

YEMP Model: Advocacy, challenges in implementation and positive emotions A way ahead for music management and musical events production

The Cyprus Centre of the Research and Study of Music has participated in the YEMP training course and YEMP development with the framework of Erasmus+ KA2 STAMP project and has reviewed the YEMP material found on STAMP Project website. Therefore in this document we initially strongly advocate in favour of the model in strategic management section, providing some main benefits of it. We then go on and discuss challenges of implementing it in other music event contexts and geographical regions such as the Republic of Cyprus and the Mediterranean, pointing to the positive emotions that are cultivated in such management model.

Advocacy: YEMP nature and contribution to the world of music management and musical events production

YEMP departs from innovative thinking in arts management; it consists of a framework of strategic management and planning and offers a ready-to-use model while allowing flexibility in its implementation in different diverse contexts. Its implementation and training week in the STAMP project, clearly revealed that it is a dynamic strategic plan and concept which once put down and expanded, is flexible and adaptable to social and cultural change within the same context of inspiration and creation as well as across different contexts. While it clearly communicates its value based philosophy, vision and mission that serve as compass, at the same time it gives space and needs adaptation to each specific case considering its uniqueness and each context. It is designed in such a way that offers close horizontal (between YEMPers and YEMPers' groups) synergies and vertical synergies (between event leaders, managers, coaches and YEMPers' teams) thus it has been considered by CCRSM as a successful strategic management and planning model in the long term not only for choral festivals but for various types of musical events across Europe.

YEMP in its final form contains clear phases based on strategic thinking, analysis, planning evaluation and reflection while it keeps open doors for creativity and independence for further innovation. It strengthens each organisation to utilise and maximise its full capacity, resources and network. Evaluation is on-going as well as final. On-going evaluation can take many forms such as meetings at the end of the day for reflections, informal and formal interviews, and responses of written questionnaires to a camera or audio recording (for qualitative analysis), rating the work and outcome of each group at the end (for quantitative evaluation).

The European Choral Association – Europa Cantat along with the participating partners in the specific output went through the journey of five tasks (Thomson & Strickland, 1996):

1. Formulate a strategic vision and mission.
2. Transform the strategic vision and mission into general strategy and measurable strategic objectives, implementation targets and quality signifiers.
3. Develop functional strategies and training plan to achieve the previous.
4. Implement and execute the strategies and training plan seeking efficiency.
5. Evaluation, reflection and improving adjustments.

YEMP satisfies the five principles of innovations which according to Lidia Varbanova (2013, p.9-11) are related to:

- Transformation and restructuring;
- Change: in an organisation, in a process, in a model;
- Generation of a new value;
- Thinking that goes 'beyond the box': thinking and acting differently.

YEMP offers innovation in (a) the creative process of the specific programming of choral festival events, (b) in the different process happening in a music organisation for such or similar event creations and (c) organisational, managerial and technical aspects in an organisation. It contributes in innovation in utilising resources within the organisation and its network. These refer to 'diverse new ways in which an art organisation starts new activity and seeks money, material, human and information resources' (Varbanova p.12). YEMP cares about YEMPers, coaches and event participants in the process and doesn't only focus on the results. It facilitates experimentation and some degree for risk while trains for risk management.

Conclusively YEMP connects well with the other outputs of STAMP project, utilising the added value of the other outputs, promotes human resource management development while contributing in a unique but very relevant and useful way to the holistic plan of STAMP project's Shared Training Activities for Music Professionals.

Implementation and adaptation of YEMP programme in the Republic of Cyprus for the organization of Choral Festival/Conferences/Forums

We could certainly organize a YEMP at an event for Choral Festival/Conferences/Forums within the Republic of Cyprus for participants exceeding 200 people and for such events with duration of minimum two days and 3-5 parallel sessions.

Regarding the selection of YEMPers we would seek for college/university students that major in music and disciplines related to the needs of the event such as photography, theater and movie directors, tourism studies, arts management, and management in general, languages studies, public relations and social media. Such selection will enable us to offer the highest possible quality service and attendance to the event participants and facilitate the communication within each YEMPers' group and their targeted obligations and responsibilities. The selection of coaches should also follow this plan while establishing a relationship of support encouragement and recognition with each other (see YEMP's activities). We might open it to managers over 30 years old in case there will be interested population to offer their services on a voluntary basis. Regarding the number of YEMPers and coaches this will be determined by the number of the participants in each event case.

Our aim and value behind this selection is to challenge the YEMPers and coaches to apply their knowledge in the 'real life' event and thus increase their motivation in the participation, the development of their skills and their recognition. The selection of coaches and the development of win-win relationships (as the implementation of YEMP clearly demonstrate) with the YEMPers and the event leaders, are of great importance. A source of motivation is always friendly supportive relationships.

Our assumptions behind these proposals are in alignment with YEMP underlying philosophical foundation. Some of them are:

- Make people feel worthwhile (people need this recognition, they want to be noticed and appreciated).
- People need and respond to encouragement.
- People need to feel cared and connect with leaders based on this relationship.
- People need guidance how to handle failure and rejection in order increase their abilities to become successful.
- People need motivation. People need to know that their contribution is not wasted, that there is value in what they are doing; they are engaged in the process of accomplishing the goal and see that they are truly making a difference.
- With YEMP activities, even the acknowledgement of dissatisfaction acts as a source of motivation/change and makes clearer expectations.

Our prime goal would be to choose locals; that are people who reside in Cyprus, Greek-Cypriots or other ethnicities. Due to the country's national and cultural particularities as well as the fact that it is an island (thus for a YEMPer the travelling cost from other countries to Cyprus is much higher than traveling in central Europe. In addition most of the time connected flights are necessary). Also Cypriots are particularly efficient in problem solving and practical resourcefulness once they feel they are part of a team.

Main challenges and suggestions:

In addition to the challenges YEMP programme addresses and comments upon, we would like to address the following:

-) As YEMP is a form of strategic management programme and a model with clear set of values and goals and horizontal and vertical synergies, it is important while we plan it and implement it (its various training activities and its actual implementation), to clarify the differences between leadership and management: Leadership is not management. Leadership is about the vision, the values, the principles and management is about the physical implementation. So leadership comes first because it deals with what are the things we wish to accomplish. Management deals with how we can best accomplish them. Efficient strategic managers are able to combine both. YEMP departs from leadership thinking and is an application of such thinking. Therefore it is a strategic model. It then deals with all the managerial issues and evaluation and choosing or modifying the many and different road maps but sticks to one vision/destination which serves as the compass for adapting it in different contexts. Therefore resourcefulness and adaptation skills are important for the leaders and strategic managers in each context.
-) Adapt YEMP activities into the cultural and social contexts and processes of a Mediterranean context such as Cyprus requires emotion management (such as stress, anger, emotional over-reacting, strong temperament, stubbornness) application. So specific activities that address these issues and offer tools are necessary. In addition, more diverse activities for group bonding and team play towards one common goal are required. This might lessen or eliminate verbal disputes, (dominance or suppression behaviour).
-) Specify the exact roles required to be undertaken by a YEMPer making sure such role cannot be easily and effectively covered from a person inside the Organisation without substantial cost.

-) Create an application form that ensures the best possible filtering of the abilities and potential of the initial applicants as a YEMPer, since the time is short for changing or improving immensely someone's know-how and capabilities.
-) Interview of the applicants initially approved from the application forms received, to evaluate the applicant's ability to positively perform under stress, quick response to problem solving or delegation of task, leadership skills, team work and ability to carry out successfully the required tasks thus utilizing their potential and helping them improve in what they like or need best.
-) Find the balance between the 2 primary goals in organizing an event with YEMPers (a) the completion of a successful event (b) the benefit for the YEMPers in acquiring knowledge and experience by participating and engaging personally in such important events.
-) Make a thorough cost evaluation in using and training YEMPers and hire coaches as opposed to just hire volunteers wishing to participate and offer their services with minimal training required. As accommodation is an important cost in case the YEMPer or coach is from abroad, the search of dependable partners who could accommodate them is an important task to accomplish. Funding opportunities in our region are limited.
-) Consider the social contribution of the organization in the possible training of young people wishing to be involved in events of this multitude.
-) It is necessary to have the final detailed guide or PowerPoint presentation from the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat as to the different steps in creating event of such scale.
-) Start such an endeavor with the intention of a continuation of this practice and not have a one-time event using YEMPers.

Suggestions to additionally increase motivation and passion from within:

- Task rotation in order to allow YEMPersto gain different perspectives and insights into other tasks' function and a holistic view of the overall production and process they are part of it.
- Enrich and diversify the number of tasks, improve quality standards, broaden responsibilities and give higher autonomy as YEMPers and their coach gradually become more experienced in YEMP and musical event productions.
- Include training activities and managerial plan for gradually increased self-managed work teams in order to increase the level of maturity for intra-synergies. This will increase their passion and motivation.
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YEMPers could be systematically trained to the following four characteristics:

-) Do it anyway (even if you don't like it).
-) Don't let rejection or negativity stop you.
-) Develop discipline, be systematic and proactive.
-) Be courageous, creative and kind.

Such participation for our managers, festival and staff team offers manifold benefits already delineated above as well as in the whole description of YEMP. We would like to add the benefit of the cultivation of the following emotions of power. Our trainees to the Estonian STAMP YEMP training and music event also referred to these emotions: The Ten Emotions of Power that YEMP promotes and cultivates:

-) Love and warmth: All communication is either a loving response or a plea for help.
-) Appreciation and gratitude: Living and working in these attitudes and emotional states will enhance your life more than almost anything

-) Curiosity: Cultivate curiosity, and life becomes an unending study of joy and a playful journey of learning and experiencing.
-) Excitement and passion: there are contagious emotions that raise the vitality and quality of expression and communication among teams. Passion can turn any challenge into a tremendous opportunity.
-) Determination: Determination means the difference between being stuck and being struck with the lightning power of commitment. Our willingness to do whatever it takes, to act in spite of fear and negativity, is the basis of courage.
-) Flexibility: Choosing to be flexible is choosing to be happy, light and all-embracing. “The reed that bends will survive the windstorm, while the mighty oak tree will crack”.
-) Confidence: Unshakable confidence is the sense of certainty we all strive for. The only way you can consistently experience confidence, is through the power of faith. The ability to act on faith is what moves the human endeavors forward.
-) Cheerfulness: Cheerfulness has the power to eliminate the feelings of fear, hurt, anger, frustration, disappointment, depression, guilt, and inadequacy from your life. Being cheerful means you’re incredibly intelligent because you know that if you live life in a state of pleasure—one that’s so intense that you transmit a sense of joy to those around you—you can have the impact to meet virtually any challenge that comes your way. Make it easy for yourself to feel cheerful by planting the seed of...
-) Vitality: regular exercise, healthy nutrition and learning to breathe properly are most important elements toward good health. Six to seven hours of sleep has been found to be optimum for most people. Once you are filled with energy then you can share through...
-) Contribution: If you can consistently give to yourself and others on a measurable scale that allows you to know that your life has mattered, you’ll have a sense of connection with people and a sense of pride and self-esteem that no amount of money, accomplishments, fame, or acknowledgment could ever give.

(Source for the ten emotions of power: Tony Robins, 2001/1991)

In addition to the above, a major benefit of such programme is the journey through responsibility to transformation and change to solidarity in the multidimensional multicultural world of music. To quote Bird Rose (2014):

The ethics of connection, of mutually implicated humans whose primary duty is to respond to the calls of others, particularly those who are vulnerable, does not demand a suppression or denial of one’s own self. Rather to the contrary, the argument is that one finds one’s own self in responding to others, and so both self and other become entangled in ethical relationships (Bird Rose, 2004, p.13)

Evaluation techniques could include:

Qualitative:

- Written/oral questionnaires. A camera can be placed in a room and YEMPers, coaches and participants can visit the room to record their opinions
- Daily meetings at the beginning and end of each day of the event for evaluation and feedback and energy boosting.
- Informal/formal interviews

Quantitative:

- Rating of the work of each YEMPers group for gentle competition between the different groups with awards for all at the end.

References:

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