Review of the book
Learning organizations. A model for public administration
(ed. Karol Olejniczak)
[original title: *Organizacje uczące się. Model dla administracji publicznej*]

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The book, edited by Karol Olejniczak, has been prepared by a team of authors (Stanisław Mazur, Karol Olejniczak, Jakub Rok, Łukasz Widła-Domaradzki) and raises the very current issue of organizational learning.

Already in the introduction the authors demonstrate, based on current examples, that the matter is neither simple nor easy to master in practice. They also link these examples to the broader dimension of strategic planning, showing the specific, practical dimension of their work and research project, aimed at improving effective organizational learning in public administration.

The methodological rigor and research design of the authors deserve recognition. The research process itself as well as the abundance of references (over 400 items), from many schools of thought (including, for example, in the field of critical management theory, rarely used in Polish literature) positively stand out from other, similar publications. The selection of research steps, the methods, triangulation, and finally also the accurate use of the available tools, knowing their limitations, are exemplary. If the book would be the work of an individual, it could easily lead to a promotion.

What is surprising, although rather for personal than scientific reasons, is that the work of Elinor Ostrom has not been used, a well-known researcher of open collaboration systems (which is a topic clearly linked to organizational learning, although indeed there is little connection with the specificity of the studied organizations) – because when reading the biography of the editor, it turns out that he had the chance to participate in her seminars.

The work itself is of a deliberately heterogeneous nature. The first chapter, which is devoted to the role of organizational learning in public management, is primarily meant for practitioners and students of public administration. It is written in an accessible and not overly daunting, pompous language, which can be a problem in the works written by some scientists.

The second chapter, which is a comprehensive review of the literature on the subject, is primarily meant for the academic community. The objective of the chapter is to provide an overview of

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trends in organizational learning, learning organizations and knowledge management, and to merge the output of these schools of thought. The bibliographic review is very reliable and worth a look for all researchers that are about to start their studies on the subject.

Similarly, the third chapter is also meant for researchers, although it focuses on an overview of the actual research studies. It also contains a review of the literature on the subject, but from the point of view of research output, possible approaches to analyzing the issue, as well as obtained results.

The fourth chapter constitutes, as the authors themselves put it, a "verification of the theory in practice". It focuses on comparing theories, the research process as well as its results and interpretations.

The final, fifth chapter presents a model of organizational learning in public administration. This is an interesting and extremely logical, based on the previous reasoning, outlook on this issue. There may be some doubts as to whether, given the academic nature of the work, this chapter is indeed accessible for all practitioners, but there is no doubt that it can be successfully used by them.

The book is definitely worth recommending, for scientific reasons (the literature, attention to the research methodology, sound research process, models) as well as for practical reasons (focus on solving organizational problems).

What could be regarded as a minor shortcoming of the book is the fact that it does not include the matter of organizational forgetting (it is a well-known fact that forgetting, in the form of unlearning, i.e. unlearning bad habits, is very difficult; and in this context organizational learning can have a negative dimension, which the authors exclude a priori).

Given that the monograph is published with the co-financing of the European Social Fund, I very much hope that the editor makes every effort to ensure electronic publication in addition to the publication on paper (even through books.google.com, where the entire content of books can be made available; as well as from the project server), because access to this book would be very useful for researchers of the subject as well as practitioners. It is the focus on practitioners that should also be emphasized and appreciated: within the framework of this project, its authors maintain an actively updated website (mus.edu.pl), where they share their thoughts on the subject in the Working Papers.