



# Stimulation from business simulation

'In our team we had a company director, two finance deputies, a sales manager and a planning specialist,' said Sabina Róza from Makro Cash and Carry in Bydgoszcz. 'We all gained new and useful experiences, but at the same time we were having great fun. Before our meetings we all thought on our own about the company's strategy, and together we achieved a compromise beneficial for our company.' She was speaking about the virtual enterprise run by her team in the Polish edition of the international Global Management Challenge competition.

'We were taking part in such an advanced strategic business game for the first time,' she explained. 'For me, as an economics graduate, the topic of business simulations was not a novelty, but for my colleagues it certainly was. I'm glad they were able to broaden their knowledge about finance, management, marketing and production.' They all cooperated on a partnership level, and each time before undertaking an important decision they met to listen to all the ideas. 'This kind of cooperation is an important integrating factor,' she continued, 'and an additional merit of such strategic games.'

The team was one of more than 300 taking part in this year's competition. This eighth Polish edition of GMC was based on managing a production and trade company.

Among the 1300 contestants there were managers, MBA students and students, the latter being able to participate in the contest thanks to the commitment of sponsors. One of them was METRO Group. Renata Juszkiewicz, director of METRO's Polish branch, said, 'Strategic games such as GMC are first and foremost an excellent form of education, both for students, for whom work challenges still lie ahead, and for those who practice

management in everyday life. Using freshly obtained knowledge in practice is the best way to make it permanent.' She said that in supporting this initiative they were helping to raise the level of academic education, and, as well, it was a unique and highly attractive form of self-development for improving one's work competences. 'Our employees have the opportunity to test their innovative methods and to take risks without endangering the company to real losses!' she concluded.

The availability and use of computer simulations in business training has greatly improved in recent years. A company wishing to take advantage of such a tool has the choice between choosing a game already available on the market and ordering one fitted exactly to their needs. The latter, however, means devoting larger amounts of time and money in preparing it. Therefore, it might be worth trying the accessible ones presented by training and consulting companies. One such business training is EMERALD, an interactive strategic game. For two days, teams of employees, under the careful eye of trainers and consultants, work intensively on complex management decisions. The participants decide on their virtual company's marketing in each market. They try to optimize the process of production, foresee product demand and analyze other factors crucial to the company's management.

At the same time they have to be focused on what is going on inside their company: they hire and motivate workers, buy raw materials, modernize their machines and, eventually, define their own salary. Designers of the simulation underline the fact that apart from the knowledge and abilities they gain, participating in strategic games raises

employees' morale, and the enthusiasm they feel while playing transfers into everyday reality.

The key condition for a fruitful strategic simulation is interactivity. To make the process of learning enjoyable one has to have someone to rival with. In the GMC competition, the participating teams rival to achieve the highest share price on the market. Another novelty is unforeseeable crisis situations which can be introduced to the players by the game's programmers. These can be rising oil and gas prices, workers' strikes, natural disasters or political storms. Such circumstances mean the sophisticated computer programs work similarly to flight simulators, in which future pilots test their abilities in various situations, even the most extreme ones.

In the eighth Polish edition of the GMC, after round-by-round elimination just eight teams took part in the National Finals on 28 November 2007. These were student teams sponsored by Millennium Bank, Deloitte, Rzeczpospolita and NBPportal.pl, and managerial representations from Millennium Bank and Deloitte. The final, hosted by Telekomunikacja Polska, was a one-day session in which teams managing their virtual companies competed to achieve the highest share price.

The winning team - Warsaw Leaders, students of the Warsaw University sponsored by Deloitte - will represent Poland during the World Finals in Bucharest on 14 April 2008.

The organiser of the GMC Polish editions is BIGRAM Personnel Consulting. The Warsaw Stock Exchange and the National Bank of Poland are patrons of honour.

For more information please go to: [www.gmcpoland.pl](http://www.gmcpoland.pl)