

ORGANIZING AND BUILDING A VACATION OF TEAM BUILDING A NEW CHALLENGE FOR THE ROMANIAN TOURISM

*Cornelia Elena Tureac and Anca Gabriela Turtureanu**

Abstract

The authors of this paper are proposing themselves to highlight the obvious benefits of team building activities. Many managers have understood that, in addition to the financial motivation, the employees considers and just a simple recognition of the merits not only from the managerial part but also from the colleagues. The benefits of this activities isn't only business for hotels and for the conference organizers or team buildings, but on them are based on and the interfacing services, industries such as aviation or of the tourism agencies, as well as smaller businesses as that of car rental.

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1. Introduction

If some time ago only the big companies wanted a team building, today more Romanian companies are interested in these activities.

The managers know that people are giving value to the company and if these people are managing to become a team then the success is inevitable.

These companies are wishing to organize team buildings when the employees are bored or are going in different directions, when the objectives aren't accomplished, when the company is joining with another (fusion), when is being desired the breaking of the daily routine and energizing the employees.

Each manager is aware of the need to motivate the employees, both financial and non-financial. Motivating the employees, they will work more efficiently, in a pleasant environment, all these leading to increased business productivity, a higher quality products/ the company services. Also, the managers know how important it is for the employees to form a consolidated and efficient team. [Miller, (2006)], One of the best ways of non financial methods to motivate the employees is the team building.

* Cornelia Elena Tureac is Associate Professor at the "Danubius" University Galati, Romania, 3 Galati Boulevard, 800654 Romania, tureaccornelia@univ-danubius.ro.

Anca Gabriela Turtureanu is Associate Professor at the "Danubius" University Galati, Romania, 3 Galati Boulevard, 800654 Romania, ancaturtureanu@univ-danubius.ro.

2. The role and importance of the team building

The team building is important because it isn't made to get into high spirits the employees, but to find the strengths of each team member, helping them to integrate, to discover their commonalities, positively affecting the team morale and helping to perform more efficiently, the team results being thus better. In fact, the team building is managing in a relatively short time to integrate a team, its members to have faith in the values of the other members, they starting to get linked more efficiently.

A team building is and a solution to resolve some internal problems of a company an can be designed with a specific purpose: either to solve various problems occurring in the communication within a company or to help the people to know each other (in the case of a fusion or of a takeover of a company). [Tureac, (2007)],

In addition to the benefits that are brought to the company, the team building has advantages for employee such as:

- Encourages the commitment towards the team;
- Is forming and cultivating the skills of planning and organization;
- Promotes the active learning trough innovation;
- Is cultivating the leadership, adaptability and creativity;
- Stimulates solving the problems and the strategic thinking

The psychologists believe that team building has as mainly purpose that the formal relation between the employees to become informal and that this is the best method to integrate in a team a new employee because this will present himself to the colleagues in informal relationships.

For companies the teams were always important. [Tureac, (2008)], Today, the teams are having a crucial role in any organization because it:

- the hierarchical structures are less "shorter" creating increasingly interdependencies between the employees of an organization in the attempt to produce better results with less resources;

- the frenzy of the total quality management, the strategies of permanent improving of the products/ services and of the more advanced techniques of customer loyalty are assuming to overcome the functional and static barriers and the collaboration between the employees across these functions and job descriptions, beyond the limits of the post records or of the procedures [Panisoara, Panisoara, (2004)]

- the need to give up a quickly answer to the forces of changing from the market in which is activates each organization creates more complex and more flexible organizational structures. Thus, "me" is transforming in "us" to a decisional level.

- Extensive use pf the project teams, often composed pf individuals with diverse training, which must be quickly reunited to solve a punctual problem, and then it disintegrates as quickly possible for the members to form another project teams.

- we are in the period between the sunset of the era of the financial capital and the sunrise of the human capital era.

- the development of the empowerment concept and the role in changing the manager from director in facilitator, they focus increasingly on groups/ teams and less on management styles like “divide and conquer”

- the competition between the organizations on the labor market for recruiting high performance individuals is less based on salary motivators and increasingly on climate motivators and the organizational culture. The organizations must provide more harmonious work environments for individuals and how they are usually involved in a team, it must be created harmonious teams

- transforming the management in leadership – the managers are administrating the team to optimize the business they run, the leaders mobilizes people and lead them to new territories, new markets, new businesses. The class leadership is based on the ability to create synergy and motivation at team levels.

- the desire to create “organizations that are developing on their own” (LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS). This is possible only if there are and “teams that are developing themselves”, and this it will only happen if the team members are interacting in currently and synergistically way to learn one from another and to agree on how they will do things in the future. The key to create “organizations that are developing themselves” is the development of a high number of “teams that are developing themselves, in constant interaction one with others. [Ritchie, (2004)]

The companies that want a team building event have to go the following steps:

1. Filling a demand for team building. Generally, the agencies that offer such events are having at the client disposition an application form.

2. Forming the teams. It is recommended that this phase to be organized together with the trainer of the specialized firm in this domain

3. Choice location. Depending on the allocated budget to the event are being chosen the location, hotel, the actual activities of team building, the meal services, special services, etc. For this step is recommended to take into account the opinion of the team members;

4. The strong confirmation of the event. Once formed the teams and was chosen the location, the company must strongly confirm that agrees with the agency offer with which collaborates to make this event;

5. Signing the contract of the event organization. This step is very important in resolving the eventual disputes.

3. The team building market

The tourism development falls within those working on this project because the nature provides, but the man exploits. It is increasingly looking solutions which to motivate those involved in the tourism development. An excellent solution to make the teams to work efficiently is team building. The tourism industry and of travels is,

globally, the most dynamic sector of activity and in the same time, the most important generator of jobs as well as and a source of national economic recovery.

In present, at the planet scale, the tourism is characterized by a strong competition between destinations. Some of them are succeeding to face the international competition and other fails. In this conditions the destinations are increasingly need of a new tourist policy model to influence the competitive position in the terms of the global competition.

Although the team building market isn't sufficiently developed at present, is a very profitable business, the turnover increasing to 100%. [Tureac, (2007)].

The team building market from Romania presents a strong demand for the indoor services – whether it is about conferences, congresses or other types of meetings whether are leisure activities as the theater plays. But an even greater proportion is having the outdoor services, the demand focusing on sportive activities. The activities of indoor team building are designed to give to the participants the right combination between learning, transformation and fun. The participants are placed in various extreme situations, are engaged in activities that can be won only by carrying out the individual and team potential. [Turtureanu, Ioan (2005)].

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The managers know that the people give value to the company and if these people manage to become a team then the success is inevitable.

The team building exercises are not only experienced by companies, Various institutions,, self-help groups, social organizations and many others are granting the deserved attention to this subject. The team building process can be fun, and sometimes is even a part of the various meetings. This activity allows to the couples, children and people of all ages to come together and to strengthen together. Today, thanks to the fierce competition, is very important to make part from a team, whether at work or elsewhere. The most important advantage of the team building activity is that it helps the participants to express their views as well as and to modify them according of the others.

These companies want to hold team building sites when the employees are bored or are going in different directions, when the objectives aren't accomplished, when the company is joining with another (fusion), when is desired breaking the daily routine and energizing the employees.

The team building is essentially an exercise. These exercises are chosen taking into account the behavior and the needs of the members of the group.

Promoting the tourism through the country image involves advertising in the international media, made by specialized institutions of the state and by professional associations in the field; accompanied by a more focused promotion made by associations and tourism firms, individually. The country image is the result of a cumulative effort, on long term, which requires consistent and stable marketing strategies. The effectiveness of such strategies is a source of competitive advantage, a

positive image promoting the tourism, exports, foreign direct investments and the external policy of the country. [Diddier, (1992)]The globalization process and ever stronger competition in the international markets requires the creation of country image on each of the four dimensions listed above, but at the same time and building an integrated image. In practice, the accent putted on every country, in each promotion campaign of its own images, on the four dimensions varies depending on its competitive advantages and the essence of its existing image.

Like the advertising campaigns and o creating the image for an entire country or for a bigger destination are having external effects and repercussions on the economy of the region or the respective country, the activity of the respective organisms are taking a public character and need a public funding. An example of secondary effects due to the image campaign is to improve the structural conditions and the image f a determined destinations which attract major industries and important services which will establish here the business units and/or headquarters. Subsequently, the needs of clientele and of the business people will force the local companies to diversify the offer and to improve the quality. [Moise, (1997)]

Several touristic regions may reach the limits of quantitative growth and the environmental condition is likely to deteriorate. This is generally due over developing the offer, over time, in certain areas, as well as and strong spatio-temporal concentration of the tourism. It may be taken measure of regulation of the tourism in the protected areas, especially in the crowded tourist areas, where it is necessary to set capacity limits to protect the nature against the touristic development. This management of the capacity can be implemented in a flexible manner: limiting the number of accommodation places and built restaurants, of the locations for parking, limiting the touristic flows to certain objectives, etc. From this point of view the policy and the strategy of developing the tourism must be established the principles and necessary conditions for improving the competitive position.

The business tourism involves the traveling to a different location, at a distance greater than 50 km from the place of origin of the business tourist, traveling determined strictly by a business, an even or by an educational purpose.

The events tourism in Romania has experienced a significant development and the experts in the field say that this development could be better exploited trough betel legislation devised and a long term strategy.

Although many companies are trying lately to go directly at the service providers to manage these events (hotels, restaurants, business centers, etc) the most suited is to work trough a tourism agency or of another professional organizer of events because the costs can be reduced and the success of the event ensured by the ability of the professional organizer to appeal to the suited suppliers and to negotiate the services tariffs. Also, based on the accumulated experience, a professional organizer of event can choose the best location, the best restaurant or the best arrangement in the conference hall.

Regarding the organization of the team building events, the increase of the volume of demand led to the apparition of specialized agencies on providing this type of event.

Because it involves providing a wide range of touristic services as well as and the organization services of the games of team building, these events require the involvement of some specialized people and with a vast experience in the field.

Although at us are still few companies which organize team building events in the true sense of the word, the tendency to be granted a greater importance for such events and for their organization is being appealed at companies that not only provide a fun weekend with games in which are involved the employees, but also examines the relationships between colleagues, the felling of affiliation to a certain entity and the most important the existence of team spirit. The real feedback of such an event isn't the immediately one after the event when everyone is in a good mood after spending a weekend at the mountain or the sea, but the feedback after a week or a month when is observed the tense or relaxed relations between: colleagues, superiors and subordinates, colleagues from different departments of the same company.

Another painful truth is that Romania is far behind the neighboring countries in what concerns the development if this economic sector. But there is also a good news: the studies made at international level reveals the fact that the Romanian tourism is having chances to become competitive. A development of this sector can't be achieved only trough substantial investments that can't be supported entirely, by the private sector or by the national budget. In support of the economic agencies, of the professional agencies and the local authorities is coming the European Union, which has launched several projects on several sectors of the touristic activities, which is addressed to all that are interested. [Turtureanu, (2007)]

Ultimately, the success of a team building is to create a vision and common practices among the team members. Thus fact, however, takes time. The international practices in this domain suggest a frequency of at least two projects per year (if now quarterly) to facilitate the achievement of the objectives: creating an effective team. For the success of such an approach is by no means sufficient only one program of team building at end of year. It is true that this behavior leads to a secondary objective of any program of team building – motivating the team members, but more than that. A economically efficient behavior should launch the next challenge: “why should I lose the money spent in a team building event per year, when even it assumes a greater effort and a greater number of events, it allows the increase of the efficiency and recovery of the investment?”

4. Full services of the specialized tourism agencies

This segment, already consolidated and finished by the western markets, has created the necessity of appearing a new type of agency, of Destination Management, dedicated to some new services and solutions, adapted to the business tourism and to a way of working different from the traditional agency” According to the experts, the

top five players on the market, have done together, last year businesses of over 100 million euros, mainly due to the development of the tourism segment of business and team building.

The General Secretary of the National Association of the Tourism Agencies (ANAT) estimate that the business market tourism will reach at the end of this year 300 million euros, but the figure could be higher if the ANAT officials and of other professional associations will decide to include in the business tourism the team building market, which could reach to 200 million euros.[Turtureanu, (2008)]The team buildings are for the travel agencies a business area with great potential for development, which began to grow from 2000 with two digits per year, from 9.000 of people who went on a trip organized by the firm, in 2001, has reached at over 600.000 of departures in such trips in 2008 and certainly there will be a significant decline in 2009.

Usually, for the activities of team building type, the companies are looking towards a specialized tourism agency or towards the tourism agencies with which are working from a longer time to purchase the plane tickets.

So, the travels of the business people isn't business just for hotels and for the conference organizers or team building, but on them are based the related services, industries such as aviation or of the travel agencies, but also in smaller businesses like car rental. From selling plane tickets, which was a business of 350 million euros in 2008, are living both the airlines presents in Romania, and a significant part of the travel agencies.

The business tourism is the strongest branch of the tourism industry in Romania. This type of tourism which includes the team buildings, business trips, participation in training programs, are an important source of revenue for the Romanian operators.

As destinations of team building, the most common are those from Bran, Balvanyos, Pestera.

The business tourism is a form of tourism with commercial, governmental or educational purposes having the recreational (leisure) as secondary motivation. The business tourism assumes, generally, moving in other location, at a distance greater than 50 km from the place of origin of the tourist business, the placement determined strictly by a business, a event or by a educational purpose. There are several kinds of business travel: individual travel, group travel, and travel at events (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, Exhibitions, MICE domain) team buildings and training trips.

The business people come in Romania both from the neighboring or close countries (Hungary, Bulgaria, Russia, Greece, Czech Republic, Poland) and other European countries (Austria, France, Italy, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom) or other continents (USA, Canada Israel, China, Japan, etc) About 60 % - 70 % of the visitors arrived in Romania are for business.

The offer of a destination management company (CMD) guarantees maximum of effect per budgeted cost, promoting in a specific way the domain "business-to

business” a number of services such as accommodation, plain tickets, car rental or business offices on short term, organizing and the event of communication management, of strengthening the team or motivation of the employees.

5. The economic crisis is felt and in the domain of team building activities

The companies are willing to invest only in team building programs which aim measurable objectives, imposing greater demands related to the effectiveness of a program, on the fond of the difficult economic conditions. The economic downturn has caused a strong contraction of the market dedicated to the interaction services, according to the specialized companies in providing these services. [Turtureanu, (2007)]

If last year the hotelier were having important receipts from the big companies which were rewarding the employees with a holiday to se and of the team building activities, now the demand has dropped by half.

The downturn has affected seriously the budgets of the companies that used to organize team buildings on the seashore. Now they think twice when it comes to the socialization of the employees.

The business people who took advantage of the trips at sea to catch a day or two of beach aren't crowding at the hotels receptions.

Which is seen and in the receipts of the hotel keepers, which relied on the business tourism especially in the extra season periods. [Turtureanu, (2008)]

The pressure on reducing the costs within the companies made the budget dedicated for team building actions to be on the list of reduced or cut. The team building itself as a particular type of interaction will resist in this period only if it is redefined, being used with discretion, efficiency and only where is aiming some real measurable objectives, The economic context will educate forced the Romanian market in what concerns the efficiency o the professional achieved interactions, given that the companies are more attentive to the quality of services.

6. Conclusions

The team building is a process thought to improve the relations and reports between the members of a group to overcome the obstacles in achieving common objectives. It must be mentioned the fact that nobody makes team building just to create a harmonious working environment. The purpose of this program is to integrate the talent, skills and creativity of the group members, resulting a consolidated team which achieves its objectives trough the interaction of the strengthen points of the members.

The team building is essentially an exercise. These exercises are chosen taking into account the behavior and needs of members of the group.

For the Romanian tourism the organization of the team building activities is beneficial trough the possibilities that is offering related to the promotion of some destinations, their development and of the investments destined for these activities.

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