

Guidelines to running an Economy of Communion Business

The Economy of Communion proposes the following, ‘Guidelines to Running a Business’ to productive organizations who take its message and culture and make it their own, which guidelines have been written in the light of the life, joys and sufferings of thousands of entrepreneurs and workers. It proposes as well to follow the scheme of the ‘seven colors’”, which is one of the founding charismatic intuitions in conceiving and living life, associated with the ‘charism of unity’, of which the EoC is an expression.

1. Red: Entrepreneurs, workers and business

The businesses which adhere to the Economy of Communion define their own ‘business mission’ by adopting communion as a fundamental value of one’s organization, at every level.

In order for this to happen, the functions and the various business roles are defined with clarity and exercised with a spirit of service and responsibility. The directing style is that of participation. Business objectives are shared and adequately verified in a transparent manner, paying particular attention to the quality of relationships between all subjects involved (stakeholders). When the business makes profits, entrepreneurs and their partners commit to sharing them in order to destine them towards three objectives, while respecting typical procedures in different types of businesses and the social situations in which they operate, and attribute equal importance to: a) helping indigent individuals through various initiatives that promote communitarian and productive inclusion; b) developing the business by empowering its structure and improving the quality of its products. Particular attention is dedicated to those initiatives which would favor the formation of new activities and thereby creating new jobs, particularly for disadvantaged people, and eventually to the remuneration of partners; c) the diffusion of the culture of communion. In the case in which adhesion to the EoC is not yet adhered to by all partners, the commitment to share the profits according to the aims of the project is limited to the sums earned by those who have adhered.

2. Orange: Relationships with clients, suppliers, financiers, civil society and external subjects

Business members commit with professionalism to build and reinforce good and open relationships with clients, suppliers and the territorial community in which they operate, of which safeguard and betterment are felt to be integral parts of the mission. The business is carried out in a loyal and civil way with all competitors, suppliers, clients, civil society and public administration, which are felt to be essential partners for the realization of the Common good. Moreover, entrepreneurs and workers of new EoC businesses, promote the spirit and the message of the EoC, presenting their own ideas and experiences when at conventions, seminars, and meetings because they consider the diffusion of this new economic vision to be part of their ‘vocation’. They are not happy to just live the EoC, but desire to let many others know about it, paying special attention to young people, whom they will make welcome during periods of formation or internship.

3. Yellow: Spirituality and ethics

The work of the EoC is seen as an opportunity for growth, not only professional, but also spiritual and ethical. The business commits itself to concretely respect laws and works for the change and the betterment of such laws. It behaves correctly towards fiscal authorities, control bodies, unions and institutional authorities. It knows that the quality of working life is a dimension essential for a person’s realization, and for the development of his/her vocation as a worker and as a human being. Those who work in EoC businesses learn to give value also to difficulties and hardships in the workplace, making them precious occasions for growth and maturity. In defining the nature and quality of its products, the business is committed to not only respecting contract obligations, but also to evaluate the effects of its products on the wellbeing of the people and the environment to which they are destined.

4. Green: Quality of life, happiness and relationships

One of the fundamental objectives of an EoC business is to become a real community. To this end, periodical meetings are programmed to verify the quality of interpersonal relationships and to contribute in resolving situations of conflict, availing themselves of so called 'instruments' of communion, among which the occasional meeting between administrators and workers, (at least once a year), moments of 'fraternal correction' between all members of the business, a time for listening, on the part of managers to eventual protests and dissent, and the exchange of experiences during moments purposely set up. The EoC business knows that if these instruments of communion are not exercised, business life is impoverished, with a cost to economic performance. Special attention is given to physical health, sports, and care of the environment, since communion embraces nature and body as well. Towards the care of relationships, the EoC business gives importance to a time of celebration, even in work clothes, during which relationships, and the sense of belonging to a working community, are strengthened.

5. Blue: *Harmony in the workplace*

Beauty and harmony in the workplace are the first impression of an EoC business since communion is also beauty, without need for luxury. Surroundings are expressions of relational harmony and are themselves a part of business relations. Hygiene, cleanliness, and orderliness are part of the EoC culture as the harmony they bring will put people like workers, proprietors, clients and suppliers at ease. For this same reason, security measures are assured, such as necessary ventilation, adequate lighting, tolerable noise levels, and all other things which renders quality of relationships all the easier both inside and outside the business. The beauty dimension is given the maximum consideration even when the business enters into contact, directly or indirectly, with poverty, knowing that the first form of cure for any indigence is attention to relationship, and the beauty dimension proclaims this loudly.

6. Indigo: *Formation, instruction, wisdom*

The business will favor the creation of a climate of confidence among its members, in which it is natural to bring one's talents, ideas and competencies to the advancement of professional growth of colleagues and for further progress of the business itself. The first school of formation is always the business community with its various relationships. Moreover, the administration will adopt selection criteria for their staff and provide programs for the professional development of its workers such as to make easier the creation of such a climate. The business will provide opportunities for continuous upgrading and updating, favoring professional formation and the formation of the culture of communion both for workers and youth interested in the project.

Lastly, the entrepreneur and the workers of EoC will cultivate their qualities and interests in the company and elsewhere. They will particularly follow the development of economic culture participating of schools and conferences, in such a way as to be ever better able to give reasons for his business vision.

7. Violet: *Communication*

Entrepreneurs adhering to the EoC work constantly to create a climate of communication that is open and sincere, one that will favor the exchange of ideas and information at all levels of responsibility. To this end, they adopt opportune tools of periodical reporting, both internal and external (e.g. 'social balance'), tools which show through facts the social value generated for various subjects interested in the business activity. There can't be communion without communication. Businesses structured according to the Economy of Communion, with the intention of developing economic relationships of reciprocal production and benefit, use the most modern means of communication to connect, both locally and internationally. Businessmen who adhere to the Economy of Communion, conscious of the cultural and political value the success of the common project can bring, maintain always alive among them, at the local and international level, a spirit of reciprocal support and solidarity. They network with all those men and women of good will who want to contribute sincerely to a more just, fraternal and united world.