

ZOLTÁN VERES

## EDITORIAL: MANAGING INTANGIBILITY IN A SUCCESSFUL WAY

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 1<sup>st</sup> Issue of Pannon Management Review in the year of 2018, which follows its usual structure. In this issue a really actual topic, namely intangible character of the business and nonbusiness activities has been put into the focus.

In management science research of hard and soft (say: tangible and intangible) success factors has a long history. In the past nearly 30 years also interpretation of the project term has been undergoing through significant changes. Previously by projects frequently big construction projects were meant. The term itself however has got a much more general content. Since the 90's scientific research of projects has been developing in two directions. One is a general approach of the projects, i.e. investigation of those with soft, negligible or even non-interpretable tangible content, the other is the transactional interpretation of the projects. Both approaches are overlapped in the area of the professional service projects. From this the project marketing, as a daughter of interorganizational marketing, was born. If I have to underline the core principle of these latter projects, I can state that comprehension of uncertainty decreasing competences is a business interest.

Based upon a series of interviews among real competences of projects suppliers five factor groups can be distinguished. These groups with their components are as follows:

- 1) Professional competences
  - a) know-how; b) human resource; c) financial; d) technology and tangibles; e) problem solving capacities; f) innovation; g) conflict management; h) project management

- 2) Trustworthiness
  - a) experience; b) credibility; c) financial; d) business ethics; e) authority
- 3) Communication
  - a) skills; b) willingness (to communicate); c) language
- 4) Relational
  - a) network; b) relationship management
- 5) Delegational
  - a) responsibility; b) powers; c) recognition of limits of competence; d) extension of competence

The paper of Nikoletta Tóth-Kaszás, „*An unused opportunity or the way of progression?*”, explores the success factors of a special project category, namely of the cross-border projects in the higher education. She finds that those are the role of the project manager, the consciousness of the project processes, the on the job type knowledge sharing, the competences deriving from the project manager personality, the learned competences of the project manager, his or her external motivation and internal motivation factors. If we disregard differences, i.e. focus on similarities, then we can discover common problematics of the different project approaches. Consequently researchers of projects are able to learn from each other.

As it is in scientific research of project management, also such other areas as e.g. the lean production, a soft, i.e. more abstract approach can help in deeper understanding of the phenomena. And deeper understanding can lead us to better practices. The findings of the authors György Péczely and Darion Liberona draw attention to the soft, cultural side of lean production implementation and give practical advice on methods how to shape and control the cultural aspects of the implementation process to improve the chances of success. In their article „*Elaborating and Validating Unified Lean Culture Model*” they show that lean could be interpreted in different abstraction levels, as basic underlying assumptions, espoused values, methods and tools, giving an interrelated definition for each.

From the interview with Tamás Krämer, managing director of CONSACT Consulting Company Ltd. the Reader can follow the changing focus of the consulting business in Hungary in the past more than 25 years. In the first years of the above period quality management projects were dominating, while nowadays process improvement consultancy has come into the focus. As for the marketable competence of the nearly graduated population the message of the interviewee is that „... if somebody cannot find his/her own area, another very good strategy is to be a generalist ...”

Finally let us have a look into another soft research area. This is nonbusiness sector, where in market terms abstract values are objects of the exchange. Apparently profitability cannot be interpreted, in fact an extended approach of service consumption makes similarities explorable. The article of Dávid Máté Hargitai, „*Stakeholder Attitudes in Hungarian Athletics*”, examines the interest structures of the different stakeholders and the preference structure which can be derived from those interest in a segment of the amateur sport sector. Preference structure is an important question in marketing management, since the boundaries of consumer segments can be determined based on the significant differences in preferences. In the paper it is examined how the sport functions, defined in the literature, appear in the athletics and what differences can be seen. In the research part, it is investigated in a survey, whether the explored dimensions can be used to define the complex sport products, as compared to as specified by the theory.

We do hope that the articles of this issue will induce further research and publications.



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He worked as project manager of numerous international industrial projects in the Mediterranean region (e.g. Greece, Middle East, North Africa) between 1977 and '90. Since 1990, he actively participates in the higher education. Among others he taught at the College for Foreign Trades; at the Ecole Supérieure de Commerce d'Angers and between 2004 and 2009 he was Head of Institute of Business Studies at the University of Szeged. In 2011 he was appointed professor of Marketing at the Budapest Business School (BBS), Hungary, and between 2010 and 2014 he was also Head of Research Centre at BBS. Since 2014 he is Head of Department of Marketing at the Faculty of Business & Economics of the University of Pannonia, Veszprém, Hungary and the editor-in-chief of the *Pannon Management Review*.

Zoltán Veres has had consultancy practice and conducted numerous research projects on services marketing and project marketing. In 2001 and 2002 he was Head of Service Research Department at the multinational GfK Market Research Agency. He is a member of the research group of the European Network for Project Marketing and Systems Selling, Lyon; Advisory Board member of Academy of World Business, Marketing and Management Development, Perth (Australia); member of Comité Científico del Academia Europea de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa (Spain); Advisory Board member of the Nepalese Academy of Management; member of Board of Supervision at Association for Marketing Education and Research, Hungary; Advisory Board member of McMillan & Baneth Management Consulting Agency, Hungary and consultant of Consact Quality Management Ltd., Hungary.

He has nearly 300 scientific publications, including the books of *Introduction to Market Research*, *Foundations of Services Marketing* and *Nonbusiness Marketing*. He has been editor of series to Academy Publishing House (Wolters Kluwer Group), Budapest. Besides Zoltán Veres has been editorial board member of the journals *Revista Internacional de Marketing Público y No Lucrativo* (Spain), *Вестник Красноярского государственного аграрного университета* (Krasnoyarsk, Russian Federation), *Tér-Gazdaság-Ember and Marketing & Menedzsment* (Hungary); member of *Социально-экономический и гуманитарный журнал Красноярского ГАУ*, member of *Journal of Global Strategic Management*, Advisory Board and Review Committee; member of *Asian Journal of Business Research*, Editorial Review Board.