



JUDIT DULIN
CHRO
Lidl Slovakia



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WORK AND LIFE CONNECTIONS

Achieving professional success often involves navigating many challenges. The responsibility towards their families and their employees makes business leaders carefully consider each minute of their day. We want to know how they like to spend their time out of work, what inspires them and motivates them.

What do you currently perceive as the biggest challenge or the biggest opportunity in your life?

(JD) From an HR perspective, the biggest opportunity is attracting and retaining Gen Z and Generation Alpha for our company. They work differently, prioritizing smart solutions over traditional hard work. To engage them effectively, we must evolve our ways of working as well.

The biggest challenge is automation. Yes, it may eliminate many of the jobs we know today. However, I firmly believe it will also create new roles that provide employees with a renewed sense of purpose. The real opportunity within this challenge lies in reskilling employees for these future jobs.

On a personal level, I see countless opportunities for my children, who belong to this new generation—one that doesn't set geographic or professional boundaries. My daughter is studying abroad, pursuing two different majors in two different countries, while my son plans to study in Hungary after high school but is already considering moving abroad afterward.

(TY) Since June of last year, I've been serving as the President of the Importer/Distributor and Direct Dealer for the American car brand Ford in Slovakia. My biggest challenge is figuring out how to provide reliable Ford products to as many Slovaks as possible while also contributing to

making both their business and personal lives more fulfilling and enriching..



Every new day brings an opportunity to optimize the way we live and work.

JUDIT DULIN



What achievement from the past 12 months are you proud of the most?

(JD) I'm proud that Lidl employs more than 6,700 people across the country. Over the past three years, we have invested over €43 million in salary and bonus increases, including €14 million for salary raises this year. Lidl's minimum wage for salespeople and warehouse workers in Slovakia now exceeds 150% of the state minimum wage for 2025.

Since March 2020, we have promoted nearly 1,700 employees, with almost 40% of our workforce advancing within their first three years—many more than once.

In the 2023 financial year, Lidl's operations supported 42,503 jobs annually, representing about 1.61% of total employment

in Slovakia. In 2024, we created hundreds of additional jobs across the country.

We also run the Retail Academy at the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra and the University of Economics in Bratislava. The program includes lectures, excursions, and workshops led by industry experts in HR, communication, administration, purchasing, sales, and central services. It provides students with hands-on experience and valuable insights from professional life.

Since 2016, 156 students have participated in our dual study program, with 21 expected to graduate in 2025. We actively support Slovakia's education system, helping students gain practical experience to build their careers. Currently, we collaborate with 12 schools as part of our dual training initiatives. Lidl has been named Najzamestnávateľ for six consecutive years, TOP Employer for nine years, and has received the Equal Pay award. I'm incredibly proud of Lidl Slovakia!

(TY) Last year was a major milestone, as Ford broke into the top 10 in car sales in Slovakia and achieved first place in the Light Commercial Vehicle segment for the first time. I'm also proud of maintaining a motivated team while clarifying the organization's direction and driving a sustainable business model. Additionally, I've taken the time to immerse myself

in Slovakia's business environment and culture, which has deepened my connections with both my colleagues and the market.

What is the favorite part of your day and why?

(JD) My favorite part of the day is meeting my colleagues in the morning. Every new day brings an opportunity to optimize the way we live and work. Seeing my colleagues reassures me that, together, we can make it happen.

(TY) From where I live, I can look down on Bratislava Castle. On my way to work each morning, the sight of the castle bathed in the morning sun energizes me and sets a positive tone for the day.



Living in different cultures has taught me the importance of adapting, appreciating diverse perspectives, and embracing new ways of thinking.

TAKUMA YAMAGUCHI



What regular habit or routine has had the biggest positive impact on your life?

(JD) I exercise a little every day after work, and I read in bed every evening before sleeping.

I have a strong need for structure, which provides a solid foundation for my work. Additionally, I regularly take a step back to view situations from a broader perspective—like a helicopter view—to ensure we're heading in the right direction.

(TY) The first thing I do every morning at work is grab a cup of coffee and organize my tasks for the day. I also try to go out for lunch as much as possible. Stepping outside for fresh air instead of staying in the office helps me reset, and sometimes the casual conversations during lunch spark new business ideas.

What advice would you give to your 20-something-year old self?

(JD) Life is constantly changing, bringing both opportunities and challenges. Focus on becoming the best version of yourself every day, and keep working on improving that version as you go.

(TY) "Jump into more experiences." Don't fear failure. Gaining experience across various industries and countries will broaden both your career and life possibilities. Living in different cultures has taught me the importance of adapting, appreciating

diverse perspectives, and embracing new ways of thinking.

What are the parts of your work that still excite you and give you motivation?

(JD) My purpose in life is continuous improvement—both for myself and for those around me. Additionally, I'm an experience seeker. I'm constantly amazed by how wonderful the world is.



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(TY) Anticipating market changes and strategizing for company growth are always exciting. I particularly enjoy exploring new business models. Additionally, Slovakia's evolving automotive landscape and its position within the European market make my work dynamic. Supporting my team's growth and celebrating our collective successes also keeps me motivated.

If you had to make a career switch, in what other profession can you imagine yourself?

(JD) Two careers come to mind. First, being a therapist—helping people directly through professional support. Second, becoming an author—using both my experiences and imagination to write books. The challenge in writing, however, would be missing the daily interaction with people that I currently enjoy.

(TY) Having always worked in sales, I'm drawn to a role where I can create and bring joy to people through

production. Traveling abroad has also given me a new appreciation for Japan, so I'm interested in a job that involves preserving and promoting Japanese culture.

Can you name three sources you have recently learned from or have inspired you the most?

(JD) I read a lot—not just books but also magazines and professional newsletters online. While driving, I prefer listening to podcasts.

(TY) 'Die With Zero: Getting All You Can from Your Money and Your Life' by Bill Perkins – It reminds you of the importance of life experiences.

The YouTube channel Slow Living – It makes you reflect on the true quality of life.

For movies, I'd mention 'Schindler's List' by Steven Spielberg from 1993 – Its message is powerful: always do your best to stay true to your purpose, even in the face of hardship.

What is your biggest fear for the generation of today's children? What about the biggest hope?

(JD) I'm not afraid, nor am I worried. Instead, I focus on preparing myself and those around me for the changes the future may bring.

I hope that social values will continue evolving in a positive direction.

(TY) I fear that as digital connections expand, people may become overly dependent on virtual experiences and lose touch with the world through their own senses. While technology makes it easier to stay connected, it shouldn't replace real-world interactions—seeing, feeling, and understanding things firsthand is invaluable.

My biggest hope is that globalization and technological advancements will allow people to pursue careers and lifestyles with more freedom than ever before. It will become increasingly important for individuals to discern reliable information and make informed choices. I also hope that future generations will continue to prioritize well-being alongside professional success.

To provide you with some bookish inspiration, this section of the *Connection* magazine features reading tips from various interesting people related to AmCham Slovakia. We have approached them with the following question:

What book has left the greatest impression on you recently and why?



THREE KINGDOMS

by Luo Guanzhong

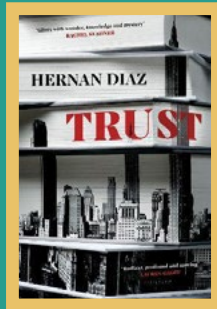
It highlights the importance of ambition, which is central to human development. While there's a limit to what an individual can achieve alone, history shows us

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that big dreams can be realized by surrounding yourself with like-minded people and ensuring that everyone plays their role effectively in the right place at the right time.



TRUST

by Hernan Diaz

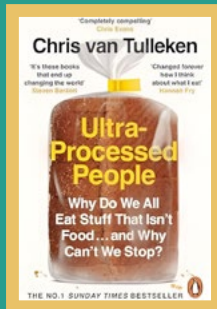
A fascinating novel about wealth, power, and the secrets behind great fortunes. It follows Benjamin Rask, a Wall Street tycoon, but as the story unfolds through different perspectives, his success seems less straightforward. The book explores how financial empires are built not just on money, but on carefully

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crafted stories and hidden influences. Diaz shows how history, like wealth, can be manipulated by those in control. The novel makes complex financial ideas easy to follow while questioning the myths of Wall Street. In the end, *Trust* is a sharp look at the power of money and the truth behind financial legends.



ULTRA-PROCESSED PEOPLE

by Chris van Tulleken

This book provides a compelling and well-researched deep dive into the impact of ultra-processed foods on our health and society. It combines personal experimentation, scientific evidence, and industry insights to reveal how

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these foods are designed to be addictive and detrimental to well-being. Van Tulleken's engaging writing style makes complex topics accessible, leaving you more aware of what you eat and how food systems shape modern health.