

HUMANE

Heads of University Management & Administration Network in Europe

SEMINAR

Universiteit van Amsterdam

Friday 15 to Saturday 16 May 1998

“Management of Change”

Abstracts

On 15-16 May the University of Amsterdam hosted a HUMANE seminar on the subject of “Management of Change”. The main aim of the seminar was to study ways in which European Universities address change; how they recognize the need for change, ways in which they undertake and manage a process of change and finally how they measure the results.

Twenty-five Secretary-Generals from universities in ten European countries participated in the seminar and five speakers from four different countries presented their universities’ experience in the management of change.

The presentation of the *Polytechnic University of Catalunya* (Spain) focused on how to deal with change through strategic management. After a methodological introduction, the speaker analyzed the theoretical tools used by the University to manage strategic planning and change;

the *University of Cardiff* (UK) introduced its own experience of change consisting of closing and creating departments in order to improve its position as a research university on a national scale;

the *Catholic University of Leuven* (Belgium) addressed the issue of change in relation to its new Information Technology system, basing its presentation on Kotler’s theory. According to this theory, in order to achieve change an organization must create a sense of urgency, establish a strong coalition, have a long-term vision, remove the obstacles to vision, communicate the changes, plan for short-time wins and anchor change in the corporate culture;

the *University of Wolverhampton* (UK) stressed the importance of institutional efficiency and effectiveness and how the University had to undertake a major process of change in order to offer outstanding flexibility and accessibility to students; finally

the presentation of the *University of Haute Bretagne* (France) focused on the introduction of the euro as a source of change and how universities must approach the new currency.

After every presentation, participants had time to discuss and compare/exchange their views, and this led to lively debate. The seminar also allowed for extensive networking among the members and familiarization with the aims of HUMANE and its potential for future development.

The University had arranged an interesting social programme for Saturday evening: this allowed the participants to socialize while discovering the beauties of Amsterdam on a canal boat or while enjoying van Gogh's paintings.

Management of Change Through Strategic Management

Dr. Francesc Sola i Busquets, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (ES)

Abstract

1. UPC Background records.
2. Why a Strategic Plan?
3. SWOT analysis.
4. Action Plan: quality as an end.
5. The Management of Change.
6. Links between planning and allocation of resources: Contract-Programme.
7. "Learned lessons".

Introduction

From the seventies to the present time the environment of the university and of higher education in general has undergone some highly significant changes: changes of a demographic and financial nature, changes in social demands, changes in legitimacy and greater national and international competitiveness, amongst others. These changes obviously have a direct effect on the management, organisation and administration systems of higher education institutions, and on the definition and implementation of government policies on universities. Current systems of management, organisation and administration of universities have therefore often become less effective and operative. Current models of university organisation and administration were conceived to respond to a far simpler and more stable environment than the one that seems to prevail in today's socially and economically advanced societies. The milieu requires strategic management of higher education institutions and quality and adaptation of university services. It is therefore essential to determine objectives, make them known to society and excel more and more in the quality and adaptation of the university service.

To face up to the challenge involved by this new social and economic environment and attempt to supply appropriate answers to it, some public institutions have been promoting particular endeavours over the last few years: processes of change are being created, improvements in quality and new management, administration and organisation systems that seek to increase organisations' levels of effectiveness and efficiency and the adaptation and quality of services. The university has not been unaware of these initiatives, though in the Spanish case there have only been some praiseworthy but still timid and experimental projects. Some examples of these endeavours worthy of mention are the processes for institutional assessment, quality management and improvement of quality and the strategic planning of university institutions.

Formulation of the problem

This paper aims to analyse how feasible the application of strategic management and planning systems is in higher education institutions, and its interrelation with a structure of university quality management put at society's service. An attempt is made to determine the constraints, benefits and requisites of the practical application of these systems of strategic management by analysing the experience of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC, Barcelona, Spain), and the phases of design, implementation and assessment of the strategic planning process.

Approach and methodology

To carry out this analysis the approach used is an in-depth study of the experience of strategic planning and quality management at the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya. From the analysis of this case we attempt to draw conclusions of interest as regards the feasibility of the application of management systems and strategic planning in universities, their determining factors, requirements and possible benefits.

The Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya has over the last four years undertaken a comprehensive experiment in the strategic planning of the institution. There has thus been institutional planning, planning of the University's different sectorial policies (teaching, research, services, staff, international relationships, infrastructures, and so on) and there is at the present time a process under way for the strategic planning of the University's teaching, research and service units, from the basis of an integrated perspective of the activities of these units and starting from their own proposal. The

budgetary process is also being linked up with the creation and application of each of the strategic plans of the University's structural units.

UPC has furthermore been fully integrated in the institutional planning processes promoted by the Council of Universities and the Catalan Agency for the Quality of the University System, processes that supply feedback for the process of planning the teaching, research and service units of the University, and which form the University's quality system along with the execution stages of these plans.

The process culminated in 1997 with the signing of a contract- programme for the 1997-2000 period by the Universitat Politecnica de Catalunya and the Regional Government of Catalonia that determines, according to the University's strategic planning, U PC's objectives for this period in its spheres of work, its assessment system and its connection with ordinary University financing. It is, once again, a completely novel experiment in the Spanish field. This agreement provides for making these general objectives material through the different structural units of U PC and its own planning for this period.

Results and conclusions

After four years, the Universitat Politecnica de Catalunya has plan at an institutional level that is developed in different sectorial plans and through the planning of its units (in 1998 over 50% of these are intended to be completed). This plan is supported by an assessment process and is fully integrated with the processes of resource assignment. These are the results.

Some initial conclusions from the experience should be pointed out. Strategic Planning is not an end in itself, and the important thing is the aim being pursued: to guide the institution towards improving quality. For this purpose it is essential for planning to be part of a complete system of quality improvement that integrates resource assignment, the measures to go along with execution and later assessment.

In an organisation like that of the Spanish university, with a complex organisational architecture, containing different units with high decision-making autonomy, strategic planning is of use as an instrument for cohesion and a tool that harmonises intentions to move forward together in the same direction. This might well be one of the biggest benefits.

Closing a department at the University of Cardiff

Restructuring and Reshaping: Closing and Creating Departments at the University of Cardiff

Mrs. Louise Casella, University of Cardiff (UK)

Abstract

The University of Cardiff was created in 1988 from the merger of two previous and well established university institutions in Cardiff, dating back to the late 19th century. The first 5 years of the "new" University (1988-92) were essentially a period of consolidation, securing the University's financial future and establishing a solid base for future developments. The second 5 years (1993-98) have been a period of considerable growth and change at the University, with the closure of one school, four major mergers to create new larger Schools, and the "de-merger" of one School to form two new departments. Using the Cardiff experience as a case study, the session will focus on success factors for effecting change in University organisations, the role of a strongly articulated and shared "Mission" and the value of good internal and external communication strategies.

In 1992-93 the University reviewed its Mission, Aims and Objectives for the next ten years and adopted the objective of securing a place in the top twelve UK research universities by 2003. It should be noted that at the time of adopting this objective the results of the 1992 UK Research Assessment Exercise had ranked Cardiff 35th of all 102 participating UK universities. In October 1993 a new Vice Chancellor took up post and provided the leadership and impetus to pursue this objective with vigour. All major decisions taken in Cardiff from 1993 onwards were taken against the background of the over riding objective to improve research performance throughout the University, and the organisation and shape of the University in terms of its Schools and its supporting functions, were examined critically to this end.

Management and responsibility at the University of Cardiff is highly devolved. Schools are the resource-holding bodies. Heads of Schools hold considerable power, and are responsible directly to Council (the University's governing body) for the proper execution of their duties. There is no major role for faculties at Cardiff. The system is thus a two-tier one-central supporting functions (the Vice Chancellor and Pro- Vice Chancellors, the information services, the administration) and the Schools. The decisions to close, merge or create Schools are therefore major undertakings with considerable consequential effects.

The session will therefore examine both the process and arguments behind decisions to restructure and the range of issues that must be addressed if the restructuring is to be successful.

Reference scheme for managing change in universities: reorganising the K. U .Leuven administration around a new management information system

Prof. Karel Tavernier, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (BE)

Abstract

Against the principles for change management developed by the management author Prof. Kotler a case of a mayor change in the administrative "informatica" organisation at K. U .Leuven will be discussed. Starting from a critical article in the university campus journal a process has been set into

motion which finally not only will change the "I.T." system for the administration but also the whole administrative organisation of the university. From a system serving mainly the central administration it will become a radically customer driven system.

The change involves a mayor budget decision of 220 MIO Belgian Francs, 6 new positions of information architects, 4 additional I.T.-experts and 3 additional staff members. All ingredients of the Kotler view on change are present: create a sense of urgency, establish a strong enough coalition, have a long term vision, remove the obstacles to vision, communicate the changes, plan for short time wins, anchor the change in the corporate culture.

Reorganising the students registration function

Mr. J on Baldwin, University of Wolverhampton (UK)

Abstract

The funding position with respect to UK Universities has been in steady decline for a number of years now. Concurrently, moves towards a mass system of higher education have continued and have led to the further development of modular structures based on the principles of credit accumulation and transfer. A change of Government in May 1997 has provided further encouragement for such moves with recent national reports (Dearing[1], Kennedy[2] and Frye[3]) all encouraging flexible patterns of growth.

In this context, the importance of institutional efficiency and effectiveness has been heightened and so traditional demarcations between "academic" and "administrator" have come sharply into focus. In truth, many academics have, over the years, taken on traditional administrative roles and have been rewarded (in promotional terms) for this. In a climate where the importance of doing more with less prevails, such a situation cannot, logically, be permitted to continue. Essentially, academics have to be freed from the "burden" of administration which must in turn be taken on by a cadre of professional (administrative) staff.

The paper will use this context to explore a major organizational change at the University of Wolverhampton in 1996/97. The University has some 24.000 students, 5 geographically distant Campuses and 2.500 staff. It has a modular curriculum and a long history of offering flexibility and accessibility to students. Prior to 1996, student administration was largely devoted to 4 Faculties, each comprising 3 or 4 Academic Schools (e.g. a Faculty of Science and Technology comprised the Schools of Applied Sciences, Engineering and the Built Environment, Computing and Information Technology and Health Sciences). Such a devotion permitted major variation in terms of the type and levels of service provided for students. In a modular institution with many cross-school programmes, this was not acceptable.

To overcome this "problem" a University Registry was created with the aim of managing all aspects of the student life-cycle from the point of enquiry to the point of exit from the institution. Local Campus Registry Services were established in order to ensure a uniformity of service and seconded academics working for the Registrar were appointed to begin to tackle those difficult para-academic areas around (e.g.) the admission of students and their subsequent counseling with respect to programme choice.

The change itself involved some 160 staff directly and, perhaps more importantly, implied and sponsored a changed culture with respect to how, precisely, the institution was managed. One year on from the “going live” date, things are beginning to bed-in and the session allowed us to explore both successes and continuing tensions.

Introducing the EURO in the university environment

Ms. Andrée Turuban Université de Haute Bretagne, Rennes II (FR)

I The Changeover tot the EURO

1) The calendar of the changeover to the single currency

- - Phase A: The launch of EMU, 1-3 May: decision about the "first wave" of EMU entrants; launch of the European Central Bank
- - Phase B: The transition period, from 1/1/1999 to 31/12/2001, the effective launch of EMU
- - Phase C: The generalization of the single currency, from 1/12/2002 to 1/7/2002

2) The currency: the coins and notes. The euro conversation rate.

3) The preparation of public institutions and administrations to the changeover to the euro.

II Practical Approach to the effective Management of the Introduction of the EURO in a University

The key steps to manage the changeover:

1) The global strategy:

- Determine the scope of the euro project
- Designate a project manager
- Identify the different issues
- Define the changeover plan
- Ensure project implementation

2) Most functions of the university are interested in the changeover to the euro:

a) "Marketing"

- Customer service: invoicing in euros
- Pricing, adaptation of price references

b) The supply chain: Procurement and logistics

- Broadening the supplier base
- Payment conditions
- Logistics

But the functions mainly involved are:

c) Financing

- Treasury management
- Access to lower-cost financing

d) Accounting, taxation, legal issues

- No dual currency accounting
- Conversion of data
- Filing requirements
- Gains and losses
- Depreciation of euro investments
- Rounding, thresholds
- Continuity of contracts

e) The Information Technology department

- Reviewing information systems
- Adapting to the euro while fulfilling maintenance needs: Hardware; Software
- An opportunity to improve efficiency
- Identifying external resources

[1] Higher Education in the Learning Society, Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education.

[2] Learning Works. Report of the Further Education Funding Council Committee on Widening Participation.

[3] Learning for the Twenty-First Century. First Report of the National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning.