

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRUST IN ENTERPRISES AND BETTER SOCIETY HEALTH

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Abstract: In this article we provide a tool that can help humankind to find the best way towards better economic and social conditions for society's health, beginning with enterprise level change decision. We introduce the strategy of enterprises' credibility, and propose to use it for development of enterprises' social responsibility and ethics in a broader sense. The strategy of enterprises' credibility could be a practical implementation tool for enterprises' systems, i.e. appropriate holistic behaviour and sustainable development towards social responsibility and enterprises' ethics.

Keywords: enterprise governance, enterprise ethics, credibility, social responsibility, strategic management.

DRUŽBENA ODGOVORNOST ZA ZAUPANJE V PODJETJA IN BOLJŠE ZDRAVJE DRUŽBE

Povzetek: V članku predstavljamo orodje, ki lahko človeški družbi pomaga najti pravo pot do boljših ekonomskih in družbenih pogojev, za njeno zdravje. Izhajamo iz odločitve o spremembi na ravni politike podjetja. Predstavljamo strategijo verodostojnosti podjetja ter predlagamo njeno uporabo za razvoj družbene odgovornosti in etike podjetja. Strategija verodostojnosti podjetja je lahko praktično orodje za implementacijo primernega holističnega vedenja in trajnostnega razvoja podjetja v smeri družbene odgovornosti in etike podjetja.

Ključne besede: upravljanje podjetja, etika podjetja, verodostojnost, družbena odgovornost, strateški management.

1 Introduction

Decades of competing with high quality, external expression of innovations, as well as aging population and the growth of affluence, caused that the old needs no longer exist; so the old production less and less responds to new needs. Therefore, enterprises need to innovate their enterprise policy (Šarotar-Žižek et al. 2011; Štrukelj et al. 2012; Štrukelj, Mulej 2011c). We especially want to point out that primarily micro, small and medium-sized enterprises that in the EU cover 99% of all enterprises (see MSP 2010), usually don't plan the long-term enterprise development, thus their enterprise policy is not recorded. These enterprises should be aware of their own shortcomings, which can be repaired through appropriate education on the importance of planning the development of the enterprise. Not only, but also because of the crisis 2008-, we believe that enterprises should take care of innovation in its development (in the direction of more SR). Therefore, among the innovation processes, in our research finding, the most important are innovation in governance and management process (see Šarotar-Žižek et al. 2011; Štrukelj et al. 2012; Štrukelj Mulej 2011c); in it the innovation in governance, which determines the management of the enterprise, is the most important. The enterprise governance is closely linked to the decision to adopt opportunistic or responsible, sustainable enterprise policy, and therefore also the corporate social responsibility (see, e.g., Gottschalk, 2011).

To succeed enterprises must in the modern economic situation gain enterprise stakeholders' trust and trustworthiness. Wishing to help to develop a better enterprise stakeholder quality of life, happiness, and well-being we would like to show selected instruments for achieving the trust in enterprise business. This can be achieved with ethical behaviour, which according to the strategy of credibility includes three interdependent aspects: (1) the

transfer of the requisite information, (2) innovation, and (3) responsibility of the enterprise and its stakeholders in every sense of the word. We introduce them in the Chapter 2. The implementation of the strategy of credibility must result from the responsible enterprise policy directions, which must be consistent with the development policies of those social and business environments in which the enterprise operates. Often, enterprise needs the innovation of its enterprise policy to achieve its strategy of credibility. Thus we introduce enterprise policy innovation in the Chapter 3 and add some concluding remarks in the Chapter 4.

2 The strategy of enterprises' credibility

The current problems and economic/financial/values' crisis crucially depend on perception of decisive persons what should be included in the considered cost, effort, benefit, time horizon, tackled circles of persons, etc. If this perception is narrow-minded rather than requisitely holistic, one-sidedness of decisions results, and failures of processes' outcomes are hardly avoidable. Enterprise is a part of its social environment and enterprise ethics is changing from instrument for profit making into precondition for it. Hence, the enterprise's long-term survival depends on efficiency, effectiveness and ethical behaviour, which matches ISO 26000 7 principles: 1. accountability, 2. transparency, 3. ethical behaviour, 4. respect for stakeholder interests, 5. respect for the rule of law, 6. respect for international norms of behaviour, and 7. respect for human rights (ISO 2010: 10–14). Ethical behaviour is defined in it as one's values of honesty, equity and integrity, i.e.: concern for people, and the environment and commitment to address the impact of its activities and decisions on stakeholders' interests. Thus the enterprise ethics and resulting enterprise policy needs to be changed, actually to be innovated in order to provide more benefit. Enterprise policy is influenced by enterprise VCEN and resulting interests, strengths/weaknesses, opportunities/threats, and existing enterprise policy (compare Belak, Ja., Duh, 2012). Wishing better enterprise stakeholder quality of life, happiness, and well-being we would like to show selected instrument for achieving their trust in enterprise business that can be used all over the world. This is why in the continuation of the paper enterprise credibility as a part of enterprise's ethical behaviour (also VCEN determinants influencing enterprise policy) is examined.

Thommen (1996 and 2003) has developed a strategy of enterprise credibility that helps enterprises' owners and managers to achieve more credibility: to make enterprise stakeholders believe and trust. Credibility is found a prerequisite for enterprise ethics, because the enterprise without credibility cannot realize modern ethics (in ISO 26000 terms).

Enterprise ethics cannot be realized without the ethical behaviour of all enterprise stakeholders because the enterprise credibility is confirmed in its environment! Thommen (1996: 43–45 in Belak, Ja. 2002: 101) considered credibility as enterprises' top leading guideline. He therefore proposes to enterprises to consciously actively implement strategy of credibility, which is based on a communicative, responsible and innovative behaviour. All three components of the enterprises' strategy of credibility are highly interdependent and can only interdependently lead toward the desired goal – the credibility, and thus also to the enterprise ethics (Table 1).

Communicative behaviour (Thommen 1996: 792–793 in Belak, Ja. 2002: 102) in the context of enterprise credibility strategy generally means that the various groups that set out the requirements are perceived as a communication business partners. These groups are for enterprise not only recipients, but also transmitters of information. Therefore enterprises need also to observe and recognize the values and needs of their environments. These values are not constant. From the enterprises' viewpoint public relations are in the foreground in the phase of the exchange of information; then enterprises try to explain their behaviour. To attain requisite holism and SR, the enterprise should take into account all essential external stakeholders, and do it ethically (in ISO 26000 terms). We also suggest that enterprises pay close attention also to their internal stakeholders, with which one also must establish an appropriate, i.e. ethical and credible communicative behaviour.

Responsible behaviour: "Being responsible" (Thommen 1996: 792–793 in Belak, Ja. 2002: 103) includes one's practice "answer, give answers," and thereby assume the consequences of one's action and behaviour. The author proposes a liability that is imposed on enterprise because of its role in its society/-ies, the responsibility to remove the damage caused, and ability of responsibility – to prevent (future) damage, if enterprise is (was) capable of solving a problem. Hence, in practice, the enterprise shall take into account all (internal and external) stakeholders, be socially responsible, and maintain the existing civilization and the planet Earth.

Innovative behaviour: the ethical and entrepreneurial behaviours are in accordance with each other, sometimes even mutually preconditioned (Thommen 1996: 792–793 in Belak, Ja. 2002: 104), because an entrepreneurial behaviour primarily means innovativeness. This is precisely what specifically requires also ethical behaviour. Namely, one must find better solutions to the existing problems and good solutions to new problems for one's partners to adopt. Innovative and creative thinking is hence, according to the author, prerequisite for ethical behaviour. He points out that we need to consider that innovation are not necessarily new in terms of the overall economy, but they can be new only in terms of single users. He distinguishes three types of innovation: product

innovation, process innovation, and social innovation. Please note that it is necessary to innovate all the processes of the enterprise (see Štrukelj et al., 2012); we should also not forget that the enterprise may have influence on the innovation of the enterprise (internal and external) stakeholders' values and societal values (and, consequently, of culture, ethics, and norms; see Potočan, Mulej, 2007; to VCEN we and H for habits); also that the enterprise should during its innovative behaviour promote and take into account the entire invention-innovation-diffusion process (IIDP process) (see Mulej et al., 2013).

Table 1: The strategy of enterprises' credibility

Interdependent elements of the strategy of enterprises' credibility
Communicative behaviour: communication through public relations (and other enterprise external stakeholders by groups of enterprises' external stakeholders*) • the behaviour of each employee – the informant must be credible • through dialogue we find the desired information of the public (and other enterprises' external stakeholders by groups of enterprises' external stakeholders*), and properly inform them • openly informing of the public (and other enterprises' external stakeholders by groups of enterprises' external stakeholders*) with complete information and with any information • accept that the public opinion (and other enterprise external stakeholders by groups of enterprises' external stakeholders*) may differ from the opinions and values of the enterprise
Communicative behaviour: communication relationships with internal enterprise stakeholders (internal communication between different groups of internal enterprises' stakeholders) * • the behaviour of each employee – the informant (internal enterprise stakeholder) must be credible/trustworthy* • through dialogue we find the desired information and properly inform* • openly informing of all enterprise internal stakeholders with complete information and with any information* • accept that the opinion of some internal enterprise stakeholders may differ from the opinion of other internal enterprises' stakeholders, as well as from the opinions and values of the enterprise*
Responsible behaviour (towards all enterprises' stakeholders, society and the planet Earth*) • liability resulting from the (importance and*) role of enterprise in society (in terms of perceptions of both internal and external enterprises' stakeholders*) • causal responsibility for all the problems that the enterprises (directly and/or indirectly*) have caused (with their information*, activities and/or products and services*) • capability of responsibility for any circumstances in which the enterprise is able to offer a solution to the problem • responsibility to the enterprise as an institution of interest linking people and property*
Innovative behaviour (small and radical innovation*, non-technological and technological innovation*) • quantity, quality, time, price (value)* and/or spatial innovation of products and/or services • innovation of processes in the process of creating of (products, services, financial and/or other) outputs [authors see this as innovation of basic realization process] • innovation of processes: governance/management process, information (and the basic realization) process* • social innovation concerning the humans (especially in the governance/management and organizational enterprise system) • innovation of enterprise values (of enterprise internal and external stakeholders) and society values*

Legend: *: Authors contribution.

Source: Adapted from Thommen 2003, supplemented with our own findings; own expose/design.

Using enterprise ethics, all inhabitants of planet Earth can enjoy social responsibility (SR) and a better quality of life. The competitive ability of enterprises and countries, and better quality of life of citizens, is influenced also by innovative, creative, lateral, and entrepreneurial thinking that is a part of the personality traits of each person, but they can also be stimulated and developed (see, e.g., De Bono, 2005; Boynton et al., 2011); this can be especially effective when governors, managers and co-workers support and apply such thinking, innovating it toward more SR-ethics quoted above.

Since the values, culture, ethics, norms, and habits (VCENH) of every individual person influence VCENH of others, enterprise's VCENH, and general VCENH of the county and country in which they live, influence also VCENH of the neighbour countries, their enterprises, and inhabitants. Consecutive conclusion is that enterprise ethics (example) that can be achieved through the strategy of credibility that can thus be transferable cross-border. But for that enterprise policy innovation is needed (Chapter 3).

3 Enterprise credibility and enterprise governance

The differences in enterprises' policies result from differences in (stockholders') VCEN and resulting interests. According to Belak, Ja. (2002: 76) the enterprise policy defines basis, general and long-term enterprise characteristics. It contains mission, purpose and basic goals of an enterprise with global determination concerning resources, processes and outcomes. We believe that enterprise policy must be oriented towards enterprise's responsible behaviour. Responsible enterprise policy (see Bleicher, 2004, also Belak, Ja., 2002: 113) is many-sided, objective-oriented into implementation of all stakeholders' interests, with high level of social responsibility consideration and with long-term developmental attitude, which requires entrepreneurial innovative search of new opportunities. One considers the requirements of an enterprise policy fulfilled (see: Belak, Ja. 2002: 132), when they are realised at the level of strategic management as well. Strategies and related structures are crucial instruments for business policy implementation. In this way the modes of enterprise policy realisation are determined. This is why the enterprise policy implementation is the central task of top management and that's why it directly belongs into the process of strategic and indirectly into the process of operational management.

As pointed out by most of the models of the integral management, every enterprise should be aware of (its) values, culture, ethics and norms (VCEN; about VCEN see Potočan, Mulej, 2007), itself (its characteristics), and the environment in which it is embedded (Belak, Ja., Duh, 2012). This awareness of owners and managers leads toward their enterprise policy innovation, latter resulting in search for its development potential. To make this possible, it is also necessary to constantly innovate research starting-points and this, as shown in the last crisis in 2008-, especially with a focus on the importance of VCEN. We believe that the enterprise policy must be oriented toward the (society's, i.e. all humans) responsible behaviour (see Belak, Ja. 2002: 110–113). Lack of social responsibility SR-ethics, systems, i.e. appropriate holistic behaviour and sustainable development are clearly important (economic) factors that caused the (socio-economic) global crisis 2008-. Therefore, we suggest the SR of enterprises, other organizations, and every individual incorporate into personal VCEN of influencing people, enterprise vision, enterprise policy, strategies and business operations.

The principle of responsible enterprise policy is directed towards attaining of appropriate requisitely holistic interests of all enterprise participants/stakeholders, long-term development, and economic and socially responsible business orientation, improving people's lives, their ethics of interdependence, protecting the earth, wisdom and creativity. Such factors must be learned and adapted so that they become our VCEN, if we want to be able to successfully overcome the crisis of 2008- (see Mulej et al., 2010) and other crises/problems linked-up with business excellence (the same source: 2–3); better: VCENH. Therefore, also enterprise policy of SR must be regularly innovated. With innovating of VCENH- based general and long-term enterprise policy, one defines the overriding interest of its important internal and external participants/stakeholders. They should rethink their long-term interests and their consequences in order to cope with their own readiness, willingness and ability to innovate their long-term interests in the direction of responsible, non-destructive promoting/protecting of the interests of all Earth inhabitants. They should always let the common and long-term interests prevail! Enterprises should constantly innovate their developmental policy/direction (such as exploitation of the opportunities arising from the development of the enterprise's environment), its economic policy/direction (with the aspiration to economic policy supporting responsibility to all of the world's population) and social policy/direction (in the direction toward the ecological and otherwise socially responsible goals; also toward the social needs of individuals taken into consideration) (cf. Bleicher, 2004).

Research results and the fact that enterprise policy is widely viewed as directly realized at the level of strategic management, and indirectly at the level of implementation management (and actually in a basic realization process) (cf. Belak, Ja., 2002) suggest that there is in addition to the need to innovate the enterprise policy (therefore corporate governance) also a need to innovate its management. This forces enterprises into their development. When planning the development of enterprises in which people spend one third and up to half of their active, working-age part of life, in our view and experience "soft" variables (VCENH) will play an increasingly important role. Due to changes in interests, which reflect a change of VCENH, and lead to a less expected behaviour of important participants/stakeholders, also the general criteria for determining whether an individual enterprise policy is suitable are changing (ranging from opportunistic to socially responsible enterprise policy; see, e.g. Štrukelj et al., 2012). Because people – individuals, businesses and society as a whole – are increasingly developing positive values, this is also reflected in increasingly responsible enterprise policies.

4 Conclusions

Policy makers struggle with ways to address new economic challenges in preparing their economies to succeed in the future economy, characterized by growing uncertainty. In a difficult global economic environment it is important that the country/region/EU etc. has laid a solid foundation to support socio-economic growth and development, including competitiveness and quality of life of all/most residents. All widely successful appeals to the enterprise ethics, sustainable development, and individual/corporate social responsibility (SR) confirm this truth (Slovenian recent examples: Hrast et al., 2013; Mulej and Hrast, ed., 2010; etc.; International examples: the standard 26000 by ISO, 2010; EU, 2011; and the first index of well-being measurement, called "Your Better Life Index" (OECD, see YBLICN, 2011); etc.; about sustainable development, see Epstein, 2010; Madu and Kuei, 2012; Wagner, 2010; see also Beyond GDP, 2011; Blanchflower, Oswald, 2011; Helliwell et al., 2012; Judge, Kammayer-Mueller, 2011; NEF, 2009; Revkin, 2005; Stiglitz et al., 2009; Wu, Wu, 2010). All of this and much more will have to be taken into account, when establishing new socio-economic arrangements. This includes a new, requisitely holistic, way of measuring social and economic development, which will require even more creativity and innovation, including innovation in the context of corporate governance – enterprise policy innovation (see, e.g.: Duh, Štrukelj, 2011; Šarotar-Žižek et al., 2011; Štrukelj et al., 2012).

The enterprise ethics is always related to people and their economic behaviour. Thus, engagement with SR-ethics must be a part of socially and else-how responsible enterprise policy, strategies and activities; the same is valid also for governmental organisations or non-governmental organizations, including social responsibility, supporting RH of enterprise behaviour, innovation of habits/VCEN, not only technology, and RH of responsibility of owners (shareholders) and managers to all stakeholders, including co-workers and environment, and vice versa (Mulej et al., 2013).

We also want to draw attention to the still very up-to-date Mulej proposal to create Business-Innovation Agency of Slovenia (Mulej, 2006: 52–55), which would with no doubt significantly contribute to the achievement of the proposed enterprise policy innovation development, and would also significantly help to improve the competitiveness of Slovenia. In this way the support to innovation would be more proactive and oriented to the future, because the proposed agency could attain requisite wholeness in dealing with the challenges of future development that base on integration of various spheres / areas and can be overcome successfully only through entrepreneurship based on non-technological and technological innovation. Such an agency could work to enable offensive innovation policy with innovation-specific initiatives to strengthen existing measures. Unfortunately, we do not have space to cover a proposal on how to create innovative regions (Wilson III., 2012), as for example: Bangalore in India, Silicon Valley in California, the new high-tech centres in Shanghai, Route 128 in Boston, Digital Media City in Seoul, biotech corridors in the vicinity of Washington or pharmaceutical region near Basel in Switzerland. We can only point to them and remark that they promote enterprise policy innovation.

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