**Research and Intervention Techniques and Methods for Organisations: a Process-based Approach**

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***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course provides students with the knowledge and skills for managing research/intervention processes dedicated to organisations and which have organisations as purchasers/end users of these services.

More specifically, the course aims to:

- develop research/intervention planning skills for organisations "on a demand basis", i.e. in the presence of a purchaser;

* develop the ability to orient oneself and choose between the main methodological alternatives dealt with those most consistent with the research/intervention to be addressed;
* develop research/intervention management skills through the acquisition of process methodological skills, i.e. skills aimed at encouraging continuous reflection along each phase of the research/intervention.

*Intended learning outcomes*

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

* know and understand the main theoretical and methodological references for carrying out research and intervention activities for the training, development, evaluation and management of human resources; carry out social research and marketing activities for the development of organisational communication;
* define the phases and actions necessary in the planning of research/interventions for organisations (HR, marketing and communication);
* critically analyse and reflexively refocus research/intervention paths and projects for organisations (HR, marketing and communication);
* identify, starting from initial request, the salient information for negotiating possible research/intervention objects and objectives;
* choose between different orientations and methodological research/intervention paths (strategic skills);
* choose between different research/intervention settings and tools (tactical skills)
* identify paths for restitution and sharing of knowledge developed through research/intervention;
* submit a research/intervention project in writing and negotiate its relevance.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course develops the following thematic areas.

***Research Module***

1. INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH AND INTERVENTION:

* The psychological view of organisations
* Research and intervention as processes

1. INTERVENTION REQUEST

* Receiving and constructing the purchaser’s request
* Problem identification
* Professional positioning
* Construction of a research/intervention design premise

1. RESEARCH REQUEST

* Receiving the client's request and constructing a research premise
* Identifying the research objectives

1. RESEARCH OBJECTS

* Choosing the psychological paradigm most appropriate to the request
* Defining the research object

1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

* How to identify the crucial questions for research?
* What logics should be followed in formulating the objectives?

1. RESEARCH DESIGN

* Transforming a strategy into an investigation in a way that is consistent with the objectives
* Translating the objectives into an investigation path (design)

1. RESEARCH TOOLS

* Recognising and orienting oneself among the variety of tools in terms of content and form

1. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

* Defining a population
* Building a sample based on the most defined research approach

1. IMPLEMENTING CONDITIONS

* Recognising the variety of technical solutions available in each implementation step
* Reflecting on the impact of a technical choice in the knowledge building process

1. CONSTRUCTING AND COMMUNICATING THE RESULTS

* Recognising and managing the specificity of the construction of data and results
* Building the "external text" for the purchaser
* Supporting the path of appropriating and using the research
* Recognising and handling the technicalities of communication for the purchaser

1. FINAL RESEARCH WORKSHOP

* Beginning with the simulation of a briefing, and then designing a research project in its various strategic and tactical forms.

***Intervention Module***

1. INTRODUCTION TO INTERVENTION

* Intervention as a process
* Psychological theories on organisation and change as "orientators" of the intervention

1. INTERVENTION OBJECT

* Definition of the object
* The intervention "compass rose"

1. INTERVENTION OBJECTIVES

* Identification of the objectives

1. APPROACHES AND TYPES OF INTERVENTION

* Strategies and types of psychological intervention and conditions of choice
* Logic of the expert, of the doctor-patient, of the process intervention

1. TRAINING AND CONSULTING

* In-depth study of the setting elements, and of the training and consulting methods and techniques

1. TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY TOOLS

* Recognising and orienting oneself among the variety of tools and settings of an intervention

1. FINAL INTERVENTION WORKSHOP

* Beginning with the simulation of a briefing, and then designing an intervention in its strategic and tactical forms.

***READING LIST***

***Reading list for the path based on lecture contents:***

*Research Module*

1. Lecture notes and module guidelines published on the Blackboard platform

2. Research project developed in groups (in the dedicated workshop)

3. One choice from a or b:

a. P. Corbetta, *Metodologia e tecniche della ricerca sociale,* Il Mulino, Bologna, 2014, chaps. 1-2-3-5-9-10-11.

b. Selected readings:

- E. Babbie, *Ricerca sociale,* Apogeo, Milan, 2010, chaps. 2 and 4.

* J.W. Creswell, *Research design: Qualitative,* *quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, 2014, (4th edition) chaps. 6-8-9.

*Intervention Module*

1. Lecture notes and module guidelines published on the Blackboard platform

2. Intervention project developed in groups (within the dedicated workshop)

E. Schein, *Lezioni di consulenza,* Raffaello Cortina, 1992.

***Reading list for the text-based path:***

*Research Module*

1. Module guidelines published on the Blackboard platform

2. Research project developed individually (based on a briefing published on the Blackboard platform)

3. Study of the texts:

P. Corbetta, *Metodologia e tecniche della ricerca sociale,* Il Mulino, Bologna, 2014, chaps. 1-2-3-5-9-10-11.

E. Babbie, *Ricerca sociale,* Apogeo, Milan, 2010, chaps. 2 and 4.

J.W. Creswell, *Research design: Qualitative,* *quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Sage publications, Thousand Oaks, 2014, (IV edition) capp. 6, 8, 9

*Intervention Module*

1. Module guidelines published on the Blackboard platform

2. Intervention project developed individually (based on a written briefing, published on the Blackboard platform)

3. Study of the texts:

a. AA.VV. (2007), *La consulenza psicosociologica nelle organizzazioni,* Spunti (Studio APS magazine), no. 10/2007 (link: *http://www.studioaps.it/rivista-spunti/82-spunti-10.html*).

E. Schein, *Lezioni di consulenza,* Raffaello Cortina, 1992.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course is highly experiential in nature and leads students towards

- the design and development of research/intervention paths for organisations;

- the integration of methodological content and process knowledge;

- critical reflection and the reorientation of planned paths;

- the evaluation of results.

From this perspective, the course integrates different teaching methods

- classroom lectures for teaching the theoretical frameworks;

- presentation of case studies and testimonies by external professionals (practical experiences);

- remote individual practical activities.

The course, in addition to the hours of frontal lectures and exercises, includes at least 10 hours of guided practical activities in small groups (final research and intervention workshops; case studies and simulations), to enhance students' learning and involvement with the course materials.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

A final oral interview that will focus on a discussion of the practical activities and group work produced in the Workshop, or the individual work produced for the purpose of the exam; it will also assess the student's knowledge and ability to critically rework the materials indicated in the reading list (Path based on the lecture contents or Path based on the texts).

Assessment will take into account students' knowledge and relevance of their answers, their ability to use appropriate vocabulary and specific concepts, their reasoned and coherent structuring of argumentation, their articulation of links and connections between theory and practice, and their critical analysis and operational planning.

There is a single final mark based exclusively on the oral interview result (30% discussion of the practical activities and the paper, 70% verification of knowledge and understanding of material indicated in the reading list).

The final mark, expressed out of thirty, will assess the above knowledge and skills according to the following ranges: - incomplete or insufficient knowledge and skills: below 18; - adequate but not very thorough knowledge and skills, with limited applications to planning in practice: 18-22; - good knowledge and skills, adequately articulated and sufficiently applied to planning in practice: 23-26; - excellent knowledge and skills, well-articulated and solidly applied to planning in practice: 27-30.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

As it is introductory in nature, there are no formal prerequisites for attending the course. However, intellectual interest and curiosity in the topics covered in the course are assumed. It is also recommended revising any basic courses taken as part of the Undergraduate Degree in:

- work and organisational psychology (or similar topics);

- qualitative/quantitative research methods and techniques/workshops, interviews/questionnaires, psychometrics.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.