

## **20<sup>th</sup> Forum of Excellence and Mastery - Otočec 2008**

**“Lux - excellentia ex oriente et occidente, ex septemtrione et meridie”**



In order to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Otočec Forum of Excellence and Mastery and Slovenia's Presidency of the European Union, in a year dedicated to intercultural dialogue and reducing the difficulties facing our generation and attempting to enrich universal wisdom, and as part of our vision of aiming for universal excellence and mastery in actions to improve life and work more successfully

the organisers and participants in the 20<sup>th</sup> Forum of Excellence and Mastery - Otočec 2008, we propose for discussion and expansion the following draft document, entitled:

### **“Otočec Strategy for universal excellence and mastery”**

**Universal excellence and mastery is a synonym for sincere  
integration and creative co-existence between people  
at a global level**

Our generation lives at a turning point in history, in turbulent times full of disputes, tensions and deep imbalances that could lead to the destruction of our planet. Yet we also have exceptionally developed technology and knowledge that could help eliminate the problems we face. We must work in this world on the basis a number of key shared values and ethical standards.

We believe in the power of words and particularly the words of universal excellence and mastery, which with values, strategies and activities will help achieve a life of dignity and work and sustainable development. The proposed strategy is an attempt to find a “new pattern of thinking and acting” that will be built on a creative, long-term integration and

cooperation between countries and nations and will enrich our life and work.

To start off our thinking we might consider some interesting ideas of great relevance to the strategy:

Zarathustra:

"Think good thoughts, do good deeds."

Hugo Svetoviktorski

"Learn everything you can, later on you will see it is all of use."

Blaise Pascal: "It is far better to know something about everything than to know all about one thing. Universal is best."

Theodore Roosevelt: "The happiest people are those that take hold of life in many different ways. People who are unhappy are those who are only interested in one thing, but fate robs them of that too."

Albert Einstein: "Science without religion is lame; religion without science is blind."

## **Key objectives and activities**

### General Objectives

1. Universal excellence and mastery should be internalised as an important mental image so that they give us energy and form a constant source for our commitment to improving ourselves and surroundings and as a consequence overall global progress. Universal excellence should enrich our relationships and help us build together "shared, tolerant cultural relations".
2. Universal excellence and mastery mean that every person can be excellent and a master. The roots of excellence and mastery are innate in humans, but often lie hidden and undiscovered. The construction of a holistic personality should be our key objective.
3. Universal excellence is a tool that – in addition to other similar activities – will help most to ensuring our lives are full of joy and our work is generally successful.
4. A person who acts with excellence and mastery must not kill, must not hate, and live out any negative values. They must work alone and with friends to embody positive values and reduce the negative.

## **The importance of education and upbringing**

5. Universal excellence and mastery are based on the need for positive thinking and active by every person. Education and upbringing are based on the principle of help yourself first, and then help others.
6. By achieving universal excellence and mastery we promote the profound seeking of knowledge, which is closely linked to mutual respect, solidarity, which leads to satisfaction and joy for life and work.
7. Upbringing has an important role in developing mutual tolerance, altruism and empathy and continual education, which brings different cultures closer together, developing empathy and enhancing co-existence.
8. Universal excellence and mastery start with the upbringing of our children, so parents and educational institutions have a major responsibility in bringing children up and educating them from the very youngest age in line with human dignity.

## **Special objectives**

9. Our work is directed towards mutual cooperation, without denigration or domination, and where tolerance is one of the basic values.
10. We understand applying universal excellence and mastery as our global responsibility in achieving and building on fundamental human rights and duties.
11. Universal excellence attempts to discover and consolidate the hidden potential of every person to realise the good within them and increase it and reduce the bad within them.
12. Universal excellence and mastery represent the efforts, desires and activities that lead to making the world at least a little better – based on responsible conduct by every person and at every level of action.
13. We respect the value of balance in our thinking and our work. “I know that I know nothing”. Humility and simplicity are a good base, together with optimism, for our work. We must also be content with small things. Arrogance is a disease that destroys the individual, the group and society.

14. Through achieving universal excellence and mastery we can build a group identity. At the same time we are part of our own nation with our own identity, but also citizens of the world, who care about both present and future.
15. The values of "peace and non-violence" form the basis for the development of a healthy personality that optimally develop its potential. These are the building blocks of a healthy society at the universal level.
16. Universal excellence and mastery means continually encouraging ourselves and our neighbours to do better. This helps us to balance the "having-being" pattern of thinking and acting, and not to exaggerate current mass consumerist trends.
17. Our actions are based on an original medical principle: "*primum nil nocere* – first, do no harm". We start any action with a comprehensive analysis and benefits that cover as many factors as possible.
18. This idea and objective should lead us make most decisions on the path to excellence and mastery unanimously.
19. We will enable and achieve universal excellence and mastery in the sense of equal opportunities for all.
20. Human excellence is seen primarily in the fact that we understand others as we do ourselves, and help each other.
21. All types of development should serve human development. Human development should be the criterion for all thoughts and actions.
22. We will achieve Universal excellence and mastery in all spheres of human action. Close attention and priority are given to building a common ethical system, based on Humanity, with the objective of a culturally and materially-rich life.
23. In achieving universal excellence we will make respecting diversity a cornerstone of our thoughts and actions.
24. Speaking and listening with respect, and the dialogue and multi-sided discourse that ensures is an objective and a valuable skill on the path to universal excellence and mastery.
25. The value of freedom – taking into account the balance of everyone's rights and duties – is an important component of this strategy.

26. We will have to deal with disputes until we reach joint solutions via tolerant dialogue.
27. Universal excellence and mastery can and must be taken as an encouragement to personal growth which then develops into group, organisational and social growth.
28. Despite all the problems, disputes and imbalances, we can sow optimism in the world with the idea of universal excellence and mastery with which we can awaken the positive inner power and desire for achievement that lies within every individual. This can then be united internationally. It will not be easy but it is certainly worth trying.
29. In ourselves and in our own environments we can spread all forms of actions relating to specific excellence and mastery. This can be understood to include business excellence, scientific excellence, artistic excellence, and ethical excellence.

### **Tangible actions to achieve universal excellence and mastery**

- A. Universal excellence is a tendency and an eager desire when connection with the global ethos links with love for oneself. Taking into account the concise philosophy "and, and" which seeks synergy in the economy, culture and other actions.
- B. Management by excellence presents a new model of management, both commercial and in other areas of social life. It offers us a symbiosis of relations that seek development, symbiosis, and satisfaction of all factors of society.
- C. The international strategy described has been joined by the "United Growing Book of the World" project, which is implemented in Slovenia and which is based on the equality of all nations and the exercise of justice. In the first stone page of this special book it is written: "Don't let a day pass without doing something good for yourself, your family, and the narrower and wider community." The second states: "Increase and deepen your knowledge and invite your colleagues to do the same."
- D. We will use apply the Otočec growing model of universal excellence and mastery, known also as the "A-E-I-O-U model." It represents an integral, development-oriented model for personal, team, enterprise and social development.

- E. The message of the international Forum of Excellence and Mastery has always been based on the idea: "*Lux - excellentia ex oriente et occidente, ex septentrione et meridie*" Light – excellence comes from east and west, and north and south. And that light and excellence and mastery shall be awoken on all continents in every person.

## Conclusion

In most civilisation and faiths the sun and light appear as a bright force, a "*vis vitalis*" and the earth as a positive force. We are all sons and daughters of this sun – the light and mother of the earth. It is therefore our duty to take care of the common good of the earth and humanity so that – symbolically said – as much light falls on the earth as possible. We understand universal excellence as an improvement and symbiosis of knowledge on the common good, humane and sustainable development, mutual respect, integration, cooperation and unity.

Positive thoughts never fade, just as the sun never fades, as a poet may say. In our strategy the understanding and application of universal excellence and mastery also never fades; it offers us one of the most important routes to overall success in all areas of human work and life, which should transfer to the collective consciousness and sub-consciousness. This means our motto could well be the same as Antigone's: "My nature is for love, not hate."

Nothing human is alien to us. Yet we will think and act in a way that as much good as possible overcomes what is bad, today, tomorrow and forever.

Let us close with a commitment that as participants in the Forums of Excellence and Mastery that we too will achieve international and universal excellence and mastery. And we will do everything in our power to help in other areas too.

**Charitable individuals and organisations, participants in the 20th  
International Forum of Excellence and Mastery,  
Otočec 22 and 23 May 2008.**