

OUTLINES BUSINESS PLAN AND PRIORITIES FOR 2010

Introduction

Before the completion of the ratification it would be worth to start with the discussion and the development of a business plan in which is described:

- The mission of ReSPA;
- Its products and services;
- The structure and processes;
- Staff and competences;
- The marketing approach;
- The financial paragraph;
- Strategy and priorities for the coming period.

After having reached consensus on these issues it can be taken up for further implementation by the new Director in cooperation with EIPA.

This documents describes in outlines the elements of the business plan as well as possible priorities for 2010.

After discussion on the 8th of October in Sarajevo and having received some guidelines from the SC, it can be further elaborated and submitted as a documents for approval during the 13th Session of the SC Meeting in December 2009.

Strategic questions

When defining a strategy actually three main questions are to be answered:

- 1. What is ReSPA and what does it wants?**
- 2. How is it recognised by the market and what does the market wants from ReSPA?**
- 3. Is ReSPA able to do what it wants and what the market is asking?**

While discussing its strategy ReSPA has to take care that these three points are in balance and if not to see what measures it has to take to bring this in balance.

Mission

It is widely used to start a business plan with the formulation of the organisation's mission.

In a mission statement the organisation briefly formulates its reason of existence. It also serves as a compass for the organisation while developing and delivering its products.

For ReSPA the overall objective that can be seen as a mission is stated as:

“To improve regional cooperation in the field of public administration, promote regional professional networks and contribute to strengthen administrative capacity as required by the European integration process and by developing human resources in line with the European Administrative Space.”

The question is if this mission statement is still completely relevant or if any modification needs to be made.

Services and products

Under this heading the organisation explains by what means it wants to achieve its mission.

As for ReSPA some of these services could for instance be described as:

ReSPA tries to achieve its mission by:

- Providing training programmes in relation with public administration reform and modernisation, good governance and in relation with the accession of the European Union. Delivered by trainers/experts from the region and/or in cooperation with trainers/experts from EU member states. These programme should have a common interest and relevance for the ReSPA members and will also contribute to strengthen the cooperation between the ReSPA members.
- Organising learning events for practitioners working in the same policy areas by exchange of experience and benchmarking.
- Organising bigger events on regional and/or international level in the framework of Public Administration, public management and European integration.
- Providing training and consultancy for training providers on national level. ReSPA may consider the national training institutes as important partners.
- Providing information on developments of public administration, public management and EU affairs by for instance publications.

The question is if these are the services and products ReSPA wants to organise and deliver.

Staffing

Starting from a basic structure it is expected that ReSPA will have at least:

- a Director;
- a staff member for financial issues;
- some staff members who will be responsible for the organisation of programmes (programme managers/training managers);
- at least 2 programme assistants;
- a staff member responsible for facilities and logistics;
- a technician;
- a staff member responsible for library, documentation and communication.

So between 9 and 12 staff members.

Secondly, it needs to be clear how ReSPA will deal with man power for cleaning and catering.

A cautious approach is suggested. There needs to be clarity about the budget that can be expected for the costs of the office, etc. that needs to be covered from the contribution of the ReSPA members. For instance, the level of salaries needs to be discussed and agreed.

Following this staffing schedule it is important to have a chapter included on the personnel of ReSPA indicating:

1. Who is working for ReSPA, what are their roles and main tasks and responsibilities;
2. What are their main competences;
These can be derived from the job profiles that are developed for the different positions.
3. How will they be recruited and selected;
Reference can be made to recruiting and selection procedures that have been developed.
4. What is the ReSPA policy on the professional development of their staff members;
How will the staff members keep their knowledge and skills updated and how can it be supported? Those initiatives for innovation and improvement will be made.
5. What is the policy of ReSPA when it concerns the quality of persons that are contracted for the delivery of the activities;
This is an important issue: ReSPA may identify good practitioners but with not well developed teaching skills. ReSPA may attract external trainers who may not be able to represent ReSPA in an appropriate way. ReSPA may attract foreign trainers who may not be well informed about the administrative situation in the region and therefore make a mismatch with their courses.

In this document it may be good to express that these risks are recognised and to describe what policies are developed to reduce these risks.

As it concerns the rights and obligations of the staff members, reference can be made to the staff regulations that are adopted by the Governing Board.

The question is if this is the staff ReSPA foresees to start with.

Structure and processes

Following the mission based on which certain services and products will be delivered; a paragraph will be dedicated to the structure, the work flow process and the main communication.

Starting from this basic structure a number of questions need to be answered:

1. How will this group as mentioned above be organised?
2. Should there be more members added to this group, why, for which tasks and responsibilities and is this affordable?
3. Who is accountable to whom?
4. How are the official communication lines?
5. What should be contracted out like catering, cleaning, gardening or what will ReSPA contract directly?

By considering these questions it is important to realise that ReSPA is a professional organisation where it concerns the core activities which requires a specific way of organising the work and management related to the nature of the organisation.

- Ad. 1. Will the training managers work on the base of division by policy areas, by geographical areas or simply on the division of a number of programmes?
- These divisions all have their benefits and constrains, such as by:
- Policy areas: training managers may work in their own field of expertise, but are not supportive for an integrated approach.
 - Geographical approach: clear who is where responsible, constrain it is fragmented.
 - On programmes: All are working in the same area, however, different people may deal with the same contact.

- Ad. 2. Will ReSPA work with external lectures and trainers? How to make sure that there will be a kind of corporate identity amongst them?
- Ad. 3. To which extend will ReSPA work on a team base? For instance, the training managers together with the Director discussing coordinating and streamlining the ReSPA programmes.
- Ad. 4. Will supportive work be contracted out to other organisations like cleaning, catering, etc.? Is this possible given the local situation, or does ReSPA has to contract these employees. If so, on what conditions and what is the financial impact?

There are some typical points in this paragraph that need to be sorted out with the new Director. Also questions on ownership and use of the hotel need to be clarified

Market and clients

As for this paragraph the questions to focus on are:

- How does ReSPA communicate its unique position to the beneficiaries;
- How will ReSPA make to their beneficiaries visible what they are able to provide;
- How does ReSPA know what they can provide to their beneficiaries.

First of all ReSPA needs to define its market:

Are they working for the central, regional and local government? For public bodies, state agencies?
To which extend are the national training institutes to be considered as a potential customer?

Secondly, within these organisations who can be considered as the target group?

Such as:

Civil servants above a certain level?

Civil servants dealing with EU issues?

Trainers and training managers of the national training institutes?

Is there any priority in terms of organisations and target groups?

Who does ReSPA define as its stakeholders, meaning those contacts that have a certain importance for ReSPA, like for instance:

- HR managers;
- Politicians
- Heads of Departments and public bodies
- Head of training institutes and their respective training managers
- Donors
- International organisations

How does ReSPA makes itself visible to their customers?

Possibilities

- by catalogues
 - publications
 - websites
 - newsletters
 - annual conferences
 - meetings for stakeholders
 - regular contacts with stakeholders
 - annual reports
- etc.

How does ReSPA keep in contact with the market in order to know what is going on and how it can respond to needs that are identified:

This can partly be done through the activities as mentioned under the ways of visibility

And, for instance, by:

- Creating a network with stakeholders and having regular contacts to discuss developments
- and possible contributions from ReSPA
- Opening their website for exchange with the market
- Having follow-up meetings with former participants
- Evaluations
- Organising thematic meetings

In addition, ReSPA can play a leading role as it concerns the introduction of successful developments in public administration and public management. It can also play a role in view of the introduction of developments within the EU.

With regards to a good communication plan we need to discuss and agree on the topics above.

Finances

As for the financial part the main questions to be answered are:

1. What are the fixed costs for ReSPA?
2. What are the variable costs for ReSPA?
3. How will these costs be covered now and in the future?

Ad 1. Without implementing any activity ReSPA will have a number of fixed costs like:

- Salaries
- Rent of premises
- Amortisation
- Licences for software
- Costs for magazines etc.
- Cost for cleaning, maintenance when not included in the rent
- Fixed costs for telephone, fax etc.
- Fixed costs for energy etc (water, gas, electricity)
- Costs for transportation
- Exploitation costs for premises
- Etc. etc.

These are the cost that minimum need to be covered in order not to get a loss.

For some costs sometimes an assumption need to be made in the start based on comparative situations.

Ad 2. ReSPA needs to define here its sources of income like:

- Subsidies
- Special funds
- Donor related programmes
- Etc.

Ad 3. When organising activities a number of costs needs to be taken into account that can vary from activity to activity like:

- Costs for printing
- Mailing
- Telephone
- The costs for contracting experts, trainers lecturers (fees, travel and per diem)
- Documentation
- Catering
- Costs for paper, stationery etc.

Taking both kinds of costs into account a calculation can be made for a manday of training given the goal to be set for a certain number of training days to be achieved.

In the start some of these costs cannot be calculated precisely and assumptions need to be made based on comparative situations.

Important is to have a good overview of costs and income to be expected.

Priorities for the coming period

After having discussed this document and being provided with guidelines from the SC the Secretariat will elaborate a more complete business plan to be submitted for approval to the SC meeting in December 2009.

With regards to the operationalisation of the business plan, the following priorities are foreseen after the ratification of ReSPA:

- Describing profiles of Staff members
- Sorting out management of the hotel etc.
- Recruitment and selection of Staff members
- Implementing Programme of Work 2010
- In cooperation with the new ReSPA Director; drafting market and communication plan, detailing internal procedures, sustainable financial plan