

Basic Training of Executive Officers – Internships in Companies of the Free Economy

In 2004 the Austrian Prison Service Academy developed a new basic training of executive officers. For this a forward-looking profile of requirements was created. Current developments and requirements of the public service, especially of the prison service system, were taken into account.

Note

The basic training lasts 20 months and is divided into 31 weeks of theory and 12 months of practical trainings in different types of Austrian prisons. The target group of this training are prison officers with final exam of a high school.

Groups of taught subjects/objects are:

- Law and criminology
- Professional care and Security
- Management and Leadership
- Social competence and communication
- IT and economic matters

The examination at the end of the basic training consists of:

- Presentation and discussion of a written project work on a specific topic
- Written exam on a specific topic
- Oral exam

Internship

Besides the seminars and practical trainings in prisons the students have to make an internship in a company of the free economy. The aim is to gain a well-founded insight into the structure and tasks of a company. Further goals to learn about are:

- Staff development
- Organizational development
- Decision-making processes in economic matters
- Budgeting
- Role-understanding of executives
- Measures of rationalization and staff reduction
- Controlling of organizational units
- Models of basic training and further education
- Project management
- Forming of change processes

Very helpful in connection with the internships are:

- The Federal Chancellery, department to promote staff mobility, which provides with contacts and information
- Wirtschaftsforum der Führungskräfte (WdF) = Austrian Manager`s Association (the „manager`s voice“), which helps to choose suitable companies

After the first contact with the company the details of the internship are established (content, objectives, etc.).

The companies provide daily and weekly plans. At the end of the internship the achieved learning goals are reflected.

In 2007, one year after the first internship, a dissertation of the University of Administrative Sciences in Speyer evaluated the experiences with the internship. A second loop of evaluation process was done in 2008.

The fields of most intensive learning were:

- Methods of staff development
- Instruments of economic business management
- Organizational development
- Instruments of leadership

We can say that the internship is an innovative step in the staff development of executives in the Austrian Prison Service. The companies are very open minded for the internships, because they get important and interesting information about the very special and unknown field of work and experience in the Prison Service.

Some Companies:

- Austrian Airlines
- Vienna Airport
- A1 Telekom
- T-Mobile
- REIWAG (Facility Services)
- ISN – Innovation Service Network
- Trilog G. Riedl KG (Training, Coaching, Consulting)
- Teufelsberger Holding AG (steel wire ropes, fiber ropes, plastic extrusion)
- Waldviertler Werkstätten GmbH. (shoes, bags, furniture, mattresses)