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Václav leads a dedicated team of consultants and psychologists across the Czech Republic and Slovakia. With a remarkable 27 years of experience in the HR sector, he has spent the last decade at Assessment Systems, serving not just as Country Manager but also as a highly sought-after senior consultant. Alongside his team, Václav partners with clients to deliver tailored HR solutions, specializing in Hogan Assessments for talent acquisition and development, competency mapping, 360-degree feedback, comprehensive HR consulting, and Schuhfried computerized psychological diagnostics. A central pillar of his work is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)—a proactive, preventive support system designed to safeguard and enhance both the mental and physical health of employees.

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IN THE CURRENT GEOPOLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CLIMATE, WHAT SHOULD SLOVAKIA PRIORITIZE TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE WITHIN THE EU AND GLOBALLY?

In my view, one of the greatest challenges—and most urgent priorities—for maintaining our industrial and economic competitiveness is opening up the labor market. This means becoming much more welcoming to foreign investors and, crucially, to international talent seeking career opportunities outside their home countries. Compared to other EU nations, Slovakia currently ranks near the bottom when it comes to employing foreign nationals. This is a vulnerability that will have severe negative repercussions in the coming years as our current workforce continues to age. We are facing a stark demographic reality: the number of young people entering the job market is, and will remain, significantly lower than the number of older professionals aging into the retirement system. Furthermore, younger generations are entering the workforce with a fundamentally different set of core values. For instance, they place a massive premium on work-life balance, meaning we can expect a much stronger preference for part-time roles and flexible working arrangements in the future. To remain competitive globally, Slovakia must adapt to these shifting expectations while simultaneously attracting the international talent necessary to bridge our widening demographic gap.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IS RESHAPING LABOR MARKETS ACROSS EUROPE. HOW SHOULD SLOVAKIA RESPOND TO AGING, TALENT SHORTAGES, AND WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION?

When you look at demographic trends across the EU, practically every country is facing an aging working population. The talent pool is shrinking, and over the next 5 to 10 years, the situation will become highly complex. Additionally, state social expenditures will rise significantly due to the growing number of seniors. While technological advancements, AI, and robotics will certainly help in many sectors, nothing can replace the added value of human beings in numerous fields.

So, the question is: what do we do about it? Companies that recognize this risk have already started taking action, knowing full well that no one else is

going to solve it for them. A relatively simple and fast solution is ensuring comprehensive care for your employees. As we age, we increasingly face health complications, both physical and mental. In other words, it is far more effective to invest in preventive programs than to deal with the consequences later.

In post-communist countries, prevention is still perceived as less important compared to Western or Scandinavian nations. However, when employers realize how much time employees spend dealing with health or personal issues during working hours—and convert that into financial costs—it becomes glaringly obvious that preventive programs are the smart choice. The cost of such a service per person equals the price of just one or two cups of good coffee.

If we provide people with the right conditions to resolve difficult life situations faster and more effectively, we reduce employee turnover and the constant need to hire new talent. This solution also applies to employees approaching retirement. If we offer them support that enables them to stay in the workforce with us longer, that's one less problem we have to worry about.

WHAT ACHIEVEMENT FROM 2025 ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF, AND WHY?

In the middle of last year, we became part of the international Mavie Work group. Thanks to this, we can now provide our services to clients across all of Central Europe—including Austria and Germany—and in all local languages. Through this partnership, we've also expanded our portfolio to include telemedical services in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Because of this, people no longer have to wait weeks or even months to get an appointment with a specialist.

Furthermore, we launched a new online portal for our clients. It allows individuals to easily select the specific issue they need help with, their preferred location, and, ultimately, a dedicated expert perfectly suited for their particular problem.

