

Germany, Product Plan, Product Description and Indicators for Music Schools

The tangible result of this project is the publication *Produktplan Produktbeschreibung und Kennzahlen für Musikschulen* ('Product Plan, Product Description and Indicators for Music Schools') published in 1998. It provided German music schools with an example and guideline for drawing up a product plan, describing their products and measuring results by using indicators. Applying these descriptions and measurements contributes to quality management within the school. The *Verband Deutscher Musikschulen* (German Music Schools' Association - VdM) is the initiator of the project. In cooperation with the *Kommunale Gemeinschaftsstelle, Köln* (Municipality of Cologne - KGSt) they started working on the first product descriptions in 1996.

Background

This project can be viewed as part of the management principle in Germany known as the *Neue Steuerungsmodell* ('New Public Management'). The object of the new management model is to increase efficiency and effectiveness, which also includes music schools. The only way to achieve this is by using standards related to preserving or increasing the quality of the institute and its activities.

Concept

Developing a product plan, product description and ascribing indicators allows music schools to determine whether they are meeting their objectives and offers the schools insight into how their results measure up to those of other music schools. Moreover, the product descriptions/indicators contribute to quality management within a school. The joint effort by the KGSt and the VdM on the publication created a product that is based on a municipal way of thinking as well as the professional foundation of the music schools.

The starting points for the individual production description system are:

- the priority of formulating a content-related objective;
- the consistent harmonisation of indicators with the objectives; and
- the aim of arriving at a description of products and indicators, geared toward quality.

The financial and budgetary details are also included in the product descriptions.

Objectives

To create standards for maintaining and improving music school quality with a view to efficiency and effectiveness.

Description

The publication consists of a format for describing a project plan for the music school and descriptions of the school's products, with room to fill in statistics such as numbers or specific rules.

The following classification is used for the products of a music school:

Figure 1

Product sector Music School			
Product group	<u>Education</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Special services</u>
Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic music subjects • Instrumental and vocal main subjects • Ensemble and supplementary subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects • Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service / Rentals

As indicated, a total of six products are described separately.

The above classification is used in the *Music School Product Plan* framework, with additional explanations provided for each product.

The six *Product Descriptions* are expanded and detailed, generally taking up four pages. The date, product name and person responsible for the product must be filled in first. Next, a description is made based on the following:

1. Product definition

This is a brief description of the product, including the corresponding statutory rules, the target group, the objectives and information on results, quality and quantity. The indicators that are applicable to the objective are included in the description. This is the most detailed portion of the product description.

2. Scope of the supply

3. Financing / Budget

4. Other information on results, quality and quantity

5. Explanation

Figure 2: An excerpt from the product 'Projects':

Objectives and information on results, quality and quantity
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A variety of projects are to be offered and implemented▪ X% are projects that precede music education▪ x% are in-depth / complementary projects▪ x% are innovative projects▪ cooperative efforts are sought with public and private partners <p>If the institute places specific emphasis on certain products it can also be described here, such as offering independent youth bands or programmes for ethnic minorities.</p>
Indicators for this objective:
X projects were offered, of which <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ x projects were different (target group, theme)▪ x were carried out▪ x had a set goal prior to commencement (a performance, for example) X classroom hours were used <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ in proportion to the available classroom hours in the product group 'Education'▪ average participant frequency (participants per offer) X instructors were involved <ul style="list-style-type: none">• x of which were in-house staff / guests, and so forth...

Organisation

A 'Products / Indicators' VdM study group was set up for this project which drew up the first three product descriptions in cooperation with the KGSt. The descriptions appeared in 1997 in a document entitled 'From Culture Administration to Culture Management in the new management model: tasks and products for the cultural sector'. The document contains product descriptions from all product sectors that can serve as an example and guideline in practice. The VdM was involved in drafting and editing the section about music schools. In 1997 the 'Music School' Product Plan was supplemented with the product descriptions 'Projects', 'Events', and 'Service / Rentals', which brings the total of product descriptions applicable to music schools to the six mentioned above.

Results

The above-mentioned is complemented by brief introductions and a concept for reporting. The VdM publishing house produces the complete end result as part of the *Arbeitshilfen* ('Employment Tools') series.

Information

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