

Chapter 2

Managing for the Sustained Success of Organic Food Associations: A Sustainable Management Approach from “Working with People” Model

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ABSTRACT

Systems and agricultural organizations are facing new challenges in an increasingly complex and competitive environment. Opposing the existence of other food producers that show low profitability in their production systems, there are other models that have differentiated through ecological production being able to reach high profitability in their production systems. Ecological agriculture is seen as an opportunity to supply to those social segments that would rather consume healthy products. This article reviews literature on processes and key management factors for the sustained success of an organization, resulting on a conceptual framework that synthesizes these ideas. Mainly it looks at two international standards: ISO 9004 (2009) and ISO 21500 (2012). This conceptual framework is used to analyze the experience of an organization of organic farmers called Camposeven, which counts with farmers with over 40 years of experience in production, processing, and marketing of conventional and organic crops in the region of Murcia in Spain.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, negotiation within organizations becomes more complex, with more challenges and new factors that affect sustained success. The normal negotiation approaches of many organizations, focus on the reaching objectives and goals that not are not always enough for success (Helbrough, 1995; Williams, 1999).

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That is why organizations are facing a growing worry when reaching for sustainability and quality in social, capital, human and intellectual aspects as well as in the abilities of managers (Ugalde-Binda, 2014).

The ISO 9004 (2009) was born as an international standard that serves as a guide to reach sustained success in an organization, in a complex, demanding, and constantly changing environment through an approach based on negotiation quality. According to this norm, sustained success is defined as “the ability that an organization has to satisfy in a balanced way and in the long terms the needs and expectations of its clients and other interested parts”. Etymologically the term “exitus” means exit, obtaining a positive result for the satisfactory accomplishment of marked objectives; reason why it is usually identified with the success in a negotiation and the accomplishment of a final goal (Haaz, 2009). This ISO also responds to the necessity of defining indicators to measure the success of an organization with the time and efficiency of an organization (Malt et al, 2003).

On the other hand, the management of organizations is also necessary to establish the success of a mission, vision and values (ISO 9004, 2009; ISO 21500, 2012) that guide people and their actions. Therefore the factor of leadership in the management of an organization (Lobas 2006; ISO 21500, 2012) is also necessary to avoid losing alignment with the mission and promoting values.

Organizations working on projects prioritized the needs and expectations of stakeholders through an effective and constant communication with them (ISO 21500, 2012). From the senior management of these organizations continuous efforts are made to measure customer and stakeholder’s satisfaction, and provide feedback with key information for sustained success (ISO 9004, 2009, ISO 21500, 2012; Olaru et al, 2013).

The capacities needed for innovation, learning and change are also considered key factors in finding solutions to overcome challenges, crisis and the survival of organizations (Lobas, 2006; Hogan and Coote, 2014; Ugalde-Binda, 2014). It has been found that there is a positive link between leadership, development and productivity, profitability and customer satisfaction primarily (Lobas, 2006).

Other studies have linked the sustained success of an organization with the dynamic ability of leaders to manage change, in order to implement innovations through learning processes that respond to a demanding and changing context (Bessant et al, 2001; Mintzberg, 1994). This becomes increasingly important for the sustained success of organizations (the importance of context and interaction with their environment) (ISO 21500, 2012). Change management is also required to respond to unforeseen circumstances, preventing future risks (Ramasesh & Browning, 2014) and taking advantages of new opportunities (Hillson, 2002).

In a study with more than 200 successful management cases, the following factors for the sustained success of an organization were identified: the strategy of the organization, implementation of actions and projects, organizational culture, structure, talent, innovation, leadership and strategic alliances (Nohria et al, 2003).

The traditional triangle, cost, time and quality management affect the satisfaction of the parties involved and therefore affect the success of projects and organizations (Westerveld, 2002; Chan et al, 2001). However, sustained success is also linked, and more relevant to the assessment of the results by the parties involved (IPMA, 2012; ISO 21500, 2012) and expectations (Dvir et al, 1993). It is therefore necessary that organizations count with human capital competent for adequate social integration throughout the entire project management (Cazorla et al, 2013; De los Rios et al, 2014; Ugalde-Binda, 2014). Nowadays, sustainable management has no sense if projects do not take into account their social environment (Cernea, 1992; Oakley, 1993; Cicmil et al, 2006; Chambers, 1995; ISO 9004, 2009) in order to overcome challenges, adverse and complex situations that come mainly from the social context.

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