

Seminar „Making Lifelong Learning a Reality“

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Description of the Project „Lernende Region – Landkreis Emmendingen“ Subproject „Course for the Development of Human Resources (PE – Kolleg)“

A: The Network for Education „Lernende Region – Landkreis Emmendingen“

...consists of more than 25 public and private institutions for education, e.g. public schools, adult education centers, the Handwerkskammer Freiburg (crafts' association), the center for education of the Industrie und Handelskammer (chamber/association for industry and commerce) Südlicher Oberrhein, a number of companies, the Bundesagentur für Arbeit (federal agency for employment), the Oberschulamt and the Staatlichen Schulamt Freiburg (offices for public school organization). In 2003, alongside this network, a number of subprojects were developed, conceived, and put into action to forward learning, education, and qualification. One of these subprojects is the PE – Kolleg.

A.1. The Economical Situation:

The Landkreis Emmendingen has a population of approximately 153,000 people. These live in 24 cities and municipalities on an area of 680 square kilometers. The Landkreis thus is one of the smaller ones throughout the state of Baden-Württemberg.

The companies in the Landkreis Emmendingen are mainly smaller and medium-sized enterprises (SME). A statistic done by the IHK (chamber/association for industry and commerce) of a total of 5,000 enterprises, merely 135 employ more than 20 persons. These employ about 13,000 of a workforce total of 41,000 employees in the whole Landkreis.

Another strong pillar of the economy are the 1,600 crafts firms that employ a third of the workforce. These work in the areas of elctrics, metal, construction, or food industry.

In the crafts businesses administrative work and work considering human resources is very often done by the entrepreneurs wife. This means, in many cases there are no persons officially qualified for the job but merely trained on the job by doing it.

A.2. Researching the Requirements:

Large deficits can be observed in offers of further education for executives and employees of medium-sized enterprises in the Landkreis Emmendingen (key qualifications). This was the outcome of a research done in 1999 by the Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft (WFG – Society for the Advancement of Economy) of the Landkreis Emmendingen. A number of some 150 medium-sized enterprises had been questioned about factors of location. The offers of further education for junior employees and possibilities of technology transfer were considered as rather bad. One possible explanation for this can be the missing of universities and Institutions of Research or larger educational institutions in the area. The offers in the nearby city of Freiburg do not seem to make up for these locational disadvantages. The spatial distance is not a large one – but the psychologically felt distance does seem to matter.

A second inquiry was done by the WFG via telephone at more than 50 enterprises in the Landkreis in August 2002. The question centered around further education for employees, the supply of courses and the participation in these offers. It became clear that

- Further job training is a very important issue with larger enterprises (more than 200 employees)
- Most of the enterprises with less than 50 employees do not offer any further job education for their employees

The reasons for this were:

- Shortage of time
- Shortage of money (temporary economic situation)
- No free resources
- No offers at the site of the enterprise, little flexibility of suppliers for education
- High flow of the workforce, executives fear to finance further training in vain
- Employees with higher qualification demand higher wages
- Little or no motivation of employees to participate in further training
- Little or no supply of interesting and business-directed offers of further training

This outcome was confirmed by a vast number of conversations the project manager of the Learning Region Emmendingen had with human resources executives, with the Federal Agency for Employment, and with chambers for commerce.

The findings of a workshop initiated by the WFG in the context of the project pointed in this direction as well. All human resources staff of leading enterprises of the region had been invited. Another workshop in one municipality concurred in its issues.

Besides the research of requirements the aim of these workshops was to find realistic possibilities to forward the supply of appropriate further training in the Landkreis.

The result was the development of the „**Personalentwicklungs – Kolleg**“ (Course for the Development of Human Resources) by the „Lernende Region – Landkreis Emmendingen“ for small and medium-sized enterprises (SME).

These courses or „Kollegs“ attempt to implement practical measures for the development of organization, human resources, for qualification, further job training, and further education. These measures were developed in cooperation with the enterprises and independently of single institutions for education. The overall goal was to bring the SMEs to the market of further education on a medium to long-term perspective and thus enhancing the competitiveness and the employment conditions in the Landkreis.

B. The „Personalentwicklungskolleg“ (PE-Kolleg)

B 1. Concept, Contents, and Program of the Courses

1.) An **initiating event** was organized in cooperation with the Landkreis and Banks of the region. It was set to inform and heighten the awareness of executive and human resource related staff toward the issue. Moreover, the goals of the PE-Kolleg are outlined:

To heighten the competitiveness and employment factors of enterprises via education, optimized enterprise strategy, and enterprise leadership.

2.) The human resource staff participating in a respective „Kolleg“ **preliminary talks/interviews** are held. To grasp the specific situation quickly and effectively, special questionnaires had been developed and sent out.

3.) Using the issues of these preliminary interviews, staff members of different companies with comparable characteristics, interests, and ideas are grouped together.

4.) The resulting groups partake in **5 practically-oriented workshops** (half a day each workshop) about enterprise-related themes. In these workshops the human resource staff members of the respective companies are led to develop working recommendations and possibilities for improvement and implementation of these ideas.

5.) In the companies, actual **working processes are accompanied** (a day each). Help is offered for their implementation. During these, suggestions for further job training is researched.

6.) Two employees from each company can partake in enterprise-/company-related **further job training seminars** (half a day each).

B 2: Status Quo

More than 300 entrepreneurs participated in the **initiating event** in the fall of 2003. In February 2004 the first two courses/Kollegs started, a third will begin in the summer. Besides getting acquainted and building trust, organizing the principles of cooperation and finding dates for the course, the stress of first **workshop** lay in analyzing the findings of the region's economy's requirements in the **preliminary interviews** and fixing the themes for the following workshops. These contain of

Life-long Learning, improvement of job training and further job training, securing future advantages in competition and in detail focus on:

- a.) The employees, their customer orientation and professional as well as social competence. Consciousness for quality is to be improved and each one of them should accept more responsibility, increase their interest in further education and be open to change.
- b.) Leadership of enterprises: ethical questions, visions, basic ideas, and making possible the right style in leading, reaching set goals, and supporting a change of values in the staff.
- c.) Market handling, marketing, general improvement, sale strategies, acquisition, broadening of service, acknowledging customer requirements, presentation, appearance, new customers, activating/improving customer contacts, learn to "not sell via prices"

d.) Customer satisfaction, emotional customer relations, customer directed service, quality, flexibility

Proximity to practical use, creating a feeling of employees for the market/ Customer, exchange of experience, gaining new impulses, and making use of the learned material are viewed as especially important items, basics of the cooperation in the courses/Kollegs.

As a **next step**, the human resources staff members were instructed to inform their employees about the PE – Kolleg and to motivate these to participate actively. In order to do this, they were given different means of help, for example material to conduct staff appraisals. From each company a number of two employees should be sent to the seminars for further job training. Steady information was asked for and the resonance so far has been very good and promising.

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In Charge of the Subproject



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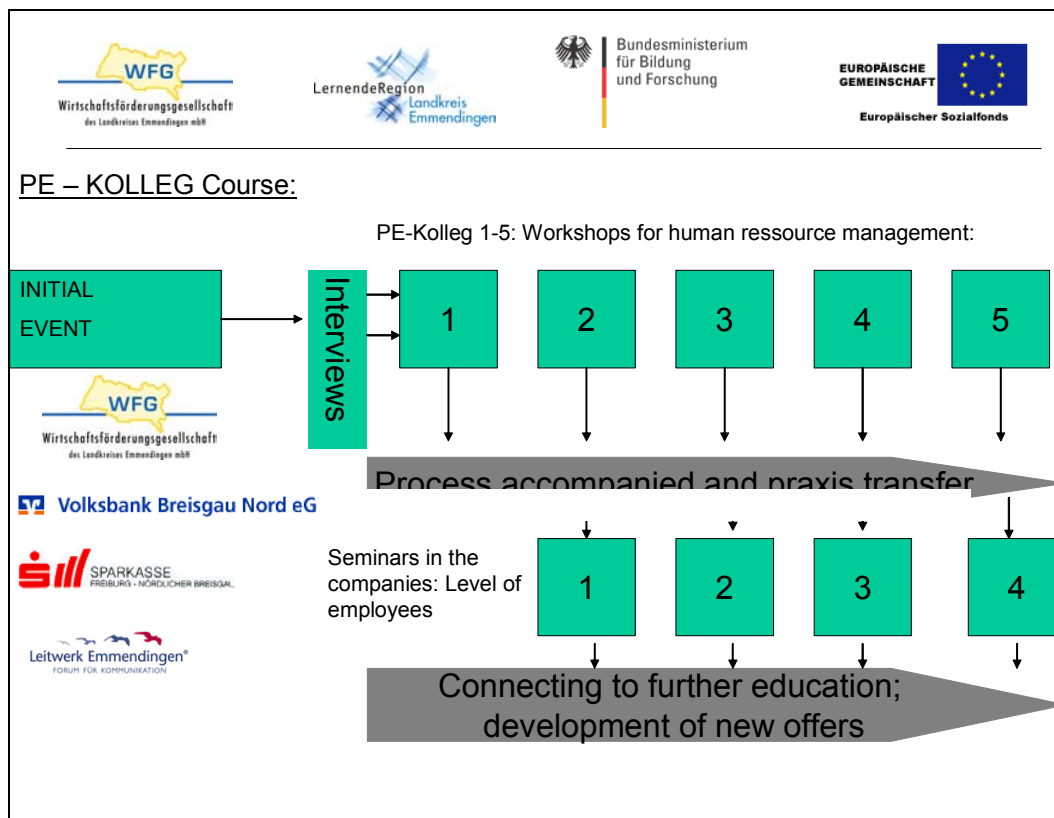


HANDWERKSKAMMER
FREIBURG

C. All in Short:

A course/Kolleg consists of:

- 1.) Preliminary talk/interview / Interview with the human resource management
- 2.) 5 workshops for the human resource management
- 3.) Processes are accompanied on site
- 4.) Further job training seminars for 2 employees



Innovative characteristics:

- Individual and company-specific course of action
- Participants determine the course of action
- Team development and exchange between different and similar enterprises
- Combination of workshops, seminars and processes accompanied
- Acquisition: Through banks and public institutions contact to human resource managers
- Contact to employees through human resource managers
- Everybody in an enterprise is asked to partake, from leadership to employee
- Decentralized and seminars on site
- Different institutions combine to a network to answer to the need and requirements – individual qualification in a group

Goal:

- Bring human resource managers and employees into the further educations market
- Create an atmosphere of innovative education
- Increase employment and competitiveness