

CREATING GROWTH THROUGH INNOVATION

CURRENT DYNAMICS AND A TOUGH, COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT ACROSS MANY OF THE CONSULTING FIELDS REQUIRES THE CONSTANT MONITORING OF WORLD-WIDE TRENDS AND NEW INFORMATION. WE SPOKE WITH JURAJ STUĐENÍK, PARTNER OF AJG CONSULTING AND CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICER OF JENEWEIN GROUP, ABOUT THE CONSULTING BUSINESS.

AJG CONSULTING IS CONNECTED WITH THE WORD "INNOVATION". WHAT HAS CONSULTING GOT IN COMMON WITH INNOVATION?

Even though it is not standard in most of consultancy companies, consultancy and innovation have almost everything in common. Consultancy is an activity that has to be developed together with the client's needs; therefore it is necessary to constantly develop currently used approaches and methodologies. It is a requirement not just to know how to monitor new trends, but also how to analyze them. The right elements have to be identified and consequently new impulses have to be transformed into real consultancy practice. From personal experience I can tell that in the business fields we are active in, I have not known a client to look for a standard solution. Everyone wants to be managerially more mature and attractive to their clients and we have to be able to develop such approaches that would positively differentiate them from their competition and which will not become just a temporary issue but a stable part of their philosophy. Clients contact us mostly when they are dealing with an insufficient effectiveness, with the wrong set up of management structure, or when they have a need to re-vitalize strategic aims inside or outside the company. Without an innovative approach we would not be able to react to 99 percent of our requests. Using an innovative approach is a guarantee of a long-term partnership and successful relationships with our clients.

DO THE INNOVATIONS AFFECT THE CHANGE OF SERVICES' PORTFOLIO PROVIDED BY AJG CONSULTING?

Significantly, although it certainly does not mean that we change course every time we identify a new business opportunity, but yes our portfolio of services has been affected by these changes. Besides our standard solutions in Management Systems Consultancy, we have recently paid attention to Change Management, a complex service providing a stable basis for the most important changes in companies. Change Management is the most complex form of Management Consultancy and especially through these services we are able

to fully demonstrate the potential of an innovative approach in consultancy. A significant part of our activities remains focused on EU Consultancy services, especially those providing Technical Assistance solutions for Managing Authorities which are in charge of Structural Funds implementation in the new programming period 2007 - 2013. We are one of few who are able to support the unique know-how and detailed knowledge of processes within the spending of financial resources from EU Funds, with a strong position in Brussels. As the most innovative solution in the field of complex assistance to the organization of the private and public sector could be considered the Public-Private Partnership projects, which are currently very rarely used form of investment solutions. Our detailed specialization and long-term experience is highlighted by the provision of complex solutions, focusing on the design and development of Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Culture strategies that significantly differentiate our portfolio from our competition in the market.

YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT INNOVATIONS ON THE CLIENT'S SIDE, HOW ARE YOU DEALING WITH INNOVATIONS IN YOUR OWN COMPANY?

Our main motto is "Creating Growth through Innovation"; this clearly represents our internal and external behaviour. AJG Consulting acts under the wings of our strategic holding company JENEWEIN GROUP. These activities are conducted in tandem with other global consulting brands - AMROP HEVER, with a focus on Executive Search, Board Advisory Services, Management Audit & Human Capital Consulting, and FIPRA with a focus on Public Policy & Regulatory Advisory and Strategic Government Relations. In line with our objective not to lose the innovative approach and to always deliver something above the client's expectations, we have established the Business Innovation Practice (BIP) within the JENEWEIN GROUP. The main goal of the BIP is to relay global innovations from all the business fields into real consultancy solutions. This approach guarantees the constant benchmarking of our solutions and trends against the solutions provided by our competition. At the same time it allows us to fully utilize the business synergy of three strong market players operating within the portfolio of JENEWEIN GROUP.

IN 2004, YOU WERE THE FIRST SLOVAKIAN CONSULTANCY TO OPEN AN EU OFFICE IN BRUSSELS. HOW ARE YOU GETTING ON IN THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL?

We have been active in Brussels for almost ten years - either as an accredited lobbyist to the European Parliament, or as members of the relevant EU institutions

and think-tanks. It is true that we opened our own office in Brussels during the accession of the Slovak Republic into the EU. During this time we have successfully accomplished many consultancy and lobbying projects and we have become a prominent player in relation to the EU Institutions and their structures. This year our activities in Brussels have reached completely different level. From the position of a local operator, although a very significant one from the Slovak-Brussels relations point of view, we have become a global player as we have integrated our consultancy portfolio in the field of Public Policy and lobbying services into the FIPRA Group - Europe's leading public affairs consultancy, specializing in advice on political and regulatory issues. This merger has created further opportunities to strengthen our portfolio and enabled the territorial expansion of our services. FIPRA Slovakia is now the entrance gate for providing services in the Western Balkans. Our office in Brussels has become a part of the FIPRA Group's EU representation office in Brussels, responsible for the coordination and advocacy of the whole group of clients' interests towards the EU Institutions. Within the JENEWEIN GROUP, using all our know-how and resources we are able to provide our clients with a unique combination of services which will help them to capitalise upon every single market opportunity to develop their businesses. From the AJG Consulting point of view, our innovative approach and tailor-made solutions allow us to deliver the highest standards in the field of Management Consulting, EU Consultancy, Investment Advisory and Strategy Planning.

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