicability and the sustainability are fundamental respects. These can be divided into some further subdivisions which can be seen in a comprehensive table:



Chart 1: The evaluation of the quality of the project proposal (*click thumbnail to see picture in large*)

The chosen project proposal can result in the start stand. The members of the team (organization) should bind themselves to the concrete project. It is very important because this is one of the key-points of starting the management's activity. The functions of project management can be divided into three aspects:

1. defining the project – the base of the project which contains two activities:
  - fixing the targets and frames of the project (exact, explicit and measurable wording the cause of the project)
  - fixing the activity of the project management: participants of the project, service route, communication strategy, surveying process
2. project planning
  - reaching the target of the project within the given compass
  - estimating and planning the labour intensity of the project
  - determining the needed workforce
  - estimating and planning the costs
  - risk management: strategies for avoiding the uncertainty and risks
  - assuring the balance of “cost – time – quality”
3. managing the project – involves all the activities that assure to reach the targets of the project:
  - measuring the progress (feedback)
  - communication (co-ordination, following the progress of the project)
  - remedial steps (problem solving)

We need considerable knowledge and information so that project management can function as an activity.

Project management knowledge consists of four main parts:

1. Elementary knowledge
2. Social knowledge
3. Methodological knowledge
4. Knowledge of organizations

Chart 2: Summary of project-management (by Verzuh) *(click thumbnail to see picture in large)*

Note: The importance of social knowledge is often underestimated. However, it can produce the most critical project success and failure factors. Using the techniques of the project management sensibly makes it possible to keep the time limits, to calculate and keep the cost plans, teaches you how to manage the resources, and the team work will become an accepted working method, consequently it will guarantee the efficiency and the success of the project. Considering the factors of the success and failure – as I have already mentioned – we can not leave the significance of the social knowledge out of consideration. I will study that in the respect of the particular subject later.

To sum it up we can say that knowledge is an important element of management.

**Knowledge**

Constructing a knowledge-based economy is a frequent development target in the documents of OECD and other international organizations (EU) dealing with economic and social development, and connected with it, creating the conditions of the learning society. That requires an exact definition of the relevant knowledge as well as organizing the production and distribution of knowledge, which must be an important task of the professional knowledge management.

The types of knowledge that are required by economy have been summarized in the table below.

Chart 3: Types of knowledge *(click thumbnail to see picture in large)*

Increasing the efficiency related to knowledge and making the intellectual property profitable as well as the continuous renewal is the task of the knowledge management which is a fundamental social process. As Cavaleri (2004) thinks the knowledge management is such a specific knowledge processing course which contains the creation, evaluation, integration of the knowledge and the supervision of the progress while the knowledge is being produced and applied. The studies about knowledge management deal with the difference of the unsaid knowledge and the knowledge that has been put into words – on the basis of the English terminology: tacit and explicit types of knowledge. The explicit, declared, describable knowledge is founded on the tacit knowledge – the unspoken, personal knowledge that cannot be separated from the emotional-impulsive knowledge-layer produced by people. The two levels of knowledge – to know what (explicit) and to know how (tacit) – cannot function effectively without each other (Lehmann, 2000).

The most important mission of knowledge management is to call the tacit knowledge out. Transforming the tacit knowledge into explicit information is a long process which involves several, specific steps. Willard (1999) called it knowledge-spiral:

- unspoken knowledge is its wording (fixing, codification, systematization) and its expression (in analogies, metaphors, allegories): externalization;
- direct transfer of the tacit knowledge: socialization;
- developing the explicit information: combination (comparisons, synthesis, etc.);
- explicit knowledge will become personal knowledge through the comprehension again: internalization.

In accordance with all these the increase and the acceleration of the rise of the number of knowledge-spirals can be a target of the knowledge management.

However we have to understand that the information processing can be perfect but an innovation will not spring up from it necessarily because people play an important role in it (Davenport and Marchand, 1999).

So the definition of knowledge management which was declared by the seminar of Knowledge Associates CE in November 2000 is a significant milestone: it is a fundamentally new way how to create, keep, share, record and use the knowledge fund.

At the same time it is important to emphasize the definition that can be read in the appendix of Financial Times entitled Knowledge Management which makes an explicit distinction between knowledge management and successful information management: encouraging to create new knowledge and motivating to use the existing knowledge is knowledge management.

Nevertheless Sándori's definition is the most expressive in compliance with my chosen subject: knowledge management is all those efforts that aim at increasing the professional intellectual foundation.

According to Bellinger (2004) the knowledge:

- is connected with the information description, the definition or the perspective,
- involves the strategy of knowledge, the practice, the method or the approach,
- wisdom incarnates the basic principles, the keen insight, the morality or the talent.

Stringing all that information – or tacit knowledge – on the conceptual spiral outlined above we will come to the third part of the study.

### **Social work**

„The professional social work helps on the social changes, the problem solving in human relations, helps to enable people to do something; setting people free for the sake of increasing the welfare. Applying the theories about human behaviour and social systems, the social work interposes at the points where people get into contact with one another and with their social environment. Human rights and social righteousness are fundamentally important elements in social work.” (Sewpaul and Jones, 2004)

There are two supporting departments that work to develop the Hungarian social network and managing problems, these are: social work and social pedagogy.

The most important targets of social work: it

- „promotes the integration of marginalized, socially excluded, dispossessed, deficient and endangered groups of people;
- deals with and stands up against the obstacles, inequality, and unfairness in the society;
- mobilizes and works together with individuals, families, groups, organizations and collectives on behalf of improving their own welfare, wealth and their problem (managing) -solving ability;
- helps people to get the needed supplies and resources in their local community;
- frames and realizes a kind of policy and political programs which increase the people's welfare, progress, the predominance of their human rights which advance the harmony of

community and the social safety;

- encourages people to represent their individual interests in the local, national, regional and/or international official matters which have reference to them;
- represents people to frame such a policy and its aimed realization which are suitable for the ethical principles of the profession;
- represents people to change the political and structural conditions which keep people in a marginalized, dispossessed, vulnerable social status, and which prejudice the social cohesion and stability of various kinds of ethnic groups if this stability do not contravene the general human rights;
- consideration for the respecting legal manners and ethic standards it works to benefit those people who are not able to do that (e.g. children who need nursing or care, and people who has mental problems);
- promotes the actions that initiate effective changes in social policy which terminates inequality caused by economic development;
- strengthens establishing a steady, harmonic society where people are agreeable to each other on both sides and where the human rights are not contravened;
- furthers to respect the traditions, cultures, ideologies, convictions and religions between different ethnic groups and communities if these do not conflict with the fundamental human rights;
- for the sake of the intentions above, it plans, organizes, administers and accomplishes programs and organizations.” (IFSW – IASSW, 2004)

We can systematize the social work through naming the target, practice and work forms.

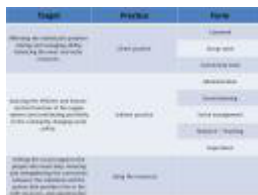


Figure 4: Woods’ summary table of social work (Pincus – Minaham, 1973) (*click thumbnail to see picture in large*)

Social pedagogy can be defined as an independent, practice-oriented, human helping profession in the social field among the applied social sciences. Social educators are able to:

- handle children’s and young age-group’s difficulties of relations, learning and social problems
- assist persons, groups and families who are touched, and bring into balance with their own environment;

provide for:

- recognizing and analyzing the real functional regularities of the society;
- analyzing the social inequalities, problematic situations which refer to children and young persons and the reasons for these factors, unsatisfied demands, endangering elements in a complex view;
- joining children, young people and their groups with governmental (social, educational, public health), institutional and social (social-political, legal, interest-enforcing, children’s welfare and defensive, etc.) services and resources which are beneficial to prevent and increase the problematic situations;
- establishing partner relations and co-operation with other experts (physicians, psychologists, social workers, lawyers, teachers of handicapped children, etc.) by knowing the bounds of competence.

As the social aspect of social pedagogy we name the aiding work of

- improving and correction the life conditions,
- strengthening the social relation system and rehabilitation / social adaptation,
- increasing the chance of life

of persons and groups who are in need of help, children, young people, old people, handicapped persons and other deprived people.

The starting point of intervention for the social educator is the social status, and its target is to advance the independent way of life.

The pedagogical characteristics of social pedagogy is that its human social helping devices are increased by some specific pedagogical (and partly psychological) means which are instrumental in worth-oriented correction (attitude-changing) of the way of living based on people's own decision. Social pedagogy represents an individual professional entity. (Social Expert's Forum, Social pedagogy Professional Council, 2010)

According to my base qualifications – social educator, social worker – I outlined what management means in social work. I found that the professionals are making an effort to apply the basis of management-science for their own field. The social, economic and political changes induce and need the application of management view in the aiding profession, as well.

Management is controlled by three fundamental aspects, the

1. processual aspect (process of activities)
2. structural aspect
3. social aspect.

Robert Weinbach (Professor Emeritus, University of South Carolina) describes it as follows: Management are those entire specific functions that are conducted by experts who work at a given place work and who are qualified for contributing to reach the productivity and the constitutional goal. The social workers who work as managers try to bring about and preserve such an optimal atmosphere at work that will lead to the effectual realization of the actual services that they offer to the customers. Management involves bringing about and keeping the influence on the working environment. There are three factors that have influence on the management of social work:

1. improving the connection with the functional environment (getting prestige),
2. applying marketing strategies,
3. evaluation (Weinbach, 2003).

The following terminology belongs to this series of viewpoints: intention, motivation, initiation, co-operation, co-ordination, communication, organization, decision making and controlling.

A part of the social services are realized in a marketized way in welfare societies, and this tendency is getting more pronounced in Hungary, too. By this means the identification and survey of the requirements,

- planning,
- establishment of main directives,
- decision making,
- supervision,
- innovation,
- evaluation

belong to the activity of social work.

Consequently learning new skills and acquiring the knowledge how to carry out tasks is necessary in order that the social worker will be a catalyst, a designer and organizer of the

social provision, so he or she will be a social manager, and not only a person who solves the problems, gives advices and handles conflicts.

Summarized the functions of the social management:

- representing new tasks, services and supplies,
- calculation management,
- planning that focuses on local level,
- working out a strategy,
- tracking,
- evaluation.

The efficiency of social work lies in the appropriate planning and expedient activity following the application of information that is compiled by an expert. For the helping professional the first step of solving the social problem is to reveal the given case and take a survey of it. This is the principal, fundamental question of view for the profession. The survey is the same as complying, integration, analyzing and evaluating data in order to be able to make relevant establishments in respect of the given case. The social diagnosis is the process of problem-wording itself. The drawing of the solving-plan / intervention-plan results from that. The wise planning points out the direction of the strategy and lays down the factual steps. It establishes a clear and comprehensible helping-contact and situation for the helpers and the helped people, as well, which has to be characteristic of mutual confidence and co-operation. The expedient activity means all the tasks of problem-solving.

The professional knowledge is applied properly and the information is obtained and extended for the sake of increasing the level of the professional work, and not only on behalf of the clients. Developing the knowledge-spiral as intensively as possible and multiplying in the social sphere has a reason for existence. The teaching system of helping trades is interdisciplinary, so the application of new knowledge and manners of the area of other sciences is suitable for fitting in and internalizing the theory and practice of social work.

Thus, management elements of social work can be identified in two professional fields: one of the determinant forms of the personal assistance, the individual case-management; and the development tasks of social services.

A) The determinant steps of individual case-management are:

1. problem-recognition / problem-determination and setting objectives
2. choosing and planning a method
3. feedback / evaluation

Individual social work is built on the mutual, confidential contact between the helping professional and the client. There are two elements in its focus: The client and solving the problem that arises in the life of the client's family:



Figure 2: block diagram of the individual case-management (Riez,A.) *(click thumbnail to see picture in large)*

B) The three phases of planning / development of social services:

1. situation evaluation



- recognizing and estimating necessities and demands
- determining the target group (demographic data)
- forecast

## 2. planning

- setting objectives
- surveying the destiny (mission) of the institute
- strategy / description of the methods
- designating the tasks and responsible persons
- working plan
- cost plan (financial proposal)
- evaluation plan (documenting, tracking, preparation of decision making)

## 3. evaluation

- professional, economic, social effect
- continuous
- quality assurance
- evaluation in the respect of the clients / organization.

The evaluation is a much debated question in the practice of the social work. It is hard to make assistance measurable and assessable. Evaluation is a measure that can be applied for helping professions. „The evaluative research (evaluation) is a systematic research which determines the degree of successfulness of a certain programme.” (Social Work Dictionary) Evaluation is necessary on behalf of the decision makers, the methodological knowledge and the contact of systems of institution of social policy:

- decision makers – results that can be documented well and satisfactorily;
- methodological knowledge – integrating the disciplines of social science and the experience that was acquired on the spot;
- system of institutions of social science – changing and improvement.

“Evaluation” is a systematizing application of the research procedure of social sciences for estimating the conceptions, planning, application and usefulness of programmes that provide social intervention; which implies seven, well-circumscribed steps:

1. Specifying the problem.
2. Measuring the problem somehow.
3. Duplicating the process of measurement at fixed intervals.
4. Determining the starting level.
5. Planning the intervention.
6. Making the way of the intervention clear.
7. Data analysis.

I think that the evaluation of the final result on three levels is important either in case of the individual case-management or during the development of the social provisions:

- clients / client system,
- institution / organization,
- levels that apply to system influences.

## Conclusion

The brief and summarized interpretation of social management is: it means the continuous maintenance of a social provision system. There are many more questions in the issue of social management: priorities and competency, professional knowledge or profession, development – effectiveness – costs, practicability and help. It is sure that the social profession needs change in these questions too.

The circumstances of teaching social experts, the development of providing supplies of social and children welfare, the innovation of methodology proceedings requires rational planning, professional organization, competent management and outlining measuring methodology, in other words the application of management knowledge in the helping profession, consequently the social management.

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