Organisation of HEALTHY AGEING CONFERENCE 2017

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1. Introduction

The population in Europe is ageing quickly: the amount of people aged 65 or older is forecast to rise from 14% in 2010 to 25% in 2050. There is a need for a platform to discuss challenges of an ageing society. Therefore, our project work consisted of organising a conference to provide such dialogue. Our group (9 people) has systematically worked for 12 months with 2 supervisors and in cooperation with other team members. As a result, the Conference will be held in March 2017 at the Hochschule Fulda.

2. Objectives

The main objective of the project was to organize the Healthy Ageing Conference 2017 and through this, gather relevant soft skills, such as project management or time planning. It also involved maintaining contact with various partners from the academia and professional fields. Additionally, the team were to work as a group on a long-term project, recognize the strengths and weaknesses and put them to use.

3. Methods

3.1 Time frame: February 2016 – March 2017
3.2 Communication:

Internal	External
Between the group members and within the University, with other teams	With external partners (possible sponsors, speakers, participants)
Weekly meetings, Moodle, Google docs, Facebook group	E-mails, phone calls, letters, social media, posters

3.2 Project organization:

Planning	Conference date and place, budget, registration procedure
Preparation	Website, logo, flyer and poster design, venue preparation (dinner in Mensa, coffee break, poster exhibition, workshop room)
Marketing	Spreading flyers and posters to universities throughout Germany, contacting partners, potential speakers and participants. Social media: twitter, facebook
Realisation	Assigning activities to each member (reception, catering, room design, poster exhibition, conference booklet), attending conference
Evaluation	Forms from participants and group members

3.3 Project controlling:

To ensure, a time plan was followed in order to complete all the tasks. The project's progress was controled by conducting weekly meetings, during which the group have written down detailed protocols.
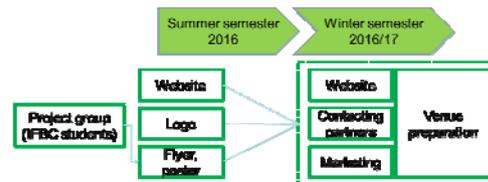
4. Limitations

Some students were not able to communicate in German. The solution was the use of google translate to understand the most important tools in German in designing website and template to facilitate the contact with sponsors,professors and universities.

5. Result

5.1 Timeframe
The workflow has followed the previously set timeframe.

5.2 Conference date & place:
The conference will take place on 16-17.03.17, at Hochschule Fulda.

5.3 Finances:
The Conference is financed by the participation and sponsors fees (various packages to suit possible participants and sponsors). There are prizes for the best three posters sponsored by one of the partners.

5.4 Marketing strategy
Publications
During the project the group have prepared various materials: logo and colour scheme, webpage, and marketing materials.

Contact to participants/partners
The communication with the participants and partners were through e-mails and letters with invitations as well as reminder-messages. The newest information were always available on the webpage and social media channels.

Venue preparation:
Enough space have been secured for the event (lectures, workshops, poster exhibition), that will be adequately prepared. In the timetable adequate time was for breaks, that will be catered (food, coffee).

5. Evaluation

The project will be completely evaluated after the completion of the Conference. Then all the data will be from feedback forms for participants and group members.

6. Conclusions

Organizing a conference is a long-time process and requires proper planning and systematic work from all the members of the team. Special set of social skills, such as being able to communicate well with others (both external partners and group members) and compromise, is necessary for organisation of such event.

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