ABSTRACT: What does it mean to manage well? What does it mean to have a strong organization? Many ask these questions across the North-South divide. But sometimes it is difficult for them to find the answers. Not any more. Jerusalem Water Undertaking (JWU) and Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) Palestine recently published "A Challenging Experience in Organization Development - A Guidebook". This Guidebook is full of common sense approaches to build a strong organization and management team. The Guidebook answers these questions in a lively and readable form. It comes with a Companion CD loaded with exercises and examples that people can use to make progress. Believing in the value of this Guidebook as a resource, JWU and GTZ developed Information Pages and plan to deploy them on the JWU and GTZ Internet websites by the end of May 2003. These Information Pages in 5 languages summarize each chapter of the Guidebook and give some examples. The websites serve several purposes: 1. Chapter summaries introduce people to organization and management concepts 2. The "How to Order" page shows people how to buy and/or gain access to the Guidebook and CD 3. The Internet application easily spreads the news about the Guidebook and gives JWU the chance to fund future printings and translations into languages other than English.

Looking to the future, JWU and GTZ realize the considerable potential to build these resources into an e-learning tool and a means to deliver the Guidebook content over the Internet rather than in hard copy. We believe that our experiences with the Guidebook fit into the Water Information Summit 2003 program for several reasons: (1) We have developed the Guidebook websites as e-learning and exchange of know-how tools; to share our experiences and "reach out" to other professionals and managers; (2) The Companion CD is also an "electronic learning" tool; (3) Future enhancements to the websites can offer a tremendous resource for training and continuing education. At the February 2003 AWWA/WEF Joint Management Conference, the author of the Guidebook led a workshop based on concepts in the Guidebook. At the end of the workshop, a gentleman from South Africa noted: "Madame, I am so thrilled to know about this Guidebook! I have searched for books to learn about management but I have not found such a clear, step-by-step book until now." By participating in the Summit, we hope to bring similar delight to others.

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INTRODUCTION

Successful organizations all over the world pay attention to good management practices. They take the time to develop and maintain their organizational strength. What does it mean to manage well? What does it mean to have a strong organization? Many ask these questions across the North-South divide. But sometimes it is difficult for them to find the answers. Not any more.

Background

From 1997-2002, the Jerusalem Water Undertaking (JWU) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GTZ) and Palestine conducted an organization development process within the framework of the Palestinian – German Development Cooperation. A team of JWU employees and GTZ consultants worked hard over those years to make progress and, in the end, the result was a “very good, joyful and supportive atmosphere” at JWU, in the words of its general manager at that time, Abdelkarim Asa'd.

We took our time. We had broad-based discussions. We took concepts and customized them to our own situation. Sometimes there was controversy. Sometimes we argued. But, in the end, we developed good solutions.

We started to wonder: Would other people find our results useful? Could we help people stop reinventing the wheel? These questions led us to create the Guidebook. We designed it to make organization development easy to understand. You can use it to form a new organization or energize an existing one.

JERUSALEM WATER UNDERTAKING: A CHALLENGING EXPERIENCE IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT – A GUIDEBOOK
Thanks to the support and encouragement of a lot of people, the Guidebook is now a reality. But this is more than a book: it is a ready-made process that you can use to build a stronger organization and management team:

- Twenty-nine chapters introduce such basic concepts as leadership, mission, strategic planning, organization structure design, job descriptions, management by results, delegation, human resources management, compensation, financial management and management reporting among others

- Chapters include lessons learned, questions for self-analysis, examples and action checklists

- Exercises provide tools to make improvements such as management reporting or they help you analyze your own situation and compare it to other organizations

- The Organization Development Self-Assessment exercise helps you identify the areas where you can benefit from action

- The Score exercise is a benchmarking tool for management practices

As we wrote the Guidebook, we had some objectives: We wanted the text to be enjoyable to read – and even kind of fun. We wanted the text to be clear and concise and in a level of English that would be widely understood by those for whom English is a second or third language. We avoided slang, complicated words or graphics that might offend. We used a two-column format to make reading easier and we avoided long sentences. In a true collegial spirit, we made every attempt to avoid the word “should”. These were real challenges: to take complicated concepts and express them as clearly as possible.

The Guidebook is full of common sense approaches to build a strong organization and management team. Of course, it is possible to read through the hard copy of the book and benefit from that experience. But, as we worked on the Guidebook, we realized that we could make it even easier to use.

We realized more and more the value of easy access to the examples and exercises. These tools, in Microsoft Word or Excel offer the user several benefits: you can start with a Guidebook example and customize it to your own situation. You can use an exercise to make an improvement or to analyze your situation.

We asked ourselves how we could best provide these resources to users of the Guidebook. We decided to develop a Companion CD and load it with exercises and examples. Later, we decided to add the Guidebook text in PDF format. After all, who wants to carry around a book when you can carry around a CD? We chose PDF format to provide the content but prevent people from changing the text. The Companion CD was born as our first electronic Guidebook resource.
The Companion CD works in Internet Explorer format. The table of contents automatically links the user to chapters, exercises and examples. The text of the chapters also has links: if you are in one chapter and you see a reference to another chapter, example or exercise, you simply click to find that resource. If your computer is also connected to the Internet, the hot links in each chapter will also take you to resources outside the Guidebook. And finally, the index links each page reference to that page.

All in all, the Companion CD makes it easy to navigate your way among the Guidebook resources – a far easier way than using the hard copy. To be honest, it was a learning experience for the longer serving contributors as the shorter serving ones showed us how to make the most of technology. For one thing, the author would never have imagined the idea of linking the index!

As we developed the Companion CD, we thought about the end users. We realized that many people around the world do not have the latest technology. We thought about what kind of computers they might have and what software. Our goal was to design the Companion CD so that it would be very easy to use and “user friendly”. Therefore, when you load up the CD, the first page gives you instructions and shows you where to go to get Adobe Acrobat Reader if you do not have it already. Then, you click to enter and you automatically go to the table of contents. From there, it is easy to navigate around the CD.

REACHING THE WORLD AUDIENCE

Thanks to the suggestions of friends and colleagues, we started to think more about electronic resources and the possibilities for the Internet. You see, as we worked on the Guidebook, we realized that we were developing something of value. Our intent was always to provide resources to others, to make organization development understandable and relatively easy to do. From this objective, it follows that our challenge would be to let many people around the world know about the Guidebook and give them access to it.

We decided to develop Guidebook Information Pages and deploy them on the JWU and GTZ Internet websites. These Information Pages in multiple languages\(^2\) summarize each chapter of the Guidebook and give some examples.

The websites serve several purposes:

- As with the Companion CD, the website provides a table of contents that links to chapter summaries as well as the sample chapter, example and exercise
- Chapter summaries introduce people to organization and management concepts

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\(^2\) GTZ Website: Arabic, German, English, French and Spanish, [http://www.gtz.de/](http://www.gtz.de/)
• The “How to Order” page shows people how to gain access to the Guidebook and Companion CD

• Contacts shows how to get in touch with the major contributors

Again, as we developed the Information Pages, we wanted to make it very easy for many people to use no matter what type of computer they might have. We kept the graphics to a minimum to allow for people who have slow Internet connections. We also designed the graphics so that they would fit well into both the JWU website and the GTZ website. When you reach the site, you can easily find the table of contents and navigate around the site from there.

This Internet application easily spreads the news about the Guidebook and gives us the platform for future enhancements. Since 24 July 2003, the JWU website provides the Information Pages in Arabic and English. You can visit this site on http://www.jwu.org/guide/english/start_en.htm. During the summer of 2003, we will also activate the GTZ Information Page website in all five languages.

THE FUTURE

Looking to the future, we realize the considerable potential to build these resources into an e-learning tool and a means to deliver the Guidebook content over the Internet rather than in hard copy. The possibilities are very exciting:

• Imagine the exercises on an Internet page where an organization answers self-analysis questions and immediately sees results – and a comparison of their results to the results of other organizations

• Imagine the ability to call up an example on the Internet, modify it and use it in your own organization

• Imagine Guidebook content that is continually refreshed and updated with more examples and exercises

• Imagine a chat room where users of the Guidebook can interact and network

• Imagine a benchmarking tool for organization and management practices

When we finished the Guidebook, the Companion CD and the Information Pages, we thought we were finished. But we have just begun. Technology and the Internet will allow us to spread the word about the Guidebook and provide resources more effectively in the future.

It is hard to imagine how we could get this resource to people around the world so easily if it were not for electronic resources and the Internet. A short 10 years ago, it would have been almost impossible to do what we can do now in a matter of minutes.
At the February 2003 AWWA/WEF Joint Management Conference, the author led a workshop based on concepts in the Guidebook. At the end of the workshop, a gentleman from South Africa noted: “Madame, I am so thrilled to know about this Guidebook! I have searched for books to learn about management but I have not found such a clear, step-by-step book until now.” By participating in the Summit, we hope we have brought similar delight to others.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The reason that the Guidebook and its resources came out so well is that it has been a cooperative effort of many people around the world: from the JWU Board of Directors who authorized the organization development project, to the employees of JWU who developed the building blocks for a stronger organization, to GTZ which supported the project with resources and two excellent advisors – Ernst Döring and Nadim Mulhem, to the consultants who provided input, to the many people who contributed to the Guidebook, to those who reviewed chapters or exercises and gave moral support and especially to my co-author Abdelkarim Asa’d who also led JWU for more than 30 years before his retirement earlier this year. It has been a rare privilege to work on such a worthy project with such professional and caring people.