

Human Capital Development in the Printing Industry: Investigation in Sector-Oriented Approaches

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Abstract

drupa 2024, has proved to be the world's most important printing technology exhibition, being the only one of its kind in the world, showcasing developments and innovations of all kinds for the printing industry. What is more, drupa offered a platform for networking, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration, engaging with industry experts, staying updated on trends and developments, and exchanging ideas with fellow professionals, can foster innovation and drive the industry forward. The print-media education and research world, has actively participated at drupa, via the International Circle and HELGRAMED booth at the dna-drupa next age Hall.

The main question - request from the hundreds of visitors to the IC and HELGRAMED booth, was the search for people for employment for companies in the sector, revealing the acknowledged shortage of people to staff the printing and packaging sectors, and indeed at all levels.

This need is now particularly critical, especially with the implementation of numerous innovations in design, management and production in printing and packaging. At the same time, it reveals an obvious weakness in the education and training of people to staff the graphic arts, printing and packaging sectors. Furthermore, it shows that in most cases, the existing education and training formations, are not sufficient to meet the needs for qualified people in the above-mentioned sectors.

It is true that print media education, is constantly evolving towards all directions and dimensions in the last decades. One could observe that all education and training establishments, from professional and secondary education up to the postgraduate levels, struggle to adapt with all kinds of developments and changes in the industry with new learning methods, such as blended and distance learning. What dominates, is the in-house training and specific oriented seminars on print-media systems, machines and technologies in general.

Previous research conducted, provide evidence that players in the education domain, ranging from ministries and industrial sectors to education development state organizations, *do create* study programs and courses, curricula and learning outcomes. These are principally based on different education levels, which continues to be the dominating process comprising a rather traditional mindset in education design. This distinction is mainly expressed in the form of a clear separation between secondary and tertiary education levels.

Hence, such approaches might not be convenient anymore, in the rapidly evolving society and the new requirements for proper education design. Additionally, in many cases, this traditional approach of education design based on different levels, might not be appropriate anymore, for specific sectors and fields, such as the print-media and packaging sectors. Such procedures are raising walls for the mobility

of people between education, training and the world of work, between theory and practice and among professional - and scientific domains.

As it has been seen at drupa 2024, evolution in the industry, requires new-alternative approaches and a new mindset, oriented on the holistic development of people in the printing and packaging industry.

This paper investigates existing procedures towards sector-oriented activities for the development of people in the printing industry. In particular the *sectoral* approach for the development of people is discussed, consisted mainly by the establishment of sector councils, bodies/authorities for education design formed by the Social partners organizations / associations and initiatives to attract young people for study and employment in the printing industry. Therefore,

The paper concludes by discussing an alternative approach for people in the printing industry, taking under consideration the full needs and requirements of a sector regarding education and training required.

This approach, suggest a new, sector-based holistic strategy for all people related with the sector and the industry. The most prominent difference of this holistic approach from the traditional settings is that it places people in the foreground; thus it is anthropocentric, for the holistic development of people in the sector, no matter their relationship or position, and taking under consideration the needs and requirements of the print-media sector at all levels.

Keywords: drupa 2024, people and print, education and training, sector-oriented development of people, sector councils.