

## **Corruption goes through the big door**

**Germán Bernate**

The new Romanian government chaired by Prime Minister Sorin Grindeanu, who had been in office only a few months ago, promulgated his first Decree. Decriminalize cases of corruption when the amount stolen is less than \$ 50,000 (fifty thousand dollars). That is, it is presented in Society to corruption and is accepted to have its own legitimacy. This decree is new: it legalizes the robbery and exempts from all responsibility those who infringe the Laws.

Many Colombians are surprised by this novel way of governing. Some, ironically, wonder when the Executive will consider these lessons from Romania to proceed in a similar way. Or, maybe, it's not necessary?

Specialists in Project Management observe the so-called 'Best Practices'. These include, among others: appropriate training for all stakeholders, information management, generation of ideas for improvement, lessons learned from other projects, comparison with work done in other countries with different cultures, audits, observing standards, and many more .

In parallel there are the so-called 'Bad Practices'. These are not found in the Procedural Manuals of any company, but all citizens know them well. Among the most famous are some used by sellers: a) lie to the customer with false promises about the benefits of the products and services promoted. B) hide from the client: never appears, refuses to answer phone calls. C) delivering poor quality products. D) non-realistic advertising.

But there are other 'Bad Practices' that are also present in Romania: bribery and corruption. These are presented most notably in construction and infrastructure. For the award of contracts mechanisms are designed to present the requirements to the proponents and emphasis is placed on transparency. After the elaboration of the contract comes a mandatory management: the obtaining of authorizations of the most varied requirements. Complex and not always useful operation.

Risk appears. This is an important complement to the project's governance. This, the Risk, provides a series of 'Best Practices' that has the mission to control the action and prevent complex situations. Controls include documentation, monitoring and control, communications, monitoring of contracts, among many.

Risk is generous in its support. Your first contribution is the definition of the corresponding procedure: that is, what should be done and what is not allowed. Then it is in charge of identifying them, understanding what is involved and setting priorities. Qualitative and quantitative analyzes are then performed. This to establish the true

impact they have. A guideline is established to know what to respond to each risk and how its management is controlled.

Parallel to the risk management and management procedure, it is suggested that an Anti-Corruption Procedure be established. This is an opportunity to develop an Anti-Corruption Plan, as an integral part of the previous one.

### **Anti-Corruption Management Plan**

There is a national concern in Romania: how much does corruption cost? In other countries in the Americas, taxpayers ask themselves the same question. For now there is no answer and it can hardly be established. Justice has a powerful vehicle: the delation. When a corrupt is identified and the authorities face and capture him, he immediately offers to collaborate with the Justice: the information he gives about his cronies gives him a special prize: the reduction of his sentence by fifty percent.

In compliance with the current legal regulations that require the elaboration of a strategy to fight against corruption and attention to citizens, and in the development of the methodology "Strategies for the Construction of the Anti-Corruption Plan and Citizen Assistance" issued by the Secretariat of Transparency Of the Presidency of the Republic, the Anticorruption and Citizen Assistance Plan of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection for the year 2014 is presented.

The exercise of documentation and systematization of the institutional efforts to combat corruption introduced by Law 1474 of 2011 in its article 731 constitutes for the Ministry an important opportunity to translate into a plan the efforts that the organization has been carrying out to materialize the expectations Social issues of an honest and trustworthy government in the Health and Social Protection Sector.

The 'Lessons Learned' from the permanent exercises of strengthening self-control, as well as the lessons derived from the continuous monitoring schemes and the search for the implementation of a comprehensive management model, nowadays allow a management policy Of management and corruption risks in the processes, defined, approved, disclosed and implemented and a notable advance in the documentation of maps of corruption risks and in the definition of actions for their management.

### **Anti-corruption procedure**

It is advisable to design an 'Anticorruption Procedure'. Several governments have implemented the construction of a 'Risk Map'. This 'Good Practice' is a beginning. Some methodological guidance should now be used to construct the so-called 'Anti-Corruption Procedure'.

The mentioned Procedure must include the fundamental phases: beginning, planning, execution and control and finally closure. The contract must include clauses mentioning the obligation to include external audits. These must be qualified and must have the Certifications that ensure their suitability. In the Planning, at least the following steps must be included:

01- Evaluation of the risk of corruption and bribery. These should be identified, find the sources, understand how the criminals operate to draw up the corresponding action plans.

02- All High Executives, without exception, must receive the corresponding training. This applies both to Governmental Entities and to Private Enterprises. When these are state providers they must demonstrate that all their executives have taken the mentioned training.

03- The documentation must be available to all interested parties, without restriction of any nature. Those documents of a confidential nature must state clearly and instruct the interested party on the points considered to be confidential.

04- Backup systems must be established to prevent unforeseen failures. There are numerous techniques for building them.

05 - Disclosure of the Contracts assigned: name of the company awarded, budget, deadlines, list of deliverables, fines for breach, among many.

**Finally, we would like to stress the importance of using productivity tools for Time Management and Risk Analysis. It is an arduous and challenging task: it is required that all citizens close ranks to defeat the corrupt.**

## About the Author



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**Germán Bernate** is an Electronic Engineer (Universidad Distrital – 1962) and Master in Project Management (UCI University of Costa Rica 2009). He worked 31 years for IBM in Colombia in managerial and technical positions. He worked with NCR Colombia and served as Program Manager and Project Manager. Founder and CEO of Almagesto (2004), a company dedicated to consulting and training in the areas of strategic planning and project management. In 1992 he won the first prize in the fourth edition of Doctor Zumel Literary Contest in Madrid Spain. President of the Board of Teatro Colón for five years (2007-2011). Led the Project Management program at Universidad Piloto August 2008 to December 2009. Parquesoft Director during the period from August 2010 to March 2011. Professor at universities Distrital Francisco Jose de Caldas, Nacional, Javeriana, Pamplona, Tecnológica de Bolívar, Andes, Externado, America and Piloto. Co-founder Colombia Chapter PMI (Project Management Institute) and its president for three terms. Co-founder of the Colombian Association ACGePro Project Management IPMA Member Association (International Project Management Association). He has published several books, including 'El año 2000 al acecho. La crisis del Y2K afectará a su computador, aprenda a controlarla' on the issue of the change of the millennium. In February 2013, published as the book 'Gerencia de Proyectos: aplicaciones en salud'. *Computerworld* Editorial Board Member since 1996 and international correspondent for *PM World Today* eJournal and PMForum.org from 2007-2011. Contact email:

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