

Peter Kopeczek: “You can’t keep cutting cost”

Looking for opportunities – even in a crisis  
Reinvent your business, now or never

**The theme of the meeting of the BZW (Brabant-Zeeland Employers’ Organisation) study group was a positive message. “These days force companies to make choices” , according to guest speaker Peter Kopeczek. “But with a complete focus on efficiency we will not overcome the problems. And there are plenty of opportunities. The trick is to grab them!”**



Foto: Vincent Knoops

The study group dates back to the early nineties. At the moment it has about 20 active members who inspire each other by means of thematical meetings. This time Peter Kopeczek was the guest speaker. With his company TheVirtualManager Kopeczek develops new lines of approach for business development in order to generate new business and profits. He does so by his ‘Re-invent Your Business’-model, which has already turned out to be profitable for customers such as DAF, FEI Company and Aegide.

### **Strategic agenda**

Kopeczek: “There is no denying the present recession, but at the same time it is no use crippling each other. Too many companies focus on the here and now. The management of a company spends only fifteen per cent of its time, on average, on the ‘strategic agenda’. Why is that? In good times they are too busy. In bad times the favourite maxim is: cutting costs. Just now I want to make clear that there are plenty opportunities to be occupied with the future. However important it may be to have your basis in good order, you should also direct your attention to your position in ten years from now. Nobody knows what this crises will bring us. Will it last for one year, two, seven? At a certain moment you cannot cut back any more. Then what?”

## **Choices**

A strategic agenda forces the management to make choices – what you must not do (any more), and what you must do. Kopeczek's approach guides companies through these problems. In his 'Re-invent Your Business'- model, preoccupation with scenario's takes an important place. What do you want to have achieved in ten years' time and what paths can you take to that end? What is your 'worst case scenario' and what is your 'dream scenario'? Within these extremities there are a number of imaginary paths which can be taken.

In practise it boils down to focusing on opportunities', according to Kopeczek. In general these opportunities can be found in innovation, globalisation and organisation, in industry but also in the services sector.

Innovation is strongly influenced by globalisation but on the other hand we are especially looking for local, individual solutions. In most companies there is some form of innovation. It often lacks sharpness and direction. More and more companies enter foreign markets, but here too, making conscious choices is essential. It is a complex matter, which, as management, you must spend time on and pay attention to.

Saving is made possible by making organisations flatter and not only by organising this within our own walls, but especially by involving the network around us – opening up the 'Virtual Enterprise'.

My objective here in the BZW study club is making entrepreneurs and managers think; getting them in a positive attitude directed towards action. Actually, this club has the same goal and our discussion shows that we have come to terms over this.'

Interimmanager and secretary of the study club Leendert van der Waals: Kopeczek's story is a positive one. A good cause, for it makes people think again, also within our club. At the moment it looks as if everybody is depressed and economises. Of course a company has to be in good order basically, but running a company is also a matter of spotting opportunities, in good times as well as in bad times.

Written by Marco de Jonge Baas for the BZW-magazine.  
Eindhoven, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009.