



**CYPRUS
ACADEMY
OF PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION**

***The Cyprus DISPA Meeting
Nicosia Conference Centre
11-12 October 2012***

***Presentation at EUPAN Meeting,
Limassol 15-16 October 2012***

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The Cyprus DISPA Meeting

- Organised by the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration (CAPA) which represents Cyprus at the DISPA network.
- Date: 11 – 12 October 2012
- Place: Nicosia Conference Centre
- Theme: “Enhancing the Impact of Learning on Organisational Performance”

The Cyprus DISPA theme was...

- proposed by CAPA and agreed upon at the Copenhagen DISPA Trio Meeting in February 2012
- announced by the CAPA delegation at the Copenhagen DISPA Meeting in May 2012.

The Cyprus DISPA Meeting Programme

- The detailed programme of the Cyprus DISPA Meeting was given (a close to) final shape at the Cyprus DISPA Trio Meeting in July, on the basis of a CAPA proposal.
- Participants at the July Cyprus Trio Meeting:
 - Poland (National School of Public Administration – KSAP)
 - Cyprus (CAPA)
 - Ireland (Institute of Public Administration – IPA)
 - The European Administrative School

Cyprus DISPA Meeting set in the context of EUPAN and DISPA work

- Recent EUPAN and DISPA work dominated by the current economic crisis.
- Crisis poses enormous challenges for Public Administration: Public Services under increasing pressure to be more
 - efficient
 - effective
 - innovative
 - quality-orientedand all this with human resources that are
 - fewer
 - expected to work harder
 - paid less
- Public administration is confronted with crisis-induced radical changes, and it must find ways to deal with them.

Recent general EUPAN theme:

“ In the wake of crisis”

Current Cyprus EUPAN theme:

“The role of top executives in times of crisis”

Recent DISPA themes:

- Warsaw – “Leadership in a changing Public Administration”
- Copenhagen – “Innovation in Public Service Delivery”

Although the word “crisis” does not appear in these titles, in both meetings there was constant concern with the implications of the crisis on public service training and training institutes.

The Cyprus DISPA Meeting Theme

- The Nicosia DISPA Meeting of 11-12 October was conceived and realized in the same spirit. A heightened and urgent sense of responsibility on the part of Training Institutes to do their best to help public services meet the current and coming challenges.
- The Meeting dealt with the question “How can Training Institutes increase significantly the impact they have on the actual performance of their clients”.
- The focus was not the what of training (i.e. the subject – matter, the content of the required learning) but the how: the learning methodologies most conducive to a considerably improved work performance.

Four sub-themes were addressed:

- 1) How can we secure:
 - (a) that off-the-job training (classroom or outdoors) can produce practically applicable learning and
 - (b) that the learning produced off-the-job will be actually applied (“transferred”) in the real work situation?

Here trainers’ and Training Institutes’ efforts concentrate mainly on off-the-job work whereas on-the-job impact is largely left to trainees and their organisations.

Four sub-themes were addressed (cont'd)

- 2) How can systematic, coach-facilitated work-based improvement initiatives be supported by off-the-job training? Here trainers' and Training Institutes' efforts are divided between off-the-job and on-the-job work, but are guided by the latter.

Case considered: CAPA EU-funded project for the strategic, leadership and management development in the Cyprus civil service. This project has already been presented in this EUPAN Meeting.

Four sub-themes were addressed (cont'd)

- 3)- Action Learning: A learning method whereby experienced managers, in peer groups, try to learn from each other how to tackle real problems they are facing, which are unique and for which there are no known answers.
- Here learning and on-the-job problem solving coincide, and therefore the question of transfer from the learning situation to the work situation does not arise.

Four sub-themes were addressed (cont'd)

- 4) Structured stakeholder Dialogue. This is a collective learning and at once problem-solving methodology. Here again learning and real problem-solving coincide. But in contrast to Action Learning, in this methodology the problem to be tackled is common to all participants, and the learning produced is shared by all.

Case considered: A Town Planning Department and CAPA Project of Public Governance Development in the Wine Villages Region in Cyprus. DISPA Delegates made a field trip to the region.

The Art of Innovation

In addition to the four sub-themes on effective training methodologies, the Meeting included a highly entertaining - and innovative - presentation on the Art of Innovation in training and management.

The two-day Meeting was throughout, very participative, experiential and interactive (as all learning processes ought to be!)