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# Pedagogical strategies for continuous training in the police system

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## Abstract

The need to adapt to the permanent changes that occur in the social, economical, technical and technological environments, has made that the continuous professional training in organizational space to be recognized as an investment in human resources, with multiple benefits for both the overall goals of the organization, and to increase personal satisfaction at work, too. Although the Romanian police system has registered multiple signs of progress in which concerns the process of professional training for its personnel, we believe that the didactic strategy of organization and conveyance for police force-oriented training programs can be improved. For this purpose, we strongly suggest the following: an identification of current conceptions for various hierarchical levels, an analysis of actual training needs of the personnel, setting up continual training programs that observe adult learning principles, setting up targets, contents, methods and means of training based on the specific features of a certain job and an application of specific criteria of assessment of the results.

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## 1. Introduction

When dealing with an organization, the employees' professional training is one of the managerial actions that ensure that the level of the services they provide is maintained at a satisfactory level or even more, improved and that the same employees can readjust to the permanent changes that occur in certain adjacent environments to that

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organization. Police managers are also interested in permanently providing education and training to the personnel, both designed to ensure a proper execution of professional tasks and thus attracting a higher performance level. Peter C. Kratcoski and Dilip K. Das stated that “education was viewed as developing the ability to conceptualize and expand theoretical and analytic learning process, while training involved gaining the skills needed to accomplish the immediate tasks and goals of police operations.” (Kratcoski, & Das, 2007, page 4) We should not only acknowledge the fact that professional training for the police force is necessary, but we should also determine the most efficient strategies regarding the implementation of training programs for the personnel.

On a global level, studies regarding professional training for policemen have mainly dealt with its initial stages or the practical applicability of certain training methods; Romanian scientific undertakings on this matter are rather scarce. Professional training for Romanian policemen can be improved by redefining it from a pedagogical and organizational point of view. In this regard, we intend to start a scientific study to help us identify some effective didactical strategies of continuous training for Romanian policemen, starting from the fact that setting up continuous training programs requires a step-by-step organizational approach. Having ascertained the actual training needs in police (concerning training fields, ways of achievement, what type of methodology is used in teaching and assessment), we can further plan continuous training programs that would cater to the specific training requirements of the system in discussion.

## 2. Typical features of the process of professional training within organizations

### 2.1. Definition and phases of the professional training

Strongly linked with vocational practice, professional training is perceived by G.A. Cole as “any type of activity that targets an acquisition of knowledge and skills that are specific to the purposes of a certain trade or to a task.” (Cole, 1993, page 362) Radu Emilian identifies the action that sustains professional training, saying that “professional training is a learning/instructive process by which employees acquire theoretical and practical knowledge, new abilities or techniques that improve the efficiency level of their performance.” (Emilian, 1999, page 162) Aside from *professional training*, other forms are often employed, e.g. *vocational training* and *professional development*. Viorica Ana Chisu sets the difference, stating that „*personnel vocational training* consists of a total sum of the actions used by employees to acquire within an organized setup an array of knowledge, skills, certain manners and behaviors that are required for several specific tasks for the company”, and „*professional development for the personnel* consists of a total sum of the actions by which employees, who followed certain programs hold in the company, improve their skills, knowledge, aptitudes, manners, behaviors and working techniques for which they are already qualified, all for the purpose of achieving a superior level of their goals and tasks.” (Chisu, 2002, page 354) The process of professional training is complex, dynamic and it is spread out over a lengthy period in time, through its two own phases:

- **Initial training** (in the vocational training sense), which “aims at training the employees with the view of obtaining the qualification, offering them the possibility of practicing a job or taking up a certain position within a company” (Rosca & Varzaru, 2005, page 281). Initial training is taught at specialized institutions (i.e. vocational schools, colleges, universities) or within companies (new employees attend training programs that concern with the know-how, acquiring the necessary skills and instilling the appropriate behavior needed for the position).
- **Continuous training** (in the professional development sense) is a stage that arises after the individual has taken up a certain position within a company. This stage consists of engaging into various skill improvement/specialization courses, seminars, professional summits, all with the purpose of a global enrichment and consolidation of the current knowledge and of the work habits.

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