The Prague Programme Series

1. Your personal journey - becoming a high value HR Professional

Years ago, Paul Kearns wrote a series of 12 articles 'From Trainer to Learning Consultant' that described a personal journey he made as a trainer who wanted to know what his impact was on the business. What started out as an interest came to define what made him a true HR Professional. Later on, Paul became one of the founders of the Maturity Institute (MI), a global network researching and promoting practice of effective Human Governance, which is rapidly gaining a global reputation.

Being passionate about the business impact of people development, Stanislav Tichý was inspired by the 'Trainer to Learning Consultant' series and it led to him becoming an MI Associate. Put simply, Stanislav strives to help those that want to multiply the creativity, energy and engagement of their people to generate more business value.

Paul and Stanislav have now designed The Prague Programme to offer the same opportunity to those who share their passion for mature human governance and wish to become the HR leaders of the future. They strongly encourage you to engage with this series and feedback how your own developmental journey is progressing. You will face challenges along the way but you will not be alone; you will have the security of a well-respected professional body behind you and your own market value will increase significantly because you will demonstrate the real value of really effective people management.

So, what will this journey feel like?

In part 2 - Why Organisational Maturity matters? - you will be introduced to the concept of the mature organization. Although that word 'mature' can have very different meanings in different languages. From an MI perspective the word is intended to signify the wisdom gained from evidence, the heightened experience of a mature perspective and the actions that inevitably follow. A CEO reaches maturity when they have the wisdom to understand that they cannot maximise the value of the company unless and until they realise the full value of all the people involved with the company, both internally and externally.

The remaining parts of this series (parts 3 to 12) will then explore each of MI's core principles - the 10 Pillars -

3. Purpose - does your organization have a clear purpose? Whose interests is it designed to serve? What would your employees describe as a purpose of your organisation and how strong is the emotional bonding they have? Without a clear purpose you, in HR, cannot determine what employees need to do or learn.

4. Value - if you asked your head of finance what value means would you get a clear answer? Is it only profit, shareholder value or what? So how do you define the value you strive to create with your people? As an HR Professional you must be absolutely clear what value means if you are planning to improve it.

5. Whole system - Management practices are still founded on Newtonian thinking which guides us to divide the whole into understandable and controllable parts. Through managing the parts, we believe, we are still managing the whole. This has left many organisations with a huge silo-effect that leads to many kinds of organisational waste and underperformance.

The best organizations understand what whole system thinking is and manage themselves as a whole system rather than as a disjointed set of departments or functions. To be a mature HR Professional must gain a complete understanding of not only the concept of whole system thinking but, much more importantly, the practicalities of installing HR policies and practices that are integrated.

6. Learning organization - Regardless of the concept of the 'learning organization', MI research shows just how rare these are. The learning organization is a crucial part of organizational maturity and only whole system organizations can reach the highest levels of value and employee engagement.

7. Integrating business plans, finances and human capital - By the time you reach this part you will already have started developing a better relationship with your finance and operational colleagues. You will develop your budgets on the basis of clearly focused, business needs and the chances are you will already be able to command greater resources.

8. Improvement - Not just improvement tomorrow but continuous and never-ending improvement. This is a philosophy that underpins all human motivation - we want to live in a better world. Why should employees keep working hard and be willing to learning if the organization does not regularly send signals that is always encouraging and enabling everyone to improve their own contribution?

9. Trust, Engagement, Cooperation - These go hand-in-hand. We could refer to them together as the total psychological contract, the organizational bond and the foundation for motivation, learning and performance.

10. Performance - Whatever you know about performance management it is worth recognising that many large companies and consultancies have recently decided that conventional performance practices are less than effective. MI's approach is to ensure management is always focused on and measuring value, rather than personal performance. In doing so, everyone in the organization is pulling in the same direction.

11. People risk - Do you assess the people risks to the business? When you know what to look for, and how to resolve the underlying causes, you can significantly mitigate business and organizational risk.

12. What you need to do now - treat people as valuable human capital - This last part in the series will be published 12 months from now. You will be one year older and much more mature. You will have realised that the best way to progress is to ensure your finance people start treating people as very valuable capital in the accounts. You will be ready to move onto the next level - integrating human capital into in company reporting. Relax, MI will show you how.

Have you noticed something while you were reading all of the above? They all work best when together, as a complete system, that's maturity.