

GRAND PARTNERS

Training & Consulting

Communication on Progress ~2013~

July 21st, 2014

I hereby declare that GRAND PARTNERS, Ltd. and its sister companies have been actively implementing the main principles of an ethical business since we started operating in 2004. Since joining the UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT in 2012, we have made The Ten Principles our priority in a way we conduct business.

We make a conscious effort to communicate The Ten Principles to our employees, Clients, suppliers, and other stakeholders. We make sure that these principles are embedded in our everyday procedures and become a way of thinking.

We are committed to continuing participation in the UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT with a hope of a better business and global environment.

Goda Petravičienė
CEO
GRAND PARTNERS, Ltd.

THE PURPOSE

GRAND PARTNERS, LTD and its sister companies operate in a private business sector in the area of training and consulting. We do not have to meet any specific requirements set by the government and are not expected to issue any kind of progress reports since Lithuanian law does not require any. Our participation in the UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT is voluntary. It was caused by our personal understanding that we are responsible for the future of our country and world. Therefore, we must perform according to some reasonable guidelines that would not discriminate against anyone and would also relate to the main areas that our business affects is affected by. We find that The Ten Principles of UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT provide us with the most fundamental rules for conducting our business in a society that we live in.

OUR STATEMENT

With this document we (GRAND PARTNERS and its sister companies) state that we will continue our support for the Global Compact and we renew our ongoing commitment to this initiative and its principles for the year to come. With great pride we declare our participation in the GLOBAL COMPACT to our main stakeholders and share its Ten Principles encouraging them to join this initiative for a greater future for all.

ABOUT US

GRAND PARTNERS training and consulting company has been successfully operating in Lithuania and neighboring countries since 2004. In 2010 and 2011, it was awarded as the fastest growing training and consulting company in the country.

OUR MAJOR AREAS OF EXPERTISE:

- ♦ Leadership Training and Development;
- ♦ Organizational Development;
- ♦ Training and Development in the areas of Sales and Customer Service.

We operate to develop leaders who positively change organizations. We strive to become a provider of choice, employer of choice and investment of choice as a company working in the fields of our expertise in every market we serve.

OUR PROMISE TO CUSTOMER

We provide our Customers with the newest know-how in the most comprehensive manner, supported by the tools that are easy to apply in a Customer's work environment right a way. Our team is fully committed to all the preparation and post-service work to create the most valuable experience to our Customer.

OUR VALUES

- ♦ We work to create maximum value to our Customer;
- ♦ We encourage people to use their talent;
- ♦ We seek open communication and constructive feedback;
- ♦ We create relations based on trust and respect;
- ♦ We only give promises that we can fulfill.

THE TEN PRINCIPLES IN OUR BUSINESS

Common principles of ethical business conduct such as non-discrimination and equal rights, maximum transparency, non-corruption as well as common sense acts of respect, trust and open communication are part of who we are as individuals and as a company. Since we joined GLOBAL COMPACT in 2012, we started consciously implementing the Ten Principles in our everyday operations and our business culture. Please find a report on our progress for the period of 2013 to 2014 below.

Human Rights

- ♦ Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- ♦ Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

We operate in the area of human resource training and consulting. Thus, our target Clients (HR managers) and suppliers (consultants, coaches, trainers, etc.) are highly oriented toward people, their needs, work environment and other factors that may influence their productivity and well-being. The protection of human rights is a very basic requirement for our everyday operations. We have included these principles into our yearly employee evaluation forms and address them semi-annually.

We also have an employee representative, who is required by Lithuanian law, but we've delegated many more rights to that person than required. In addition to taking care of employee safety at a workplace, this person overlooks such issues as internal communications and microclimate within the organization to ensure the optimal conditions for employees. We also invest in employee skills training, yearly events and celebrations. The outcome of retaining the best employees and quickly attracting potential employees fully covers the costs incurred. The employers and owners also benefit from this practice and are motivated to carry that on.



Trip to Stockholm, 2014

Labour

- ♦ Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- ♦ Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- ♦ Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and
- ♦ Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Working in the area of HR training and development, we fully understand and embrace the

advantages of diverse workforce. However, our main decisions on hiring, development and retention are always based on a person's skills and experience as well as their motivation to work with GRAND PARTNERS and not personal traits such as age, gender, etc. Depending on a particular position, we come up with a list of very specific requirements and select the person, who is the closest match and has the highest potential of developing them in the shortest period of time. Every year we employ university students who want to gain some real life experience. We hire many of our previous interns for permanent jobs or some temporary projects. We continue our cooperation when they join other companies and need help in the area of HR training and organizational development. At the same time we also work with people who are retired from their main positions, but are still willing and able to share their experience with others. The average age of our employees is 35 years.

We have made equal rights part of our hiring and employee retention plan from the very beginning of our operation in 2004. We only hire professionals with a minimum requirement of a university degree in the area they specialize in. Because of that alone the issue of child labour is completely out of question. Moreover, it is not an issue in our country after all.

Since experience is a very significant factor, most of our employees have worked in other businesses before starting their career with us. Thus, the issue of child labour is out consideration for us. We do provide some opportunity for internship for college and university students, who are looking for some experience in some real business environment. It is important for any business to have alumni with some real life experience, not only academic knowledge. We are committed to devoting some of our work hours to contribute in that area in a community we operate.

Collective bargaining does not exist in small businesses in Lithuania, we have put some policies that would allow our people to express their needs from the beginning of our operation. In addition to a post of employee representative, our process of hiring fully omits questions regarding any political beliefs and/or activities. We do not enquire candidates about their participation in any organizations that are not directly related to their desired position or job. When people become members of our team they are free to continue their extra-curricular activities regardless of whether management and owners approve of it. People are always free to express their beliefs and ideas on any matter (political, religious, any other) and will never be evaluated based upon that. Our yearly evaluation policy, questionnaires and review sheets omit any discriminatory questions. All of the questions are direct and are related to very precise measurable results that employees have to meet. In addition to that we hold quarterly meetings where we discuss what needs employees have and look for possible solutions together. We also conduct yearly surveys that assess employee motivation, loyalty and organizational climate in general. We incorporate the findings into our strategy for next year.

We have made equal rights part of our hiring and employee retention plan from the very beginning of our operation in 2004. Our team consists of almost an equal amount of men (60 %) and women (40 %).

Environment

- ♦ **Principle 7:** Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- ♦ **Principle 8:** undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- ♦ **Principle 9:** encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

We believe that we have implemented all of the policies and principles available for a service business. We have incorporated some very simple principles that allow us to contribute to preserving our environment every day:

- ♦ Think before you print!
- ♦ Recycle!
- ♦ Reuse!
- ♦ Use scratch!
- ♦ Car-sharing at all times possible!

We implement those principles at work as well as at our homes and encourage our team members to do the same. This initiative has been gaining more and more attention and support each year. We currently have special containers for recycling used paper in the office.

Since we use a lot of paper material during our training, we try to use recycled paper as often as possible. During academies where the same people go through many different trainings, instead of using many folders, we prepare one large binder that allows them to keep their training material in one place. We also encourage our training participants to reuse their plastic name cards, pens, pencils and all other training materials throughout the ongoing training programs or at their workplace after training. We responsibly recycle all of our paper materials.

We also save:

- ♦ Electricity (switch off the lights when leaving the office, all of our equipment is set to hibernate if not used for more than one minute, avoid air-conditioning as often as possible);
- ♦ Heating (reduce it if the air in the office is not too cold).

Anti-Corruption

- ♦ Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

When we started our business avoiding bribery was almost impossible. It was very common in the area or training and consulting as it was in every area for that matter. Various institutions, such as United Nations, Transparency International and even Lithuanian government has taken some initiative in the areas of educating our society and the situation is slowly changing. However, we made a conscious decision to avoid all acts of corruption in all of its forms. In some instances we have made our business less profitable, but it is also our competitive advantage in hiring and retaining employees and even attracting some like-minded Clients. After all, in a small market that we operate in reputation is key.

CONCLUSION

We are proud to have completed our second year with the GLOBAL COMPACT initiative and we hope to not only further implement The Ten Principles, but also be more active in our local chapter and to attract more members to join UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT in the nearest future.

Managing Director

Goda Azeneckaite-Petraviciene