



**Republic of Serbia
HIGH JUDICIAL COUNCIL**

Number:
Date: 2014
Be l g r a d e

Pursuant to Article 3, paragraph 1 of the Decision on Organisation and Operation of the High Judicial Council Administrative Office ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 31/03), and in conjunction with strategic guidelines Nos. 1.1.1, 1.3.1, and 1.4.1 under the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Judicial Reform Strategy for the period 2013 – 2018 ("Official Gazette of RS", Nos. 77/13 and 55/14)

The President of the High Judicial Council, on 2014 hereby passes

INSTRUCTION ON

**ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES FOR THE HIGH
JUDICIAL COUNCIL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE STAFF**

INTRODUCTION

I

Provision of Article 47 of the Law on High Judicial Council ("Official Gazette of RS", Nos. 116/08, 101/10 and 88/11) stipulates that the Administrative Office shall perform professional, administrative, and other tasks within the High Judicial Council.

Professional development of the Administrative Office staff shall take place in accordance with their respective job requirements in order to monitor changes and work dynamics in the judiciary. The Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Judicial Reform Strategy for the period 2013 – 2018 ("Official Gazette of RS", Nos. 77/13 and 55/14) provides for the Administrative Office capacity building.

Strengthening professional knowledge, capabilities and skills of the Administrative Office staff is to be achieved through organisation of different training courses.

This Instruction aims to contribute to a planned and efficient management of the Administrative Office development system. The specificity, the scope, and the significance of the Administrative Office work, requires its staff to be trained to continuously keep up with new developments concerning judiciary reform.

Judicial reform is largely dependent on the functioning of the High Judicial Council, and therefore on the functioning of the Administrative Office, i.e. on the expertise and motivation of its staff and their preparedness and capabilities to adapt to change.

The aforesaid reasons lead to the conclusion that a strategic approach needs to be taken in improving the functioning of the Administrative Office that is to be implemented by means of different types of training encompassing all employees. The training planning aims to strengthen knowledge and skills as well as capacities to anticipate and readily welcome change. Training plan enables efficient use of funds ensured by international projects, and cooperation with institutions engaged in staff training.

Passing of the Instruction first involved the assessment of learning and development needs of the Administrative Office staff carried out in July 2014, while the staff survey followed up on the research of relevant state bodies and institutions responsible for the civil servants and judicial officials training.

One of the most important components in strengthening professional competences of the Administrative Office staff is high level of internal motivation expressed in the course of the learning and training needs assessment, which was taken into when passing the first three-year training plan.

The objective of professional development is to increase Administrative Office's efficiency and effectiveness by strengthening professional competences of its employees over the next three years.

The Administrative Office staff professional development principles include the following:

- High valuation of knowledge, stimulating learning, internalising new professional skills and exchange of knowledge and experience;
- Professional development based on previously analysed needs for new or upgrading previously acquired knowledge and skills;
- Professional development is to be implemented in a planned manner and in line with the staff individual and aggregate needs;
- All employees are entitled to attend training related to their respective tasks and in accordance with their expressed personal motivation,
- Staff members participate in training based on the identified needs in carrying out their tasks and their personal motivation for learning, with the support of the working environment.

The Instruction defines guidelines for planning and organising staff training at the Administrative Office. It relates to non-formal education having in mind that non-formal education facilitates quick adaptation to the social, economic, political, technological and other changes.

Staff learning process is specific and governed by certain rules given that the employees need to be motivated to learn, with their desire for learning deriving from their internal need and working environment's support. High motivation is manifested in the need for personal and professional development and as such makes a precondition for success and fast mastering of new knowledge and skills. Moreover, the employees need to recognise the benefit of acquiring new knowledge and skills and the practical application thereof in practice. Linking the learning content to the already acquired knowledge and experience boosts and increases chances for faster and easier completion of the training. This results in the application of new knowledge and skills in their daily work.

First, it is required to understand and accurately assess the staff needs for professional development in all areas of work to be enhanced due to their job requirements. Personal motivation for further development in the areas indirectly increasing efficiency and effectiveness of work is also taken into account. Thereafter, training priorities and plans are being defined.

For each individual training course the following is to be identified: the objective, the expected outcome, training duration, number of participants, and funds required. These make the starting point for the annual plan elaboration.

It also must be taken into account that staff training should not jeopardise the progress of the regular process and continuity of work at the Administrative Office.

TRAINING PLANNING

II

There are four phases in planning any training, namely: identifying needs, preparing training, delivering training, and monitoring and evaluating the success of the professional training plan.

1. Phase: Identifying Needs

Identifying training needs entails defining work related problems that may be minimised or eliminated by training, as well as needs for specific type of training.

Training should be designed based on staff proposals following identification and analysis of problems, gaps, or other situations. The expressed personal motivation of employees needs to be taken into consideration as well. Training is especially important when new tasks are being introduced. Managers are required to monitor the extent in which their employees actually use knowledge and skills acquired in training courses, and to initiate their further professional development. Training needs need to be continuously monitored.

The questionnaire is one of the primary tools for identifying learning needs. In addition to the questionnaire, there are other options such as: individual or collective interviews; analysis of a critical event; and organising discussions among the staff members regarding their expectations from the upcoming training.

Individual or collective interviews

Managers at the Administrative Office should occasionally interview employees within their internal units to have an overview about their opinions, complaints, needs, suggestions and ideas for improving the work of the Administrative Office.

Critical Event Analysis

When analysing critical events employees themselves identify knowledge, skills or attitudes they consider helpful when faced with the same situation. The analyses should be used given that they allow learning useful

lessons from negative experiences and thus prevent potential errors or omissions in the future. The aim is to establish procedures and practice that enable efficient and effective operation.

Organising Discussions on Staff Expectations

Prior to organising any training course future participants should be gathered to learn about their expectations. This activity is important because it allows the training course content to be tailored as to cover what they find to be most important aspects for their work, personal and professional progress. Discussion on employees' expectations from the upcoming training course is to be organised either as a plenary discussion or in smaller groups.

Professional Development Methodology

Selecting a learning method depends on the needs and possibilities. Professional development methods include:

Mentoring – an interactive relationship between individuals with different levels of knowledge. Mentor transmits knowledge, skills, and experience that will help participants in their future work and development.

Mentor also assists the participants following the training in subsequent application of acquired skills and knowledge. Mentor is a more experienced colleague providing assistance, support, understanding, and inspiration, and offers initiative.

Training courses/seminars – educational meetings aimed at acquiring new knowledge, skills and professional development. Training courses last for one, two, or more days and are implemented by one or more specialised trainers. They are based on the interaction between the trainer and participants. The training process draws on knowledge that participants already have in a particular area. When dealing with a new topic, it is very likely that participants already do know certain terms or possess some prior knowledge. In training courses various training techniques (work in small groups, lectures, case studies, debate, argumentation, demonstrations, etc.) adjusted to the content and participants are being used.

Lectures – Lectures comprise the most common method used in training and applied in order to learn unfamiliar terms.

However, when assessing the effectiveness of a lecture it should be kept in mind that the attention of an average listener spans for 20 minutes on average (it might be even longer depending on the learning style and other personal characteristics). An exception entails lecturers having the ability to engage the attention of training participants for longer periods of time, however in such cases lectures and their duration must be tailored to capabilities of participants who are, inter alia, expected to carefully follow the lecture.

Consultation – a meeting in which employees discuss specific problems and seek answers to questions. Professional consultations may be exceptionally useful in problem-solving, eliminating dilemmas, and resolving burning issues.

Workshops – working with the group to develop certain knowledge, behaviour, and skills using personal engagement and experience of all participants. It is a short and intensive training programme for a relatively small

group of employees (6 – 15), focused on improving techniques and skills in a specific field of work. This type of training enables each participant to actively participate. Workshops are typically organised for employees working together in the same or similar positions. The training is guided by instructors having substantial experience in relation to the discussion topic – training content. This type of training facilitates intensive learning in a short period of time.

Study visits – are particularly useful to gain theoretical and practical knowledge and exchange experiences.

There are also other learning methodologies in addition to the mentioned ones.

The professional development needs analysis established that the Administrative Office staff view expertise and knowledge of an instructor and his/her ability to engage and drive active participation as vital.

2. Phase: Training Planning and Preparation

Training plans should be based on defined objectives and planned outcomes with defined timeframe for their implementation. Developing a training plan for the Administrative Office staff includes: analysing additional knowledge and skills that employees need, proposing planned training content, and assessing the level of interest among employees for various training types.

Defining Training Objectives and Outcomes

Training programmes are defined in the process of assessing the staff training needs. Training plan covers the period of next three years and lists the number and type, i.e. the content of training courses to be implemented. Each programme defines the objective of an individual training course. The objectives may be defined prior to selecting the lecturer or in cooperation with a selected lecturer. Training duration and a concrete budget for its implementation need to be defined as well.

Training outcomes or expected results (deliverables) are also defined. Training outcomes need to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound and relevant to the change or progress to be achieved. Defined outcome of a specific training course ascertains knowledge and skills the participants are to acquire and master at the end of the course.

Programme and Material Development

Secretary of the Council shall determine the content of the training course in cooperation with the lecturer.

Selection of a lecturer is critical for the training course quality. Lecturer's profile should be tailored to the needs the Administrative Office staff, their knowledge, capabilities and actual possibilities in order for the expected training results to be achieved.

During the preparatory period the lecturer prepares written materials needed for application of specific training methods, as well as hand-outs the participants will keep after training. The training evaluation method is also defined at this stage.

Logistics

Preparing logistics encompasses technical implementation of training facilitating delivery of the training course in accordance with the plan. Logistics preparation includes: ensuring accommodation for the lecturer and participants, transportation to the training venue, ensuring appropriate facilities, technical support, materials, etc.

Preferably, the training should be organised outside the place of work and residence. This allows the participants to stay focused on the training outcome to be achieved. Otherwise, unplanned business obligations may lead to participants occasionally leaving the training and thus have negative impact on the continuity of the training course and participants' concentration and hinder the overall process. The time participants spend together in an informal setting is also important as it positively affects team work and their mutual understanding.

3. Training Delivery

Training should be delivered based on a pre-defined plan and programme. Training content needs to be in a direct accordance with identified needs. Lecturers who are experts in specific areas use techniques they find most suitable for the given subject matter. At the same time, they monitor participants' reactions and continuously provide feedback related to the field of learning that is directly or indirectly related to their jobs. Based on participants' response lecturers adapt their activities thus ensuring success of the process. Two-way communication and the atmosphere established need to foster the exchange of opinions and allow participants to clarify dilemmas and receive job-specific information. In the course of training, participants are provided with materials or publications they can use in their future work.

At the end participants are to evaluate the success and the usefulness of the training course for their professional and personal development.

4. Phase: Monitoring and Evaluation of the Professional Development Plan Implementation Effectiveness

Evaluation of the implemented staff-development plan, inter alia, depends on the assessment of success and impact of each individual training session. It is important to evaluate the extent to which staff professional competences have been improved, same as the effect thereof on the work efficiency of each employee who had participated in the training i.e. the effectiveness of the Administrative Office operation.

Information on the evaluation of success is used to subsequently modify or supplement the annual training plan and future training programmes.

Any shortcomings identified during training as well as specific problems are to be considered in designing and organising training course in the future.

Monitoring of the Training Plan Delivery

Continuous monitoring of the training plan delivery is essential – monitoring includes systematic and regular compilation and analysis of information regarding the training.

Collected information is especially useful in the evaluation phase within a planned timeframe. Training monitoring implies taking care of the following:

- Has the learning needs assessment been carried out, same as of the results?
- Have the training objectives and outcomes been determined?
- Have the performance indicators been defined?
- How many employees participated in training? How this number compares against the total number of employees?
- Which methods were used in the training?
- What is the participants' feedback on the completed training?
- What are the results of the evaluation concerning the change in knowledge? Have any changes in the delivery of daily tasks been observed?
- How much money was invested in training? How does this amount compare to the overall budget?
- Which institution/lecturer/trainer delivered the training?
- Where and for whom such lectures/training courses have been delivered in the last two years?
- How many lecturers formally completed the Training of Trainers course?
- How were lecturers/trainers evaluated during the training?
- What materials were used in the course of training?
- Where and how were the materials created?
- When was the last time the materials were upgraded?

Performance Evaluation

The evaluation entails a comprehensive assessment of previously gained experience over the specific period, identifying whether the successfully delivered training course and application of new knowledge and skills brought about achieving the training objectives and positive impacts.

After evaluating the success of the training, recommendations and decisions regarding changes in future planning and practice, as well as guidelines and instructions for future work are being defined.

Evaluation may be carried out at any time during the plan execution process.

Evaluation of the training plan implementation, inter alia, includes: identifying training courses that are necessary and defining objectives for professional development of staff; planning, preparing, and drafting training programme in accordance with objectives; identifying adequate lecturers; contracting planned and envisaged programmes; organising meetings between participants and managers prior to training; testing existing knowledge, skills and opinions of participants before training; filling out questionnaires after completed training course; participants' reactions; filling out questionnaires on acquired knowledge or skills, minutes of meetings held between participants and managers following the completion of training; monitoring application of acquired knowledge by managers, evaluating changes, evaluating and comparing funds invested and results achieved. The impact on participants and their performance are subject to evaluation.

Indicators facilitate evaluation of the annual training plan quality and the success of each individual training course.

Indicators may be quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative indicators refer to the activities, whereas qualitative indicators refer to objectives.

Quantitative indicators include:

- Number of training courses delivered,

- Total number of training days,
- Number of training participants,
- Number of participants who filled out evaluation form after completion of each training course.

Qualitative indicators include:

- Knowledge participants gained,
- Skills participants acquired,
- Application of skills and knowledge at work,
- Employees' attitude towards training,
- Employees' attitude towards new job demands,
- Mutual relations between employees and exchange of knowledge and skills,
- Managers' attitudes towards the effect of training on performance at work,
- Level of employee satisfaction with results achieved after the training.

An example of the Evaluation Form for training is enclosed in Addendum I to this Instruction.

The results from the Evaluation Form comprise an integral part of the report lecturers submit to the High Judicial Council. The report contains all essential information on conducted training and the estimate of expected progress made in terms of knowledge and skills.

The Professional Development Plan for the Administrative Office Staff makes an integral part of this Instruction.

III

This Instruction shall enter into force on the eight day after being published on the High Judicial Council's notice board.

**PRESIDENT OF THE
HIGH JUDICIAL COUNCIL
Dragomir Milojević**

Addendum I

Evaluation Form

Title: **Office Management**

Dates: 16 and 17 November 2014

Venue: Vršac

1. Have the seminar objectives been met?

- Completely
- Partially
- No

Comment:

2. Select topics that will contribute most to your future work:

- The concept and the importance of office management
- Basic concepts and terms in office management, receiving, opening, reviewing and sorting mail, recording documents and cases, abridged registration book, file folder
- Submission of acts
- Organiser
- Distributing acts
- Sending mail
- Archiving and storing cases
- Components of an official act
- Reporting on the status of resolving administrative issues
- Monitoring the implementation of regulations in office work
- Office management in a broader sense.

Comment:

3. Lecturer/trainer's work was:

- Excellent
- Very good
- Average
- Poor

Comment:

4. Please write additional suggestions and comments.