

WHO IS WHO

WHO IS WHO ALMANAC

WHO IS WHO



21ST
EDITION
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OUR PATRON MEMBERS

abbvie

accenture

Adecco

ADIENT

AGEL

assecO

AT&T

CEMM THOME
a member of Amphenol

CISCO

citi

CLARIOS

THE
Coca-Cola
COMPANY

CORWIN

DELL
Technologies

Deloitte.

Dentsply
Sirona

T
DEUTSCHE TELEKOM IT SOLUTIONS

DÖVERA
ZDRAVOTNÁ POISTOVŇA

Dr.Max+

IBM

Johnson & Johnson

KB

KPMG

Lenovo

mastercard

McDonald's

Medtronic

MSD

MetLife

MICROCOMP

Microsoft

NOVARTIS

O₂

orange

Pfizer

PHILIP MORRIS
SLOVAKIA

pwc

Roche

SERVIER
moved by you

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SLOVENSKÁ
športelňa

SPP

Solar Turbines
A Caterpillar Company

SQUIRE
PATTON BOGGS

SWAN

Swiss Re

TB
TATRA BANKA

U.S. Steel Košice

VISA

Whirlpool
CORPORATION

Z
ZURICH

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ANDRIJANA ADAMEK

CO-OWNER AND MANAGER
ESB, S.R.O.



Andrijana is passionate process and project manager capable of coping with any kind of challenges. She proved to be able to build project structures to initiate, run or stabilize any kind of project. Making systems work smooth is in her DNA, and so is entrepreneur spirit. ESB team is dream-come-true crew capable of bringing your process alive from the paper to the practice.

HOW YOU PERCEIVE MARKET TRENDS IN PROCESS MANAGEMENT?

Process management used to be common mainly in corporate world. We are happy to see, that awareness on the topic is increasing throughout different company segments. There is emerging trend to either build internal process departments, or at least bring attention to internal process. Sometimes, companies are coping with the topic within the team, however it is quite common to seek for an external view.

External teams can be very useful, if well contracted. Companies can benefit from cross-company experience, focus on process topic and continuous education, which is not necessarily available from within the client's team. Still, the added value of external help can be reached if expectations are well stipulated. In this case, trusting external consultant can bring valuable fruits to the company.

Each client is unique to us, and even though each company follows some standard, the process performance is specific in each case. We are happy to enjoy the trust of our clients and seek better ways of how they can enhance their performance. To do so, we follow international guidelines and standards, and we are connecting with companies who are appreciating our professional approach.

WHAT CHALLENGES COMPANIES FACE IN PROCESS MANAGEMENT AREA?

We observe, that it is especially important to assess internal processes in structured manner and with regards to the context and specifics of the client. More and more companies are using fact-based decision-making methods to support their efficiency, sustainability, and continuous growth. Useful dashboards can boost expansion decisions and enable development. Functional internal processes can contribute to stability of working environment inside the company and towards market, which is important factor when attracting top employees, or top clients.

We are always flattered when a company chooses to improve their way of work with us, give us their trust and share their systems, so that we can work together. We appreciate our clients, who are also our partners, and we appreciate their privacy, that is why we do not share our references. Nevertheless, I am quite sure that we worked for your company, with your company or at least with someone from your company in the past.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR ADVICE – WHAT IS THE RIGHT TIME TO SEEK FOR EXTERNAL SUPPORT?

Our team consists of education-enthusiasts. Each of us is constantly in learning progress. During the decades of experience, we came to the point, when we are able to offer assistance to other companies: whether it is optimisation activity, challenge to keep performance during cost-cutting tasks, implementing new product line, or preparing organisation for significant growth. Our partners appreciate external contribution when coping with major changes, implementing project management, or introducing new tools.

There are many examples, when companies take internal costs for granted, and after calculating the price for it, previously expensive price for automation seems cheap compared to manual work. Price for internal processes should not be underestimated and finally bringing some light into it can be very helpful for P&L.

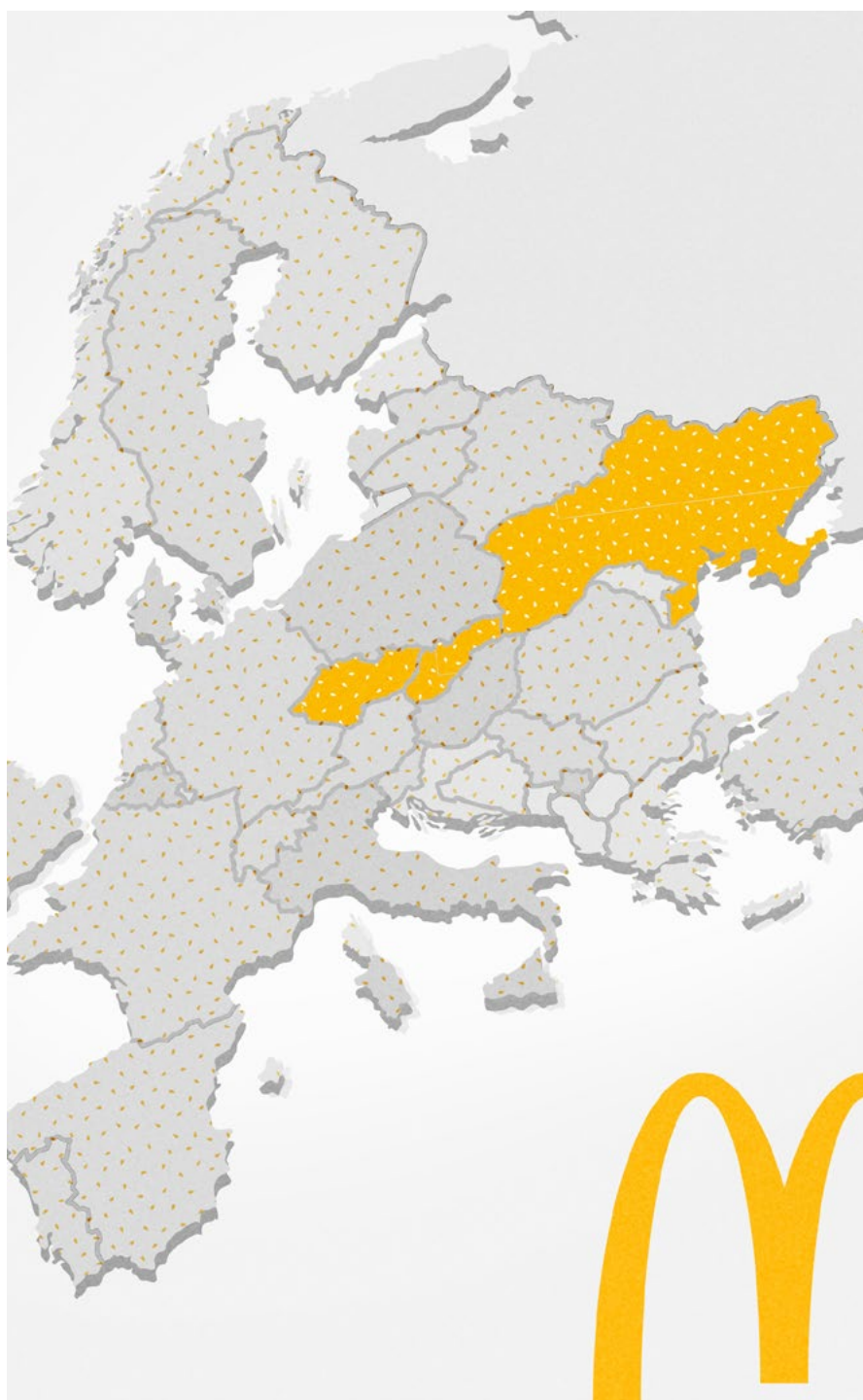
YOU ARE NEW TO AMCHAM – WHAT WAS YOUR EXPECTATION WHEN JOINING IT?

Our culture is based on teamplay, partnership and reciprocity. We acknowledge value of cooperation, networking, and synergies, so we hope to find it in supportive and inspirational environment of AmCham. We are looking forward to meet our peer entrepreneurs and learn from their stories and experience, as each company's path is unique and inspirational.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

My leadership principles are based on McDonald's values which are serve, integrity, community, inclusivity, and family. Transparency and honest are crucial for me when it comes to cooperation and partnership, and I practice same that I expect from others. McDonald's core menu is the same everywhere and it almost never changes

while the company is very dynamic and do not tolerate complacency. I like this balance – to be principled, have good foundations and always challenge the status quo and strive to improve every day a little. Agility and flexible mind-set are key in the changing world around. When we open the restaurant, we are becoming the member of the community and we are building long-term partnership that's why all the decisions we are making in McDonald's are based on our values and long-term strategy.



YULIYA BADRITDINOVA

MANAGING DIRECTOR
MCDONALD'S UKRAINE,
THE CZECH REPUBLIC, AND
SLOVAKIA



Yuliya Badritdinova, Managing Director of McDonald's the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Ukraine, the leading food-service company with more than 17 000 employees. A committed people leader, Yuliya built a solid team to lead McDonald's business in Ukraine. Yuliya has been working at McDonald's for more than ten years. In her previous leadership role at McDonald's Ukraine, Yuliya was responsible for the Marketing, Consumer & Business Insights, Corporate Relations functions, and strategic planning across the company. She also was a Professor at Worldwide Hamburger University in 2017 and 2018, where she trained international teams of marketers from around the Global McDonald's system. Yuliya has a variety of experiences serving on not-for-profit Boards. She is a member of the American Chamber of Commerce (ACC) Board of Directors in Ukraine since June 2019.

WWW.MCDONALDS.SK

DENYS BALATSKO

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,
ENGINEERING
GLOBALLOGIC SLOVAKIA



Denys has more than twenty years of experience in software engineering. He joined GlobalLogic back in 2001 as a Software Engineer and later was promoted to senior management positions. He participated in and then led the development of top-notch software products in the Communication and Healthcare industries. Since 2021, he has been leading a group of software engineering units in Europe. He holds an MSc in Software Engineering from Lviv Polytechnic National University, Ukraine, and an MBA in General Management from Sheffield University, UK.

WHAT ARE THE TWO OR THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

The first two for me would be Result Orientation and Creative Thinking. Result Orientation helps them achieve, and overachieve, the goals that drive the company business to the next level, ahead of the competition. Business is always about reaching stretch goals, and the team needs to be focused on achieving them.

Creative Thinking drives innovation. In software engineering, we are at the edge of global innovation and constantly working with cutting-edge technologies, where people need to be creative in applying them to transform the world of today into a new exciting digital future. People need to always be trying new ways and experimenting.

I also look for managers who are transformational leaders. People who can lead by creating a vision of the north star and inspire their teams towards it rather than just executing management duties. Transformational leaders are able to inspire their teams, so they are able to utilise all their potential towards stretch goals, which energises the whole organisation.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

At GlobalLogic, we are always looking to grow talent within the organisation first rather than hiring on the market. For example, within my management team the majority of leaders have been working in the company for over 5 years, and most of them started in the company as individual contributors.

We provide people opportunities to learn inside the organisation, to develop their technical skills as well as their soft skills. For example, a software engineer can start his/her way into management

by enrolling in a Team Leader course. In a year or two, after completing the course and getting experience with team leading, he/she can then apply to the Project Management course and so on. We have a complete set of these courses which guide a person up to the top management levels. We expect people to be continuously learning and to never reach a glass ceiling.

As for reskilling, in Software Engineering, new technologies emerge every year and many "old" technologies also become obsolete rather quickly. This is where we apply reskilling and retrain our engineers who used to work on legacy technologies.

Having the best people in the team is the key driver for the company's success; therefore, all the investment in talent always pays off.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

It is a bit difficult to look at the mirror and describe my own style, but let me try to explain what I see there.

In the answer above, I have already mentioned that I am looking for a transformational leadership style in my team. I try to focus on the future and build a vision of what's next. Obviously, the future often requires changes, so I try to support and drive the change rather than keeping the status-quo.

I try to delegate more and avoid micromanagement – set an inspiring goal rather than driving the way to achieve it. And the team – it is very important for me to make sure that people have challenging (yet achievable) goals as well as the ability to develop their skills and be able to step up to the next level in the organisation.



Freshfields

EWAN BARR

MANAGING DIRECTOR, GLOBAL
HEAD OF SHARED SERVICES
FRESHFIELDS BRUCKHAUS
DERINGER



NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

Integrity, fairness and empathy

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

Capability and competency focused, strong values, partner with my colleagues to be the best they wish to be

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

Open, embracing, transformational, people led, grounded

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Be more vulnerable as a leader, look more broadly at situations, recognise your own strengths

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

Continue the development of Slovakia (and Bratislava) as a vibrant, European hub which is attracting regional talent and investment from leading international businesses

Continue the digitalisation work already underway in the country to ensure competitiveness, attract ongoing inward investment and position the local market for future success

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

Embark on class leading digitisation

WHO WE ARE

With more than 4,000 people in the world's major business hubs, serving clients in over 150 countries, we know what it takes to operate across borders, legal systems and commercial cultures. Over decades we have built ties with the leading national advisers in every market so we can support our clients wherever they need us.

We take care of our people; whether you're a lawyer or in Finance, HR, Document specialists or Marketing and Business Development, you'll be empowered to grow your career in a thriving, supported and diverse environment.

THE FRESHFIELDS EXPERIENCE

We combine the knowledge, experience and energy of the whole firm to solve our clients' most complex challenges.

As the oldest global law firm in the world, we have built a reputation not only for excellence but for innovation responsible business, reinvention and modern ways of working.



Results oriented executive with over 30 years experience spanning UK / Europe / Asia, utilising his background in complex matrix organisations, roles, disciplines to successfully implement strategy and key priorities. Proven ability to lead global and regional teams and initiatives across Controls, Operations, Resilience and transformation that streamline, capture savings, centralise and offshore, improve capabilities, minimise risk, embrace compliance, transform organisations and deliver sustainable synergies. Member of Chartered Institute of Bankers focused on Banking and Financial Services. Diversity champion who can adapt to cultures and bring people along with new ways of working. I make a difference and am a people's champion in how I work. I galvanise communities of purpose, can be trusted to own and deliver in the right way and drive real sustained change.

WWW.FRESHFIELDS.COM

The Bridge

KLAUDIA BEDNÁROVÁ

DIRECTOR
THE BRIDGE - ENGLISH
LANGUAGE CENTRE, S.R.O.



Klaudia graduated from the PF UKF in Nitra and in 2009 she founded a private language school the Bridge - English Language Centre. The Bridge is now the only internationally recognized and EAQUALS accredited language school in Slovakia. She is a founding member of both the Slovak Association of Language School and the Slovak Chamber of English Language Teachers. Klaudia established and runs projects such as Eltforum.sk- an annual international conference for teachers of English and the Bridge re-boot camp for teachers- a unique summer school with a holistic approach to learning and teacher wellbeing. Her passion and professional interest is in effective learning strategies and the impact of language training on work performance.

WWW.THEBRIDGE.SK

WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING CHANGE CURRENTLY INFLUENCING YOUR SECTOR?

The business world has been discussing the shift from manager to coach for some time now, and a similar and even more significant change is happening in education. Instead of the traditional teacher who stands at the front of the classroom as the sole expert, we now require coaches/facilitators who guide and facilitate the learning process towards desired outcomes. As a result, we have an increasing need for teachers who can effectively motivate and guide their students towards achieving their full potential as well as the development of autonomous and self-motivated learners.

It is important to acknowledge that students now have access to an abundance of knowledge that surpasses any one teacher's capacity. This is a major change in schools and the biggest shift since their inception. Fields like psychology, sociology, and neuroscience can help us navigate this shift and shape the future of education. We need to listen and adapt. The ever-changing world demands that we react and adapt quickly in order to thrive in the 21st century economy. Lifelong learning and cognitive fitness are not just buzzwords, but essential concept for our workforce and economy to keep moving forward. Just as we keep physically fit to move without pain or discomfort, we need to be cognitively fit to adapt and change without stress or decreased performance.

WHAT SECTORS HAVE THE BIGGEST POTENTIAL TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE SLOVAK ECONOMY?

As we focus on the need for lifelong learning and cognitive fitness to keep our economy thriving, it's clear that education is the key. The current gap between our educational system and the demands of our economy has become too large to ignore. To bridge this gap, we need to attract the best people to the field of education, with teams of professionals who have the experience and skills to innovate.

Teachers are the backbone of our education system, and we must prioritize their needs and well-being. It's well-established in psychology that role models are crucial to effective education and training. Therefore, schools must have well-functioning HR departments and experienced HR professionals to build effective teams and implement change.

As a small country with limited potential for industrial or agricultural significance, Slovakia's economic future lies in our education system. To make innovation happen and provide a solid foundation for

growth, we must keep our brain trust at home. If we fail to invest in education, we will fail to grow and thrive as a nation.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE GOALS FOR THE SLOVAK ECONOMY OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS?

In order to equip our workforce with the necessary cognitive skills to navigate the fast-changing and demanding business world, it is crucial to support and demand quality in adult education businesses. We can achieve this by setting clear standards to maintain desired quality. We need to get the wheels in motion.

In general I believe we need to nurture knowledge-based ventures, promote growth in the IT industry, encourage sports and the arts, develop sustainable tourism, and prioritise the development of green solutions in each of these fields. This will not only benefit our economy but also ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.

WHAT DO YOU APPRECIATE MOST ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF AMCHAM?

Definitely valuable networking opportunities that not only allow me to meet new people but also help me foster existing relationships. The range and diversity of topics covered by AmCham and the knowledge base it provides are of great significance. In today's fast-paced world, where life seems to be moving at a galloping pace, it is more important than ever to have the chance to connect with people, engage in meaningful conversations, and learn from each other.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU IN WORK?

Owning my own school provides me with a unique opportunity to experiment and try out new teaching approaches. It's my playground, where I can explore innovative methods and push the boundaries of traditional education. One of my most rewarding challenges has been establishing an effective and functioning teacher training program. Education is my passion, and in the 21st century, which is dominated by information and technology, it's crucial to have teachers who can navigate the major changes in society and guide our children and us through the muddy waters of a rapidly changing world.

Over the past decade, we have successfully implemented a system that works well, but we know that in order to keep pace with the changing times, we must continuously update and improve our approach. My dream is that one day our teacher training methods will be adopted by others, leaving a dent on the educational landscape.

MARIA BIELIKOVA

DIRECTOR-GENERAL
KEMPELEN INSTITUTE
OF INTELLIGENT
TECHNOLOGIES (KInIT)



Maria developed the long-term vision and strategy for KInIT. She also conducts research focusing on user modeling and personalization. Recently, she has been working on data analysis and modeling of antisocial behavior on the Web. Maria is active in discussions on trustworthy AI at the national and European levels. She is the chairwoman of the Permanent Committee for Ethics and Regulation of AI established by the Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization. She was a member of the European Commission Joint Research Center Board of Governors and High Level Expert Group on AI. Before her work at KInIT, Maria was a full professor at the Slovak University of Technology, former dean and a lead of the PeWe research group (pewe.sk).

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

I will list four key qualities, because they are all equally important and one can hardly be without the other - expertise, honesty, engagement and entrepreneurship. And it does not matter if the person is a researcher, an engineer, a manager, or a student.

Without competence and expertise, we will not be able to learn from our mistakes effectively. However, having knowledge and being an expert is not enough. Honesty perhaps needs no further argument, but it is important to keep in mind that it should apply to all aspects of our work, i.e. both to people and data. Engagement means that we want people to be proactive and care about what is going on around them.

And finally, entrepreneurship. This is where I see the greatest potential for impact towards positive change, along with honesty, expertise and engagement. Can researchers be entrepreneurial? Yes, they can, and most of them should be, so that their actions can be translated into value for others, either economic, cultural or social.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Have no doubts that trust in people pays off. Even if you stumble and sometimes it

doesn't work out, believe that it will be just fine. Have no doubts that it will pay off in the end and it will make you stronger.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

Education, education, education. This is the most important thing for Slovakia, both in the short and long term. But it will take a very long time before we see any effects of our actions.

However, if education is neglected and not seen as a fundamental and important value by the majority of people, it is difficult for any government to make it a priority. The situation in Slovakia is just like this. It takes a great deal of entrepreneurship to do that, and that is why we need to start right where the entrepreneurial people are.

Innovation and research will help us create a critical mass of people who, over time, will enable us to focus more on education and thereby also improve our health and our lives overall.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

I would enable those who have already proven they can bring value with their hearts and minds to scale their ideas. The message will spread and inspire more and more people to do the same. We should be bold in doing so.

KInIT is an independent, non-profit research institute focusing on Artificial Intelligence.

KInIT's mission is to support scientific excellence and its transformation to responsible innovations by:

- bridging the private and academic sectors
- encouraging knowledge sharing, talent development and circulation
- advocating for quality, ethics, and fairness including public policy advising

Web & User
Data
Processing



Green and
Secure
Environment



Natural
Language
Processing



Ethics &
Human Values
in Technology



KInIT has repeatedly proven its excellence and potential. In nearly three years of existence, it doubled its staff, acquired funding from seven European projects, engaged in industry collaborations with over 20 industry partners, started a PhD programme that includes an industry track, and established active

international cooperations with 30+ partners in more than 20 countries. KInIT is gaining recognition for being a new institutional model for R&I in Slovakia, demonstrating that strategic priorities of the institute are in alignment with the European and Slovak strategies.

DANA BLECHOVÁ

CEO
BLECHOVA MANAGEMENT
CONSULTING, S.R.O.



Dana Blechová started her HR consulting career in an international executive search firm in 1996 and in 2003 she was entrusted to build up together with Austrian colleagues a Slovak subsidiary of HR consulting company Iventa. In the position of a Country Manager she covered the Slovak market and for one year the Czech market until the end of the company's operation in CEE region. Since April 2014 she is representing her own company Blechová Management Consulting, s.r.o. specialized in executive search, direct search and outplacement in Slovakia but still cooperating with partners from Austria and CEE. She majored Computer Science from University of Economics, Bratislava and currently is attending Managerial Psychology, MBA program at European School of Business and Management in Prague.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

The qualities which are the most important, are right mindset and ability to take responsibility. The employees can be always trained to gain new technical skills, to improve languages, sometimes also soft skills. But what we can not teach them is integrity, passion for work and curiosity. Therefore when I looked for a new employee, the suitable employee had to be bright, ambitious with drive and a good team player. We were more focused on personal qualities than technical prerequisites. For our clients we look for candidates who meet their professional requirements and have the right mindset, mostly being dynamic and professional.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

Currently I prefer model to cooperate with senior people in consultancy who work independently and deliver good results to employ people. The most important in this cooperation is to understand what we want to achieve, to keep the required quality and to meet time frame. I have learned also in this co-operation but also in people management, the most important are the feedbacks and open communication. This also helps to develop people.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

In general my principles in leadership are mutual trust and open communication. I also expect results and having fair relationships. Speaking about my managerial experience, I managed mainly people without experience in my field (executive search). Therefore my style was more to train colleagues, to teach them fundamentals in HR, but also in sales. Since the Austrian company I represented, entered the Slovak market, we built up everything from the scratch. We were focused on delivering quality to our clients, as well as on meeting our sales targets. It was very dynamic and since I was not able to do everything, I focused mainly on keeping qualitative standards and developing my colleagues in HR consulting.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

I would recommend to my 15-year ago myself, to pay attention to issues which I can influence, and not to waste time with issues which are out of my control. Our

mental health is very important for being successful, therefore we have to take care of it. To be sometimes self-fish is very important and healthy. Therefore we have to manage our time and energy smart.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

To solve 3 major problems in Slovakia:

- Slovak economy is slowing down, we need to implement new reforms to make business environment more flexible for domestic and foreign enterprises. Slovakia was an economic tiger among new EU members 15 years ago and so, currently we are one of the worst in EU. The challenge will be to attract new investors and to become again competitive player in European field.
- We have already a demographic crisis and it will be worsening. We will have less and less people in productive age and every year we are losing new young talents. The new government will have to open our country to employees from the third countries, to accelerate and simplify the process of hiring foreigners. At the same time to attract talented Slovaks to return home and to put more emphasis on making Slovakia more modern country with better education system and with higher investments to science and innovations. Slovaks who gained valuable experience abroad can bring their knowledge and to work at economy boost.
- The population is getting older and our healthcare system is collapsing. Although I am mentioning it last, this should be the first priority of our government. However for this we need a lot of funds, but also the right people in the key functions who have a courage and competences to start with reforms and to face new challenges.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

Less bureaucracy to ease business for the companies, as well as to employ foreigners in Slovakia. The companies many times have difficulties to do business in Slovakia for many administrative and financial obstacles and burdens. We face not enough flexible taxation and many times not flexible employing domestic people, and very complicated and time-consuming employing foreigners from the third countries. Every company is facing ups and downs and the state does not help sufficiently businesses when they struggle. To say it shortly – more flexible legislation for doing business and for employing people – both Slovaks and mainly foreigners.

COMPANIES SHOULD SHIFT THEIR FOCUS FROM DATA COLLECTION TO ANALYSIS AND DESIGN OF DATA SOLUTIONS

As regards the budgeting, planning and reporting of companies, we see a shift from a cyclical approach of drawing up budgets to their preparation on demand and in real time.

The role and position of financial directors in companies is strengthening. Automation and digitization are becoming their key topics. Štefan Čupil, a Partner at PwC Slovakia and Risk Assurance Leader shared the results of a survey conducted by PwC in recent months of three hundred CFOs from nine countries in Central and Eastern Europe, including Slovakia.

THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IS CHANGING VERY DYNAMICALLY. IS THIS ALSO IMPACTING FINANCE DEPARTMENTS?

Yes, our survey shows that about two-thirds of companies are currently undergoing, or are about to undergo a transformation as regards finance. They are responding to current trends, the biggest of which are automation and digitization, increasing the skills of employees, i.e. upskilling, and the fact that uncertainty is the new normal. It began two years ago with the pandemic, now it is continuing due to geopolitical disruptions. Companies that do not undergo transformation will sooner or later cease to be relevant in the market.

WHAT EFFECT IS THE INSTABILITY OF THE ENERGY MARKET HAVING ON COMPANY BUDGETS? HOW OFTEN DO FINANCE DEPARTMENTS NEED TO UPDATE THEM?

It depends on the sector in which the company operates, and the degree of its dependence on energy. However, there has been a major change in budgeting, planning and reporting – we are seeing a shift from a cyclical approach to budgeting, planning and reporting on-demand and real-time preparation. The traditional approach was to prepare a budget once a year and revise it quarterly or monthly. Today, companies need data and information for business decision-making almost continually, and thanks to digitization and technology, this is possible. In a turbulent environment, there is much greater pressure and demand for real time data.

ARE FINANCIAL DEPARTMENTS ABLE TO DELIVER THE NEEDED DOCUMENTS?

In the survey, we focused on what it means to prepare management reporting and divided this process into several phases. The first is the collection, processing and display of data, the second is business intelligence, i.e. putting data into context,

the third is forecasting, and the fourth is providing proposals for decision-making, i.e. bringing added value.

CEOs stated that finance departments spend roughly 42% of their time just collecting data. In five years' time, this ratio is likely to decrease by around 17%. In contrast, the time spent on the last phase, i.e. analyzing and proposing solutions that make the most sense for the business, should increase by 13% and become dominant with a 29% share of working time.

WHAT WILL NEED TO BE DONE TO BRING ABOUT THIS CHANGE?

Companies must realize that it is not just about technological solutions. What we see is that companies sometimes rush headlong into expensive automation or digitalization solutions, which do not meet their business requirements, or are either oversized or undersized.

Businesses are often charmed by technology suppliers. However, little is said about the role of people during the process. It is not enough to buy and implement technology. Employees must move from traditional functions towards higher IT literacy. This is evidenced by the fact that half of the companies stated that they are not satisfied with their current IT infrastructure in the survey. And this is mainly about the fact that volumes and demands on IT infrastructure are increasing exponentially. As regards, for example, additional servers or increasing performance. And, of course, companies are struggling with limited budgets, especially now. It's about deciding where to allocate resources to get the most value.

WHAT WILL TRANSFORM FINANCE DEPARTMENTS AFTER THEY GO THROUGH AUTOMATION AND DIGITIZATION?

When we digitize, for example, data from invoices, automate processes and introduce robotics, the next level is the use of cognitive tools in computer technology. For example, machine learning, artificial intelligence or natural language processing, when a robot can read the emotion of the person who sent the email. Or we will move in the direction that company directors will download, select and analyze data and information from the cloud using voice commands.



ŠTEFAN ČUPIL

PARTNER, RISK ASSURANCE
LEADER
PwC SLOVAKIA



Štefan is a Partner of PwC Slovakia and Risk Assurance Leader, he focuses on the digitization and automation of finance, cyber security and non-financial reporting.

WWW.PWC.COM/SK

RADOSLAV DANILÁK

CEO
TACHYUM S.R.O.



Dr. Radoslav Danilák, founder and CEO of Tachyum, has over 25 years of semiconductor industry experience and 137 patents designing state-of-the-art processing systems. In 2016 he founded Tachyum to disrupt markets by solving the performance plateau of nanometer class processors. Dr. Danilák was founder and CEO of Skyera, a supplier of ultra-dense solid-state storage systems, acquired by HGST/WD. At Wave Computing, he architected the 10GHz Processing Element of their deep learning DPU. He was co-founder and CTO of SandForce, acquired by LSI, where he pioneered MLC flash controllers and solved MLC flash endurance limited by device physics. He was a chipset and GPU architect at NVIDIA, a CPU architect at Nishan Systems and Toshiba, and chief architect of their 64b x86 CPU at Gizmo Tech.

Dr. Radoslav Danilák is the author of the idea to build a world-class supercomputer in Slovakia. Tachyum alongside partners within I4DI (Innovations for Digital Infrastructure) provided their relevant capabilities and experience to the development of the National Supercomputing Centre (NSCC) in Slovakia. Slovakia urgently needs to transform its industry. A world-class supercomputer can have a huge impact and contribution to the development of new innovative industries, it is a potential that can significantly change the industry in Slovakia. If a country wants to be recognized as a supercomputing power, it's not enough to have a supercomputer in the top 500. It's not even enough to have a supercomputer in the top 50. There are nearly 200 countries in the world. If researchers want a supercomputer to solve the most complex and challenging calculations, they don't want the 50th-best supercomputer. They want the best, second best, or maybe the third best.

In Slovakia, there is interest in a powerful supercomputer with world-class performance. The survey by Tachyum, which addressed experts, representatives of the academic community, representatives of the private and state sectors, and potential users of the upcoming supercomputer, found that 92% of respondents think that the planned Slovak supercomputer should offer world-class performance. Access to higher computing power and sufficient technological infrastructure is also an opportunity to actively participate in big EU or global projects.

In March 2023, President Čaputová visited Tachyum's offices in Bratislava to witness first-hand the progress of the Prodigy Universal Processor, which is in the final stage of development. The President met with Tachyum team of engineers to discuss topics such as innovation, green economy, sustainability and attracting top regional talent. During the visit, Tachyum representatives showed President Čaputová how Prodigy-powered supercomputers are poised to address

some of the world's most important and challenging problems. Faster and sustainable computation speed for AI is considered critical for advancement in all aspects of human life – from faster drug discovery and vaccine development to climate change impact assessment, weather forecasting, personalized medicine and more.

"If we want to start catching up with the living standard in Western European countries again, we need to develop cutting-edge technologies in Slovakia. We need companies with the ambition to push the boundaries of what is possible and to succeed on the world market. It is great that we already have companies with this vision in Slovakia," said Zuzana Čaputová, President of the Slovak Republic.

"Tachyum is well positioned to help with the transformation of the economy into a sustainable one in large part through enabling more efficient use of resources. With a mantra of "do more for less," Prodigy allows companies and governments to dramatically reduce electricity consumption, helping to control spiraling electricity costs and reducing the need to continually build power plants," said Radoslav Danilák.

With data centers currently consuming more than four percent of the planet's electricity – predicted to be 10 percent by 2030 – the ultra-low power Prodigy Universal Processor is critical to minimizing the environmental impact, including emissions, of data centers.

Prodigy, the world's first Universal Processor, delivers a revolutionary new architecture that unifies the functionality of CPU, GPGPU, and TPU into a single monolithic device, and dynamically reallocates server resources to maximize utilization without expensive and power-hungry accelerators. Tachyum has provided ideal server, cabinet, networking, and storage designs to help meet the high demands of cloud and HPC (High-Performance Computing) /AI (Artificial Intelligence) workloads with Prodigy.



WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING INNOVATION CURRENTLY INFLUENCING YOUR SECTOR?

The most exciting innovation currently influencing our sector is the post-covid remote collaboration. Organizations have to work differently, which means that IT infrastructure, digital tools for remote work, and data-driven activities become critical to organizational efficiency. Digital transformation has sped up, and most organizations are pressured to identify, develop and optimize their operations and performance.

This shift means that clients and employees are more and more tech-oriented, always connected, and less loyal. Additionally, Customer Experience (CX) is critical for talent management. We see the shortage of the right skills within the IT sector, but CX is also the derivative of the organizational IT landscape that consists of enterprise solutions that may boost their performance and ease the CX delivery at a great level.

Of course, the newest trend with AI in place may change the world in many areas as well. Many functions within organizations are already supplemented by AI, RPA, and other tools that allow reducing the human workload and focusing on creative work and productivity growth.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT TRENDS WITHIN THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION?

Organizations are now following several trends in digital transformation. Professional tools enable remote collaboration, fast and user-friendly applications facilitate employee productivity, and CX is critical with many offering 24/7 contact and mobile presence. However, Smart Factory/Industry 4.0 are still not fully implemented in all organizations. Cloud technology, single truth of data, functionality, and speed of ERP systems,

as well as IT infrastructure costs, are crucial for enterprise success. Lastly, it's vital to allocate project teams responsibly and plan realistically to ensure successful digital transformation while considering the people and teams impacted by the change.

WHAT DO YOU APPRECIATE THE MOST ABOUT MEMBERSHIP IN AMCHAM?

What I appreciate the most about membership in AmCham is the strong, diverse, and active community that works towards improving both the public and business environments. The association offers numerous activities that create awareness and build recommendations and solutions for stakeholders, which I find very useful. Also, being a member provides an excellent opportunity to network with professionals, and create great initiatives, projects, and committees that benefit both the association and its members. I am particularly impressed by AmCham's special care for the education sector, evident through the training provided for teachers, policy creation, and promotion of new technological solutions. Overall, being a member of the association has been a valuable experience, and I appreciate the opportunities it presents.

WHAT DOES MOTIVATE YOU AT WORK?

My main motivation is the opportunity to create solutions that can positively impact the world. Working for Sii Poland, I am driven by the company's growth and the chance to contribute to new projects that benefit both the company and its employees. Additionally, the ability to explore new markets and countries is also a significant motivator for me. Finally, I thrive on the thrill of competition and the satisfaction of winning against our competitors.



KRZYSZTOF DANILEWICZ

REGIONAL DIRECTOR,
COUNTRY BUSINESS LEAD
FOR THE CZECH REPUBLIC
AND SLOVAKIA, SII



Krzysztof Danilewicz was born in 1973 in northern Greater Poland. He graduated in International Business at the University of Economics in Poznań. For many years he has been professionally associated with management and sales. In 2012 Krzysztof joined Sii, and since 2014, he has been responsible for the establishment and development of the Katowice branch of Sii. Together with the team, he has built six hundred specialists site and a solid business relationship with a large group of clients. Currently, he manages the branches of Sii in Katowice, Gliwice, and Częstochowa and business in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Privately, he is passionate about the Beskid Mountains, MTB, Off-Road, and fantasy. Happy husband, father of four, and grandfather traded long-distance running for long walks with the dog.

PETER FECKO

REGIONAL CEO, CENTRAL
& EASTERN EUROPE
GRAYLING



Peter Fecko has been active in business and communications industry for more than 25 years, working originally as a journalist for business media in Slovakia and later on joining leading international communications consultancy in Central and Eastern Europe, Grayling. During his time at Grayling Peter Fecko has overseen establishment of the Grayling's office in Slovakia, becoming its Managing Director in 2002. He lead various Grayling offices in following years, in 2020 taking on a role of Regional CEO of Grayling CEE, being responsible for managing 9 offices – Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia and Ukraine. In his role of Regional CEO Peter has been also responsible for acting as regional strategic coordinator and business advisor to key international companies in the CEE region and he is also member of the Global Board of Grayling.

NAME 2-3 KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

We prefer employees that have strong expertise in their field or willingness to learn if they are starters, can think out of the box and are ready to innovate in their approach and ways of working. Last but not least, they need to be team players willing to work for the greater good of their team and company they work for.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

At Grayling we provide our employees with multiple programs through which they can professionally develop and upskill – it is always a combination of global development and education initiatives (Grayling Advantage Academy, international exchange program) and locally funded training programs tailored to each employee and his/her ambitions in terms of professional development and envisioned growth within Grayling.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

Key for me is to ensure that each of our employees has strong support in order to feel comfortable in the role they have in the company. But at the same time, I want every employee to bring into the company something from their experience, expertise and ambition to grow and develop, their views and opinions. I empower people to come up with new ideas, approaches and initiatives, while making sure they have necessary support and development opportunities in areas they do not feel strong at. I prefer colleagues that have their own opinions, even if they disagree with me and through joint discussion we come up with the best strategies and solutions – only such dialogue and discussion can fully utilize the talent of each employee that works at Grayling.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

If you have to resolve a difficult situation, never do it in the heat of the moment unless you absolutely have to – sleep on it, gather all the information and views from other relevant people around you and only then make the decision backed

by arguments and analysis of pros and cons of each option for resolving the challenge.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES

Consolidation of public finances and more responsible approach to state budget deficit, creating social system that is based on healthy balance between solidarity and economic realities and clear strategy for long-term growth and development of Slovak business environment and economy.

“ I WANT EVERY EMPLOYEE TO BRING INTO THE COMPANY SOMETHING FROM THEIR EXPERIENCE, EXPERTISE AND AMBITION TO GROW AND DEVELOP, THEIR VIEWS AND OPINIONS.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

Defining long-term principles of country's development both in business and social area. Currently there is no long-term vision and strategy – providing the answers to key areas defining where the country wants to be in 10, 20 or 30 years and there are too many often almost ad hoc changes to key systems of the market and society. If a business wants to have long-term, sustainable presence in Slovakia, it is extremely difficult to set long-term strategies if the basic factors of the socio-economic functioning of the country are changing so often and so profoundly.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES.

Teamwork, truthfulness, and problem-solving skills. Teamwork and collaboration are very important because employees who can work effectively in a team, collaborate with others, and contribute to positive team dynamics are essential for achieving common goals and objectives. It also fosters a positive work environment and builds trust among team members. Truthfulness is important at work because it builds trust and credibility among colleagues and supervisors. Being honest and transparent in communication and actions promotes a culture of integrity and accountability, which is essential for maintaining healthy work relationships and achieving long-term success. Employees who can analyze complex problems, think critically, and come up with effective solutions are highly sought after by employers.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

I prioritize the development of talent within my workforce by establishing a culture of continuous learning and growth. I provide regular opportunities for employees to attend training, development and mentorship programs to gain new skills and experience.

To approach reskilling and upskilling, I first identify the skills gaps within my organization and determine the areas where new skills are needed. Then, I work with my HR team to design customized training programs that meet the specific needs of our employees.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

I would define my leadership style as an open one. The open leadership style has several advantages that can contribute to the positive work environment and foster growth for both the company and its employees. By being transparent and approachable, an open leader can build trust and create a culture of collaboration and inclusivity. Moreover, for me, it means an honor to create a workplace where people feel comfortable and know they always find support when needed. This style also encourages innovation and creativity by allowing employees to contribute ideas and share their perspectives. Open leaders prioritize communication and feedback, which helps to identify and resolve issues quickly. Overall, an open leadership style can promote employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention, leading to increased productivity and organizational success.



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WOLFGANG H. FISCHER

CEO BRATISLAVA
COMPETENCE CENTER
ZURICH INSURANCE
COMPANY



I am a German citizen – born in Munich – and I have gained many skills and experience over 18 years across Europe: German, Spain, UK, Switzerland, Russia, and Slovakia – where there is my position as CEO of Zurich Bratislava Competence Center. Also, during my career, I have qualified as FCII, PMP, and MBCI. But most importantly, I am a proud father of a 19-year-old son, whom I adore. When I am not busy with work, I indulge in my hobbies, which include exploring renaissance and baroque art, traveling, skiing, listening to classical music, and practicing foil fencing. Although I studied law, my passion for insurance and project work led me to obtain an additional degree in Insurance Management from German Insurance Academy, showcasing my commitment to continuous learning and development.

WWW.ZURICH.COM/SLOVAKIA

LYGIA FULLBROOK

ASSOCIATE PARTNER
KPMG IN SLOVAKIA



Lygia Fullbrook leads KPMG's Talent Solutions services in Slovakia and is sector leader for Shared Service Centers. She assists clients going through transformation and change and provides them with Big4 skilled talents to help them with the delivery of strategic projects. Prior to joining KPMG in 2006, Lygia worked in London for a global risk management consultancy firm where she was overseeing Corporate Intelligence projects in Central Europe.

WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING INNOVATION CURRENTLY INFLUENCING YOUR SECTOR?

Technology is transforming consulting and advisory services in many ways. The use of artificial intelligence, automation, and data analytics is changing the way firms conduct audits or provide advisory services.

Recently, we have seen intense discussions about generative AI models. At KPMG, we believe that generative AI models have the potential to transform businesses through automating and executing certain tasks with unprecedented speed and efficiency. However, it will take time and human expertise to unlock their full potential in a way that's responsible, trustworthy, and safe.

WHAT SECTORS HAVE THE BIGGEST POTENTIAL TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE SLOVAK ECONOMY?

The Slovak economy, like many others, was tested by enormous challenges: a global pandemic, inflationary pressures, geopolitical tensions, etc. During the past few years, companies have learned to navigate the unpredictable, realigning their workforces, trying to untangle supply chain disruptions, and adapting to those impacts.

Slovakia's economy is diversified, with various sectors contributing to its growth and development. However, some sectors have more potential to shape the future of the Slovak economy than others.

Personally, I believe that the Business Services Centers Sector also has a special place in the future of Slovakia. Our country has been selected to be an important support hub for global corporations such as Dell, IBM, Lenovo, Swiss Re and many other well-known multinationals. The know-how and governance standards these companies bring to our country are of the highest standards. Their company cultures are about acceptance of diverse backgrounds and mutual respect. Their biggest investment in our country is in the people they employ by providing them with best in the class learning and development programs, preparing the young generation of graduates to be future-ready and employable in a competitive market.

The sector has significantly grown over last 20 years and currently employs almost 40 thousand people across Slovakia. Whilst in the past centers were mainly set up for cost saving reasons

and jobs located in Slovakia were more of a transactional character, in recent years we saw that more value-added roles were transferred here, and Center of Excellence were created with focus on IT, Finance, HR and Procurement. The positions in these Centers are more complex and as a result, employee requirements are more demanding, and the ability to learn and adapt is becoming a significant asset. To be able to fulfill these new requirements and be able to stay in the game we must continue to align our education system so that it prepares graduates with practical skills which stay relevant even in a rapidly changing environment.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU IN YOUR WORK?

First of all, it's the nature of my job. As part of our Talent Solutions service, we help our clients deal with one of the biggest challenges we face today – the lack of skilled and experienced people in the area of Finance Transformation. I regularly meet with and talk to CEOs, CFOs and HR directors to understand their needs and, at the same time, to learn from them as they have interesting perspectives. We often touch on important issues that resonate in our society and, to some extent, affect our business. A big motivation for me, however, is my colleagues. It is not often that you can find good people with the right experience, a willingness to learn and grow while sharing similar values, and I know I am extremely fortunate to be working in such a team. For me, it's important to involve them in projects where they can use their skills and experience and to ensure they add real value to our clients.

WHAT DO YOU APPRECIATE THE MOST ABOUT MEMBERSHIP IN AMCHAM?

I find AmCham to be incredibly valuable in fostering a business community which is not driven by individual company return alone, but has at its core, a desire to continue building a democratic, independent, and vibrant economy in Slovakia.

I also appreciate greatly the efforts by AmCham in advocating the pillars of Rule of Law, Capital of Talent, Innovation Capital and Regional Capital. A special mention must go out to Peter Rusinak, who has been tireless supporter of the Business Services Centers community.

PATRIK GALLO

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
RESONATE SERVICES S.R.O.



Patrik is the Operations Director at Resonate. Patrik holds a PhD. in field of Telecommunications and has more than 15 years of experience in Unified Communications and Collaboration Solutions. In past, he acted as SME and was involved in large scale telecoms projects for Fortune 500 Companies focusing on the transformation of legacy infrastructure to new cloud-based collaboration services. Patrik has built Resonate capability in Slovakia and leads the Slovak branch of Resonate and is managing the support organization that provides 24/7 services to our customers globally. Patrik lives in Slovakia with his wife Lenka and their family. Resonate is a group of experienced collaboration experts and developers with a portfolio that includes some of the most advanced cloud solutions. We are a Microsoft Gold Partner with 8 different accreditations and we are currently working for the global leaders in the fields of Telecommunications, Oil and Gas, Banking, Law and Media.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

Hunger to learn new things and asking questions, adaptation, taking action.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

Being Microsoft Gold Partner help us to see behind a corner a bit and get to understand what technology or feature is being introduced. We are investing more on innovation and trying to encourage our customers to adopt new things that will bring them better efficiencies and ROI on their technology. This allows us and our team to get to learn new things quick and test these out in our environment. Pace in which new tech is evolving is really fast and we trying to get our hands on it early days so we can shape our roles and skillset for future projects and for our customers.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

Open. Never had a closed office, never will have :) The other one is probably data driven decision making. While there is always space for improvements, I'm trying to backup my decisions with experience and data. Data is the new oil.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Take an action, and quick. Whatever it is.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

Well there are many and probably some more important than below – but from our perspective it's the following:

1. Education and research. Current society is a reflection of lack of high-quality education and critical thinking. Today's we are trying to find easy answers instead of the right ones.
2. Make investments opportunities for small/medium business more achievable. Get hands on EU money quick and simplify.
3. Clustering and business networking. Create an open environment that local companies would know about each other and meet. We have lot of top quality companies in Slovakia, that our economy rely on and we tend to do very little for them and to create business for them. Its not about big ones only, that can pack and leave.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

The above three :)



VISA

L'UBICA GUBOVÁ

COUNTRY MANAGER
VISA SLOVAKIA



Lubica Gubová works at Visa as a Country Manager for Slovakia. In this position, she is responsible for the development of the company's business activities on the Slovak market, for strengthening relationships with the company's clients and partners, but also for building brand awareness and representing Visa's values. She joined Visa in 2020, when the company's office was officially established in Slovakia. With her small but strong team in Slovakia, provides clients with support in all key areas – product, marketing, but also analytics and consulting. She has worked in the banking industry in the past. She has worked at Tatra banka for 15 years, where she gained experience in Cards & Payments, Mobile Payments, tokenization.

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NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

For me, it is extremely important that employees know how to connect and work together for a common goal. Our team also proves it. We work and make decisions as a group. Of course, each individual member must be an expert in his or her field, but at the same time it is necessary that we respect each other and do not compete.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE?

Female leadership is inclusive. Female leaders are said to be more supportive and are more willing to share information with the colleagues they lead. I think women generally have a better ability to consider the "human" side of individual team members as well.

I personally have a strong sense of detail. I require not only that everything fits "in the tables", but also that everything else around completes the whole picture. You could call it a more developed EQ.

In our team, after almost three years of intensive cooperation, it has proven itself it works. I believe it will continue like this.

IS IT GENERALLY DIFFICULT TO BE A WOMAN IN THE WORLD OF FINANCE?

In general, the banking and finance sector is perceived as more male-dominated, but this is mainly due to the predominance of men in top management positions. I must say, however, that the representation of women in various other positions in banks is quite high.

There is also a difference in the way men and women approach challenges. There are studies that confirm that men will calmly apply for a position if they only meet 60% of the requirements, but women only apply if they think they meet 100%. In any case, it is important to encourage women not to be afraid to apply for leadership positions. They add a different perspective on leadership, they have a different approach to it than male leaders. Men have a bit more predatory approach to leading a team. They use more arguments, facts, figures. Women go more often through humanity, stories, personification, immersion. They use team bonding in leadership methods. They are supportive. They look for partnerships and that's how they create a high functioning team.

The absolute best is the combination of the masculine and feminine elements in management – they complement each

other, creating a strong and functioning whole.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

I would advise my younger self to devote effort to what fulfills me and brings joy. This is the criterion by which decisions must be made in youth. Work hard on your mindset and believe in your ability to succeed. Reject those people who try to tell you how to live your life and live it in a way that makes you satisfied and happy. That's the point.

“

I WOULD ADVISE MY YOUNGER SELF TO DEVOTE EFFORT TO WHAT FULFILLS ME AND BRINGS JOY. THIS IS THE CRITERION BY WHICH DECISIONS MUST BE MADE IN YOUTH.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

We are not doing so well as a country that one change would be enough. From our point of view, as a company that provides people with the most innovative options for such a common everyday act as paying for goods and services, digitization with an emphasis on the final consumer is a priority.

However, changes are not driven by just one participant in the ecosystem. We all have a role to play: government, payment providers, technology companies, consumers.

The entire ecosystem needs to prepare for the future in a finance where cash is on the decline. And we need to get ready quickly, because the pace of change will probably be very fast. After all, we can already see it. Along with this change comes the need for better education about digital payments and the entire financial sector in the digital era.



LUCIA HAÁSZOVÁ

LOCATION LEADER IBM ISC
IBM INTERNATIONAL
SERVICES CENTRE



Lucia currently serves as the General Manager for IBM's International Center organization and as the Country HR Leader for IBM in Slovakia. Her role involves representing IBM centers, driving synergies, opening new opportunities for growth, and building upon previous successes. Beside the HR organization, Lucia also leads Employee Experience, Communication and External Relations, and act as an executive sponsor for D&I and CSR. With over 15 years of leadership and consulting experience in HR, she is skilled at identifying, proposing, and implementing pragmatic solutions to support strategic business objectives. As a leader she supports individuals, teams, and organizations reach their full potential. On this journey, she embraces agility, a culture of continuous learning and innovation, and focus on positive employee experience.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

In today's world where the changes are tremendous and as fast as never before, we simply cannot fix just to the pure skills the employees are having today. This might become old or even way too old tomorrow. What is important for me is looking at their potential going forward into the future. So for me personally, the first thing I look for in a new colleague even into my own team, is their growth mindset - the belief that not knowing is not an obstacle, rather a challenge. I like working with people who believe they can find the solution to any issue we are facing.

The second thing that is important for me is the compatibility of the new person with the culture of the company, as well as the culture and dynamics of the team. Sharing similar values is the base we build on.

And of course, depending on the role we are selecting a new colleague for, the set of skills needed to perform that specific role is extremely important. It really depends if we are looking for an experienced professional or for a new hire for an entry level job. So the right skill set is one of the elements we are taking into consideration.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

I believe in the strengths-based philosophy. When we are building teams or even the whole organization, I believe we should look for the best talent of the individuals and do our best to maximize the potential of those people and their talents. I truly believe that if the person is in the right fit for the given role and is able to utilize his own talents and strengths, he can achieve the exceptional results.

Sometimes we are trapped focusing on the areas for improvements. I believe, rather than spending a great deal of time trying to improve what we are not perfect at, we should focus on those areas we excel at.

And I am not saying improvement is something wrong. Of course, you need to fix your weaknesses in case they are blocking you. But what I believe we should be willing to achieve is utilizing the talents and strengths in our teams.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

My leadership style is a combination of visionary and caring. I always look into the future and try to visualize what we can achieve not only as a team but also as an organization. At the same time, I care a lot about the environment I work in. It is not about myself as a leader, but it is also about the ecosystem I am a part of and that ecosystem is created by the people in my team, by broader teams, by environment and partners outside of IBM. For me as a leader it is important to create a wholistic leadership style with these two elements close to me as a person.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Do not be afraid to accept the challenges. They can move you forward. Be yourself. This is the best advice I would give to anybody. I believe being the authentic self, being real, is what can bring the best out of you.

IBM ISC is one of the largest shared service centers that provide support in areas of IT, finance, sales, business, and process functions. At IBM, we believe that our greatest asset is our IBMers. Our commitment to our employees has earned IBM numerous awards, including recognition

for promoting gender equality, having the best work office, being named the healthiest company, and being recognized as a family-friendly company. IBM prioritizes creating an environment where all employees can thrive, regardless of their background or personal circumstances.

ERVIN HARAMIA

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
OF DIRECTORS
ALITER TECHNOLOGIES, A.S.



Ervin Haramia served almost twenty-seven years in the army, where he worked in various command and staff positions in the field of ICT and Security, as well as in international organizations. He was one of the first employees of today's Aliter Technologies joining in 2008, now working as Chairman of the Board of Directors.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

One of the most important things is passion for the field the worker is working in. If someone has the desire to learn new things and puts enough effort into it, he or she has a high probability of being successful. Further qualities are precision and accuracy. Our goal is to deliver the highest quality, which is why we are demanding on ourselves, our employees, and the work we deliver for our clients and partners.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH TO RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

The basis is to properly set up a team. It must have the right number of seniors, mediors and juniors. Subsequently, the development of each of them is assessed individually. Each team member has his or her own development plan, which takes into account his or her personal prerequisites and way of learning. Colleagues must constantly motivate themselves. Keeping up with the latest trends and technologies is a must. We take mutual sharing of knowledge and experience as a standard.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND ITS PRINCIPLES?

Personally, I try to promote the so-called 'democratic' style of management placing the main emphasis on building relationships and fulfilling the set tasks

across the whole organization. I believe that this style is the key to achieve the right team motivation, especially by ensuring proportionate involvement and proper communication. Employees need to be heard, their views considered and, if useful, applied in the company management process. I support employee activity, as it enables them to fully show what they've got and develop their talent and I always try to respect the principle of individuality. I also expect this to bring about a positive working climate, an atmosphere of mutual trust and agreeable interpersonal relations. And if this is aligned with optimal control of tasks and assignments, it ensures better fulfillment of one's duties, stirs up strong incentive for cooperation and drives effective usage of the skills of the majority of team members.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Each of us looks at things differently over time. But if we did not experience them as they were, it would affect our perception. With the acquired experience, I perceive that it is necessary to have a manageable working pace and distribute his or her long-term workload that even after a long time one is still able to perform his or her work duties responsibly – free of unnecessary stress and avoiding possible burnout. Over time, however, I have realized that it is far from easy to follow this particular advice.

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NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES

I believe that certain key qualities of my staff are essential. First and foremost, I prioritize integrity, which includes maintaining high ethical standards and being honest and transparent in all dealings with clients, the court, and other legal professionals. I also look for empathy and compassion towards clients, as well as objectivity and diligence in employees' work. It's essential to pay close attention to detail and ensure that all aspects of a case are thoroughly researched, and we strive to achieve the best possible outcome for our clients. And last but not least, it is the desire and willingness to develop. Continuous improvement and self-development is also an added value I look for in my employees.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

I am committed to developing talent within my workforce. I encourage professional development by participating in webinars, attending conferences, or pursuing additional certifications to improve themselves. I also conduct performance evaluations to assess employees' strengths and weaknesses, provide feedback on how to improve their skills and work performance and offer opportunities for career advancement within the firm. I guide my colleagues to be flexible and independent, but at the same time able to work in a team and handle work stress. In short, to enjoy their work and be proud for the result at the end of the day.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

My leadership style comprises vision and its communication, integrity, strategic thinking, team building, and I do also believe business acumen. I believe that by having a clear vision for the future, understanding legal trends, and making strategic decisions, we can create positive outcomes for our clients. My also prioritize building a positive work culture by providing resources and support to develop our team, encouraging collaboration, and providing opportunities for professional development. Additionally, I value having a strong understanding of business operations and finances, managing budgets, setting financial targets, and making strategic decisions that benefit the firm.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Reflecting on my current experience, I would advise myself from 15 years ago to focus on building a strong legal foundation and dedicating time to research, writing, and developing analytical skills. I would also emphasize the importance of developing strong communication skills, seeking out mentors, embracing technology, developing soft skills such as empathy and emotional intelligence, and always maintaining high ethical standards. However, when I look back, I wouldn't have done things differently than I did, i.e. I think that I did at least partially most of the above.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER THE SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

I believe that the top priorities of a new government after the upcoming September elections should be education, healthcare and implementation of public integrity. To improve the quality of education, the government should find a proper financing model of schools, update and improve curriculums, make teacher job more attractive, and strive to teach student critical thinking. Regarding healthcare, the government should finally create realistic financial model of operation of health care system, assess pros and cons of decentralization, improve the quality of healthcare by implementing standardized protocols and guidelines (including DRG), investing in modern medical equipment, motivate students to stay in Slovakia upon finishing medical education and doctors to educate themselves during entire practice. In public integrity, the government could improve transparency in government operations, strengthen compliance measures and institutions, and hold officials accountable for malpractices.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

I would try to reduce bureaucracy in combination with paying bigger attention to the principles of the market economy. Streamlining of procedures and reducing the administrative burden on businesses could make it easier for both domestic and foreign companies to operate in Slovakia, potentially positively influence economic growth and creating new job opportunities. Less state and less regulations should boost the economy.



MARTIN JACKO

ATTORNEY-AT-LAW AND
MANAGING PARTNER
**LANSKY, GANZGER,
JACKO & PARTNER, S. R. O.**



Martin Jacko practices in the areas of corporate law, mergers and acquisitions, construction law (including FIDIC), real estate law, insolvency and restructuring law, compliance, public procurement, state aid/investment aid, as well as international and European law. He focuses in particular on strategic advisory, crisis management, corporate acquisitions and large construction and infrastructure projects at national and international level. He acts as a bankruptcy trustee and restructuring trustee, an active member of the Council of the Antimonopoly Office of the Slovak Republic. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the SCC (Slovak Compliance Circle), which is focused at developing and implementing standards and legal aspects of compliance. As SCC representative in the Rule of Law initiative (comprising largest entrepreneur associations) Martin is connected to the public / state sector participates also in the legislation process.

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IVAN KISELY

PARTNER
BIRD & BIRD S.R.O.
ADVOKÁTSKA KANCELÁRIA



As a Partner at Bird & Bird Slovakia Ivan has more than 15 years of experience supporting clients predominantly in a broad range of commercial contracts and regulatory issues in selected sectoral fields, public procurement matters, environmental law, compliance and white collar crime. Ivan prefers a sectoral approach to legal advice and has robust track record of advising clients in the defence, automotive, technology, life sciences and gaming sectors. This enables him to offer in-depth insights into sector-specific contracts and contractual ecosystems. Having spent part of his legal career on secondment as the General Counsel at a European company operating high-power charging stations for electric cars on highways, Ivan used his immersion into this industry as a springboard to extend his expertise into innovative fields, such as electromobility, connected cars, autonomous vehicles and AI.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

The three top qualities that I look for in employees are passion for their work, can-do attitude and common sense. Passion for work (be it law or non-legal professions of our firm) makes the difference between viewing the job as a necessary must, as opposed to being self-motivated, looking forward to new challenges and looking for ways how to improve individually and as a team. Can-do attitude is key for overcoming obstacles and problems that inevitably crop up even in the most exciting jobs and stellar workplaces. And finally, common sense is the hard-to-define subtle art of finding the right balance in practical matters like level of detail of legal advice, the right amount of independence, extent of informality in a work team and achieving a reasonable work-life balance.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

In the context of a law firm, this would be more upskilling than reskilling, as even lawyers who wish to take a break from a law firm career would most likely wind up taking up another legal profession, as opposed to starting to code or becoming an engineer. As a global law firm, at Bird & Bird we strive to harness the synergies that can be achieved by sharing know-how, skills and best practices across teams and across countries. One tangible example are trainings for lawyers of all levels of seniority, from trainees right up to partner which often focus on soft skills, rather than purely legal know-how. Second example are our regular international Bird & Bird sector calls and retreats (Tech and Comms, Life Sciences, Aviation and Defence, Automotive, Financial Regulatory, etc.), during which practical real-life case studies and trends are shared by people with an in-depth knowledge of these sectors. Third example are client internships, during which our lawyers acquire the valuable experience of being a part of the internal team and viewing a business as a living organism from inside. Our experience at Bird & Bird Bratislava is that such secondments result in long-term benefits for both the secondee and the client and ultimately also our firm.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

For context, 15 years ago would have been the early years of my law-firm career. With the benefit of hindsight, I would have advised my own self to be more willing to invest time in non-linear ways how to develop my skills, such as client secondments, secondments abroad, taking a course in a non-legal area and taking a sabbatical to freshen up my mind. Of course, each era has its specifics and “wise words” from 2023 would sometimes be impossible to replicate in 2008 and truth be told, I did manage to catch up on some of these later on. However, I feel that at that time myself and other peers from my generation viewed our professional development in a more traditional, linear way and often did not find the time or opportunity for venturing beyond the well-trodden path of career development. I am happy that at Bird & Bird we are open to our members pursuing such ventures and offer flexible arrangements, although the initiative should come from the individual, which in itself is a lesson for life.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

This will inevitably be a lawyer’s perspective: I believe that greater predictability of decision-making would make Slovakia a better place to do business. This includes not only courts, but also public administration bodies. In my experience, predictability is essential, as it enables business from abroad to take a well-informed decision on whether and how to enter Slovak market and ensures that their risks analyses, budgets and timelines are not merely “on paper”. But also Slovak businesses often face difficult decisions whether to apply for a permit or government funding or new line of business and whether to pursue a claim before a court and how long will it take, even if the chance of success is high. Of course, predictability is a complex topic, as it requires adequate length of proceedings, transparency on requirements, deciding same cases identically and also offering guidelines or consultations on tricky areas of law, in which the advice of a law firm should be ideally complemented by the regulator’s viewpoint.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

Each employee has its own individual strengths and unique abilities. One of core competences of manager is proper management and development of talents. Beside various individual qualities of each employee for me personally personal values and highly professional approach to work matters. Since I am responsible for area of private and corporate clients, I am naturally looking for people who are motivated by direct client contact and are prepared to do extra mile for our clients. In our core company values we have demanding, creativity, braveness and partnership as 4 pillars and I am fully in line with these principles in the area of people management.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

It goes without saying that our people are our core and most valuable asset. That's the reason why talent development should be important pillar of every company. It's crucial to have talented, high professionals, especially in positions facing our clients. Our colleagues have wide range of various development activities depending on their preferences, experience and individual motivation which helps them to find out more about their individual strengths as well as development needs.

We must not forget that today's world is developing extremely fast. The necessity of education and learning of new skills is therefore a highly actual daily topic. Our effort goes towards continual progress, to be abreast of the times, so we could deliver the best comfort we are able to. Understandably, such approach is expected from the client's perspective from such an innovative leader Tatra banka is. So without any doubt, I am supporting increase of expertise and keeping up with the trends. Temporary job rotation programs in our bank are very beneficial. Colleagues, which are part of rotation are gaining new experiences, which they will not be able to get, if such option will not be offered.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

Slovak republic is currently facing multiple challenges. Number one is the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. The government must deal with outcomes and effects from war outbreak in different areas of society. Second topic, which need to be subject to discussions, is population ageing. Also, how to solve the lack of skilled workforce will be essential. Last, but not least, I think that new government coming after September's elections will be facing challenge of long-term sustainability of public finances. Topics like new pension scheme, health care system, social welfare system, mix of different taxes, demographic situation in our country will be ahead of our new leaders.

ZUZANA KOŠTIALOVÁ

MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
TATRA BANKA



Zuzana Košťálová became a member of the Board of Directors of Tatra banka in July 2022. She graduated from the University of Economics in Bratislava with a specialization in international business. She joined the bank in 1994 and has worked in various positions building corporate banking and managing client relationships. Prior to moving to the position of member of the Board of Directors Zuzana managed the Large Corporate Clients Division, which also covers the Syndicates and Financial Institutions Department. She has also built a strong team focusing on the acquisition of international corporate clients. She also cooperated on several optimization projects and managed Tatra banka's first private equity investment on the Slovak market.

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L'UBICA KRAJČOVIČOVÁ

BRANCH MANAGER
CPL



Lubica Krajčovičová is a Branch Manager of Cpl Slovakia. Being in recruitment since 2006, Lubica started her career in internal HR and Talent Acquisition teams in an international IT company, where she stayed for almost 12 years. Since 2019, she has been working for Cpl, a consulting company specialized in recruitment and total talent solutions. Her areas of expertise are leadership, people development, recruitment, business development, client management and coaching. She is living in Bratislava and has 2 children at the age of 9 and 13. In her free time, she likes reading, playing the piano, doing Pilates, going for walks, and spending time with her loved ones.

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CHALLENGES IN THE SLOVAK LABOR MARKET

MARKET CHALLENGES IN 2023

The market in 2022 was heavily influenced by high inflation and energy prices and this unstable situation seems to continue also in 2023. These factors caused a lot of uncertainty among candidates and employers. On the other hand, the unemployment rate in Slovakia is continuously decreasing, reaching 5.76% in February 2023, compared to the unemployment rate of 6.86% in February 2022.

During 2022, 115 000 jobs were advertised overall, while almost 40% of them were in the Bratislava region, followed by Trnava, Nitra and Trenčín. Almost 40% of all open jobs required secondary education.

WAR FOR TALENT

In Cpl, we have been experiencing an increasing number of offers rejected by candidates in the last couple of months. Many employers also realize how difficult it is to find experienced candidates and therefore value their employees more, especially the senior ones. They are more open to satisfy their needs and create the environment where they feel happy and recognized. **We assume that in 2023, the war for talent will continue.**

To win the best talent, **we always recommend our clients to improve their hiring process. The more efficient and quicker the process is, the bigger chance to win the talent. Communication with candidates and their treatment during the hiring process is very important, too.**

MOTIVATING CANDIDATES IS KEY

This year, one of the biggest challenges for employers in Slovakia, will be the **candidate shortage**. Many companies are struggling to find skilled and experienced workforce. **Nowadays, it is not sufficient anymore to post a job and wait for CVs. Candidates need to be motivated to change jobs - they need a lot of details before they even consider it.** As we know our clients very well, we can explain what their vision, company culture, and working teams are like. We can tell them much more about the role and the working environment than they can find on the company webpage or in the job description. We listen to them and discuss their individual situation and potential reasons for leaving. **From our experience, what works most for candidates to consider changing jobs is to understand**

what challenges there are for them in the new role, what they can learn and what impact they will have.

On top of that, the most frequent reasons for leaving jobs are salary, not feeling recognized or appreciated, unrealistic expectations regarding performance, bad relationships, lack of work-life balance, and incompetent management.

When it comes to flexibility, it is one of the most important factors for candidates to consider a job change. **Working from home, flexible working hours, and work-life balance are the standard conditions candidates expect from their future employers.**

We can see that many companies are offering similar benefits. The challenge for employers is how to differentiate themselves from their competitors. **Some companies are already trying to implement non-standard benefits such as unlimited vacation, a four-day workweek, or fully remote work.**

Cpl has been working as a trusted partner with many companies from multiple sectors. We see what our clients struggle with and what obstacles they face. Therefore, we think that the added value of cooperating with a strong partner like Cpl is enormous, and that we can significantly help employers to overcome their challenges.

We would like to thank the AmCham team for receiving the opportunity to share and exchange our experience with other AmCham members also in 2023 and we are proud to be part of such an inspiring community.

MOST IN-DEMAND IT ROLES

- Software Developers
- Data Analysts / Data Scientists
- Security Engineers
- System Administrators
- DevOps Engineers
- UX Designers

MOST IN-DEMAND NON-IT ROLES

- Accountant
- Financial Data Analyst
- Financial Market and Investment portfolio Specialist
- Strategic Buyer
- Recruiter
- Sales Representative
- Administrative multilingual roles

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

A talent for me is a self-motivated, highly skilled person who wants to continue to develop by improving various skills in order to be successful. For me the key thing in such cases is to allow this talent the space it needs to develop, which means trusting in a person's ability to do a good job. After having taken on a new project, new skills, then it's time to add additional areas to that person's working environment, providing them with new challenges through which they can gain new skills.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

As mentioned above, I like to develop people who have potential and enjoy the work they do. For me the key principles are showing respect, giving trust and trying to create a positive working atmosphere, in the sense of always viewing the glass as half-full rather than half-empty. In the best cases, it is my employees themselves who come with solutions to challenges, and I only need guide them accordingly.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE GIVEN YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

My advice would be to surround yourself in your professional environment with as many people who inspire you and are suited to you as possible, and to avoid people who cost you energy. Try to work mainly on projects/things you enjoy and match your abilities. This is the basic prerequisite for being successful and satisfied.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER THE SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

1. Improve the absorption of the available EU funds
2. Improve education, in particular by increasing the salaries of kindergarten and school teachers, so talented people are not forced to leave kindergartens and schools to work in the private sector
3. And, on the one hand, promote better integration, especially through early support for minorities, such as the Roma, and, on the other hand, further facilitate the hiring of third-country workers to ensure a new, skilled labour force.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

That is a difficult question. I believe Slovakia should focus on improving its economic competitiveness. In doing so, a lot of other goals, such as achieving a higher standard of living, can be achieved more easily.

WHAT IS THE KEY FOCUS IN YOUR FIELD WHICH YOU CURRENTLY CONSIDER YOUR TOP WORKING PRIORITY?

Digitalisation is a hot topic in all fields of work, including accounting. If you work with the right technical tools and use the correct workflow, you can save accountants a lot of time-consuming, everyday work, and quality and internal risk control will improve as a result. In other words, your accounting costs will be considerably lower, while risk and fraud – e.g. at the management level – will be eliminated. These kinds of digitalisation projects are therefore the main focus for me and my team, which is why I increasingly find myself surrounded by IT professionals, together with whom I create new service lines, for example as an implementation partner of Helios Inuvio.

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KLAUS KRAMMER

PARTNER
TPA SLOVAKIA



- Partner
- Certified tax advisor

Klaus Krammer is the TPA Slovakia partner responsible for outsourcing projects with a main focus on IT optimisation and OCR implementations (digital bookkeeping, optimisation of Helios Inuvio ERP systems). From working in different countries he gained a lot international know-how with regard to tax planning, tax optimisation and M&A, with a focus on the Austrian, Romanian, Hungarian and Slovakian markets. He is skilled in developing new service lines and new teams.

He has extensive experience in particular in the sectors of real estate (offices, warehouses) and renewable energy (solar and wind).

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PETER KUBINA

MANAGING PARTNER
DENTONS EUROPE CS LLP



Peter Kubina has been with Dentons since 2013 and he has been the Managing Partner of Dentons' Bratislava office for 6 years. He is the Head of the Litigation and Dispute Resolution practice in Dentons' Bratislava office. In his practice, he focuses on dispute resolution matters, both litigation and arbitration. He has advised on a number of dispute resolutions in various areas ranging from criminal law and civil, employment and commercial litigation to constitutional matters. He occasionally lectures at Comenius University on topics related to constitutional law. He is the legal counsel to the President of the Slovak Republic in constitutional litigation proceedings before the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic and other formal legal proceedings before other justice and law enforcement bodies. Foreign directories such as Chambers Global, Chambers Europe, Legal 500 and IFLR 1000 recognize Peter Kubina as the top-ranked lawyer.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

Character – Because it is one of the few things that money can't buy. As lawyers, we often face dilemmas having to do with ethics and values, where a strong sense of right and wrong is needed.

Professional excellence – Because our clients come to us for premium quality legal advice and without this asset there is no way to survive in a highly competitive market.

Loyalty to the firm – As opposed to job-hopping and taking every job offer that may come from the competition. In turn, we as a firm reciprocate that loyalty to our employees.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

In practising law, talent development is a marathon and requires commitment on both sides. We identify talent at a very junior level (often while the person is still a law student), provide them with training which tests their ability to learn, and then allow them to work on a variety of projects and cases, giving them challenging tasks which make them step out of their comfort zone and learn under the supervision of a partner or a senior lawyer. Many of these cases are pro bono and give our people the opportunity to do something beneficial for society, which many young people value. As a firm, we strive to be a place where our people can grow and develop their career and we offer various career paths instead of the traditional "up or out" model that is typical to most law firms.

To be successful in a small legal market like Slovakia, one can specialize in certain area of law but it is important to maintain a great degree of versatility. As a result, reskilling (from one type of legal work to another) in our business is not as difficult. Upskilling is a natural and inevitable part of every lawyer's career path and "comes with the job". Our firm offers a variety of internal and external training to help our lawyers and staff to develop skills that are needed in their role.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

I like to give my colleagues a great degree of freedom and avoid

micromanaging them (as I preferred the same in my junior years). I try to lead by action and example, albeit there are areas in which I am definitely not the best example to follow. :-)) I like to surround myself with people who are better and smarter than I am, so that I can learn from them. I like my ideas to be challenged and improved by the ideas of others. And what I like the most is seeing a colleague to take ownership and responsibility for a case or matter and take it forward.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

In my career, I would probably not change anything and do it all over again exactly as I have done it until now. I have been very lucky to work with the right people at the right times. In my personal life, I wish I would have spent more time with my family and that I would have started riding my bike much sooner.

To lawyers beginning their careers, I would say: pick your first real legal job not by the pay but by your future boss, as your first mentor will have the greatest influence on your qualities as a lawyer.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER THE SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES?

Only three? There are so many changes I'd like to see that it is very hard to choose. But if have to name my three top areas, they would be (1) rule of law – so that no one enjoys unlawful immunity from being liable for their wrongdoings and law enforcement institutions remain free from undue political influence, (2) education – so that children and young people are raised to become assertive and critically thinking individuals willing to take responsibility for their own lives, and (3) healthcare – so that spending time in hospital is not a nightmare and patients have access to quality care and evidence-based medical research.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

If I have to choose only one thing, it would be eradicating or at least minimizing cronyism and corruption, which requires strengthening the rule of law (in the sense I summarized above).

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

I look for "heads, hands and hearts" when it comes to colleagues. "Heads" bring innovation and creativity in solutions of challenges, while "hands" deliver on them with needed fortitude, diligence and competence. However without "hearts" – a genuine interest and passion of people in delivering solutions to clients the first two could (soon) be AI.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

I always say to people "do what you love and if it will be with us, we'll be honored". Our international group offers many opportunities for talent growth through trainings or mobility, however it is up to each employee to pursue it – we are not in the kindergarten anymore. We have small and flat organization locally and therefore traditional hierarchical "moves" are limited. On the other hand I have never turned down any professional training request by employee or its manager to develop areas they feel are needed or spark interest.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

Good leader modifies the style to reflect the situation and thus above all I try decipher opportunities as well as threats around and enable the team to act on it. In smaller teams like ours it is very hands-on.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

1 year maternity leave will NOT damage your child. Truly! Regardless of what is the local "standard".

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

Education, healthcare and rule of law.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

Transparency.



KATARÍNA KURUCOVÁ

COUNTRY MANAGER
& EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
KOMERČNÍ BANKA, A.S.,
POBOČKA ZAHRANIČNEJ BANKY



Katarína graduated from City University, Bellevue USA in Business Administration. Prior to banking, she worked for Slovak American Enterprise Fund focused on equity investments within SME sector in CEE as Investment Manager and in Deloitte Slovakia as a Consultant within Management Consulting stream. In 1999 she joined ING Bank N. V., where she spent 12 years on various positions in corporate banking. As of October 2011, the Country Manager & Executive Director of Komerční banka Slovakia, member of Societe Generale Group and elected Member of Presidium of Slovak Banking Association.

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ANDREJ KVASNIČKA

TAX PARTNER
BDO



Andrej has been dealing with tax matters since 2007. He uses his expertise as a tax partner of the advisory company BDO. Andrej has over 17 years of broad experience for clients within the real estate sector, management of international tax restructurings and transaction projects for major real estate companies in the CEE. Andrej is responsible as a project leader of a complex multiple years real estate advisory project for the Government Office of the Slovak Republic creating a new ecosystem of state-supported rental housing in Slovakia.

HOW WOULD YOU EVALUATE THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE REAL ESTATE SECTOR IN SLOVAKIA, ESPECIALLY FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE AVAILABILITY OF RENTAL HOUSING?

The Slovak market is dominated by private ownership. In comparison with the EU, we reach the first ranks in this matter. There is only a small group of apartments held by individuals available for rental purposes and very limited social housing supported by the State Housing Development Fund. The share of rental apartments is therefore only around 9% of the total housing stock. Currently we can see the development of a new state supported pillar – rental housing owned by experienced institutional investors with regulated rents.

External factors, such as rising interest rates, high housing prices or the war in Ukraine, cause a decrease in the offer of existing rental apartments. In some regions, we can find only a couple of available properties. At the same time, if we consider a relatively weak and slow development of apartments and an increasing group of people who are not eligible for mortgage, I assume that the interest in rental housing will grow rapidly. In the current conditions, we observe that the real estate market has frozen, and developers are looking for new options to place the apartments under construction on the market. The solution for them will be the sale to major rental housing players, as is the common standard in Western Europe.

CONSIDERING THE DESIRE OF THE SLOVAKS TO OWN, WILL RENTING BE ATTRACTIVE ENOUGH COMPARED TO BUYING AN APARTMENT WITH A MORTGAGE?

The group of people that cannot afford to buy an apartment under current conditions is expanding fundamentally. The insufficient supply of commercial rental apartments leads to a further increase in rents. Our survey at BDO showed that if the rent is lower than the monthly mortgage payment by 100 to 300 euros, people incline to rent an apartment. Our models show that the rents in regulated apartments will be within this range even without the employer's contribution, which is one of the benefits that the new legislation of the state supported rental housing provides. With the employer's contribution, the rent can be up to

65% lower than the mortgage, and the difference can be up to 600 euros for larger apartments. Such a fundamental difference offers significant flexibility to people, increases their disposable income, and can influence the decision to rent instead of own.

HOW WILL THE NEW SYSTEM AFFECT EMPLOYERS?

The monetary contribution of the employer for the employees' rent is a new mechanism introduced by the state supported rental housing legislation. From my point of view, there is not a sufficient general awareness of the benefits it provides yet, even though it is a very powerful tool in rental housing – a game changer. This is in fact a net salary, as it is fully exempt from taxes and social security. We already perceive a high interest among large employers, who currently spend millions a year on accommodation or employee transportation, in providing this contribution.

WHAT IMPACT WILL THE PLANNED CONSTRUCTION OF RENTAL APARTMENTS HAVE ON OUR RENTAL HOUSING MARKET?

The number of apartments being built today is small and is not meeting the demand. Thus, in the short term, we expect to see an increase in commercial rental prices, regardless of the emergence of the regulated state-supported rental segment. From a long-term perspective, I expect the market to stabilize. The new segment will satisfy the demand for housing and should have an impact on slowing down the increase in commercial rental prices.

WHO DOES THIS OPPORTUNITY OPEN THE DOOR FOR?

Interest can be expected from major foreign players in the rental housing sector. This product is particularly attractive for pension funds and insurance companies with long-term money, for whom even a lower yield can be interesting.

The volume of investments that some current and potential investors are already declaring – several billions of euros – can represent a significant push for the Slovak economy, bringing many multiplier effects and creating new jobs during both construction and operation phase of the rental housing projects.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

Definitely open-mindedness, an ability to take the initiative, a “can-do” approach and willingness to learn new things. These are the qualities I consider the most valuable and that are definitely needed to succeed in the future workplace given the speed of change and transformation economy and most businesses are going through. And I would also add patience and persistence. I believe being successful requires hard work and persistence. Success is usually not an accident.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

Talent is the key asset for us and so we invest significant time and effort into our talent agenda and the overall talent experience. It starts with a well-managed onboarding, constant development of technical skills, leadership skills, effective communication and personal development. We also focus on topics such as physical and mental health, which become especially relevant after the COVID pandemic. We believe in the importance and power of coaching. People perform best when they can apply their talents and when they do the work they like. We systematically focus on our people's strengths; it starts with helping people to identify their strengths and then building jobs and roles around the key talents and interests. Due to the large size of our firm and broad range of professional areas and geographies we cover, we also promote and support talent mobility within the firm. It is a great opportunity to learn new skills and get new experience.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

I believe my style is very open, inclusive and collaborative. I trust in people and appreciate different skillsets. I tend to consult on important decisions and seek other colleagues' views, as I strongly believe that no-one can evaluate and analyze every side of a problem alone and considering different perspectives usually results in better decisions. I believe people should be encouraged and be given space to share their views, contribute their ideas and be actively engaged. This is what motivates most people. And this is the mindset and company culture which, in my view, brings the best results.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Probably none. I believe the experience I went through, with all the ups and downs, has shaped me into what I am today. I have always done what I believed was right, without worrying too much about what would happen in the future. You often need courage and a strong moral compass in business to make the right decisions.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

Education, healthcare, and anti-corruption and law enforcement.

Deloitte.

IVANA LORENCOVÍČOVÁ

MANAGING PARTNER
DELOITTE



Ivana Lorencovičová is the Managing Partner of Deloitte Czech & Slovak Republic. She is also the WorldImpact Leader for Deloitte Central Europe promoting initiatives focused on creating a more sustainable and more equitable corporate environment. Ivana has over 20 years of experience in transaction advisory and manages projects for strategic and financial investors in various sectors, including advisory on M&A, company sales, restructuring, refinancing and business valuations. She is a Fellow Member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (FCCA) in the UK.

WWW.DELOITTE.SK

MARTIN MAGÁL

PARTNER
ALLEN & OVERY
BRATISLAVA, S.R.O.



Martin is recognised as one of Slovakia's most accomplished private-practice lawyers. He advises clients on a wide range of corporate and commercial transactions including acquisitions, disposals, joint ventures and restructurings. At the same time, Martin heads the firm's dispute resolution practice in Slovakia and in the wider CEE region. He has acted on many landmark M&A transactions involving Slovak target companies and investors across many sectors and industries, including financial institutions, media, telecoms, energy, technology and construction. He has litigated cases at all levels of the Slovak judiciary (including acting before the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court), in civil, administrative, anti-trust and arbitration-related litigations. Martin is also one of Slovakia's leading arbitration practitioners.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

1. **Curiosity:** We value people who are eager to learn, to explore new ideas, and to challenge themselves and others. Curiosity drives innovation, creativity, and problem solving, which are essential for both our clients and our firm.
2. **Collaboration:** We appreciate people who can work well with others, across teams, practices, and geographies. Collaboration fosters trust, communication, and diversity, which are vital for our culture and our performance.
3. **Commitment:** We respect people who are dedicated to delivering excellence, quality, and value to our firm, therefore to our clients. Commitment reflects professionalism, integrity, and responsibility, which are the foundations of our reputation and our success.

they can leverage these technologies to automate and streamline processes, improve quality and efficiency, and generate insights and solutions that address complex legal challenges and opportunities. There are already a number of AI-powered tools and platforms on the market; for example, A&O as the first law firm to do so, has recently launched Harvey, a legal tech platform based on Open AI's latest models which have been enhanced for legal work, helping us to further improve the quality of our services for clients.

WHAT SECTORS HAVE THE BIGGEST POTENTIAL TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE SLOVAK ECONOMY?

Those that are driven by digital transformation and knowledge. These include sectors such as information and communication technologies, advanced manufacturing, e-commerce, and education.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE?

I believe the key is investing in the continuous development of our people, both professionally and personally. We offer a range of learning opportunities, such as tailored trainings or secondments. But, it is essential to provide them with regular feedback on their performance and to be supportive, be a true mentor and last but not least, to care about their career.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE?

I would wish for my leadership style to be perceived as visionary, empowering and supportive. In reality, I often do not live up to those standards and I can well imagine being perceived as an absolutist, albeit an enlightened one.

WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING INNOVATION CURRENTLY INFLUENCING YOUR SECTOR?

Definitely the use of artificial intelligence and data analytics. Companies are constantly exploring how

WHAT DO YOU APPRECIATE THE MOST ABOUT MEMBERSHIP IN AMCHAM?

The opportunity to connect and collaborate with other leading businesses and professionals in Slovakia, to contribute to the development and advocacy of policies and initiatives that support a competitive, innovative, and sustainable business environment. AmCham organises high-quality events, and is involved in many other added-value activities. It also offers its members access to key stakeholders and decision-makers in the public and private sectors.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

Improving the quality and efficiency of both the public administration and the judiciary. They are key enablers for the business environment. The public administration and the judiciary desperately need thorough reform and modernisation.



MARTIN MARTINEC

IBM CONSULTING LEADER
IBM SLOVAKIA



With over 18 years of experience in the IT industry, he has a strong background in strategy, implementation, and AMS projects related to customer relationship management. Martin worked with major international clients across 15 countries and 3 continents, primarily in the automotive, logistics, telecommunications, pharma, finance, and energy sectors. In addition to his professional experience, he has also held several local and regional management positions, leading competencies in CRM, Oracle, and Enterprise Applications across 10 countries. Martin is an experienced professional who leads IBM Consulting division at IBM Slovakia. He oversees the delivery of consulting services and the implementation of systems and applications for clients, with a focus on leveraging cutting-edge technologies including cloud, digitalization and artificial intelligence to improve client business value.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

When I decide to work with someone, I observe how the new colleague is prepared to build a dependable and trustworthy relationships which are important for building a positive reputation and how they are able to contribute to a positive work environment with can-do attitude – **Reliability**. It is also important to be able to adapt to changing situations and take on new tasks and responsibilities. An employee who is willing to learn new skills and take on challenges, and who can work effectively and shows high levels of **Adaptability**. In our client facing roles it is necessary to have a strong **Communication** skill as well, they are essential for building positive relationships either at workplace and with customers, used to effectively convey ideas and information. Reliability – Adaptability – Communication skills would be on top of my mind.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Perfect timing of the question – as I have joined IBM 15 years ago. First of all, don't be afraid of new challenges within your business. Embrace them as opportunities to learn and grow – as a professional and as a personality. Every change you encounter helps shaping your skills and make you a more versatile and adaptable person. Remember that failure is not the end, but rather a chance to reflect, learn and try again. With each attempt, you gain valuable experience and insights that can help you succeed in the future.

In addition, open communication is essential for building trust and strong relationships. When you communicate openly and honestly, you create a safe space for others to follow the same approach. This can lead to deeper

connections and greater understanding between people, whether in personal or professional settings. By practicing good communication skills, such as active listening, expressing yourself clearly, and being respectful of others' perspectives, you can foster healthy and positive relationships with those around you.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES

Ensuring business stability and predictability while investing in education and the future workforce are crucial for a thriving economy. However, the recent years have been particularly stressful for people, with the pandemic and the war in Ukraine creating widespread anxiety and uncertainty. Instead of creating artificial threats, politicians should focus on actively supporting wellness and mental health initiatives to help people cope with these challenges.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

In addition to promoting business stability and supporting mental health, it's also essential for policymakers to focus on innovation and building a workforce that's ready to tackle future challenges. With rapid technological advancements and the ever-changing global landscape, it's critical to foster an environment that promotes innovation and creativity. This can involve investing in research and development, providing incentives for startups, and supporting emerging technologies. At the same time, it's crucial to equip the workforce with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in this constantly evolving landscape. This may involve providing education and training programs that focus on emerging technologies and preparing individuals for jobs of the future.

IBM Slovakia is a major player in the Slovak IT market, established in 1992 with a vast network of sellers and business partners. It offers cutting-edge technologies and applications to simplify implementation and provide value-added services for its clients in banking, defense, government,

manufacturing, telecommunications, and distribution. IBM Slovakia offers a broad range of IT technologies, including enterprise systems, hardware and software systems, cloud solutions, Watson analytics, mobile, social, and security solutions to drive client digital transformation.

VILIAM MYŠIČKA

PARTNER
KINSTELLAR



Viliam Myšička is a Partner in the international law firm Kinstellar. He leads the firm's M&A practice in Slovakia as well as the firm-wide Restructuring & Insolvency team in CEE. With more than 15 years of legal experience, Viliam has worked on a broad spectrum of domestic, cross-border and distressed M&As. He has served as chairman of AmCham Slovakia's Restructuring & Insolvency Committee since 2022. In terms of sector specialisation, Viliam focuses on technology and has led Kinstellar's firm-wide TMT sector since 2017.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

I think it is an evolving matrix depending on the seniority of a person. Nevertheless, holistically these would be (i) ethics, (ii) the ability to lead a constructive dialogue, and (iii) the willingness to go the extra mile (in particular when it comes to complicated legal assignments).

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

Good question. I think that more could always be done in this area. I am proud of co-developing a project for law students called "Night of Chances LAW" together with the NGO Nexteria. The project offers students insights into the legal profession as well as opportunities to work at leading law firms in Slovakia, thus gaining experience and practical skills working on real legal matters and taking part in our Learning & Development programs. This year, Night of Chances featured top law firms on the market and more than a hundred students.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

Hands-on, focused, and at the same time inspirational. The Golden Rule: I try to treat people the way I would like to be treated. I create a network of relationships. And I never read books about successful people—no copycatting.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Do not study law, consider an IT career instead... More seriously: Advocacy is not for everyone and requires a lot of sacrifice. At the same time, it can be a very self-satisfying occupation with great opportunities to meet top-class people in business, innovators, politicians, etc. I don't regret a single step.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

These may seem a bit surprising from a transactional lawyer, however they are, in my personal view: (i) school reform and bringing salaries and terms for teachers in Slovakia to a competitive level, (ii) lowering the tax burden applicable to SMEs, and (iii) overall better predictability and stability of the legislative environment (easy to say, hard to achieve)—I suppose by appointing more professional and less politically dependent senior employees and executives at all ministries.

“ADVOCACY IS NOT FOR EVERYONE AND REQUIRES A LOT OF SACRIFICE. AT THE SAME TIME, IT CAN BE A VERY SELF-SATISFYING OCCUPATION WITH GREAT OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET TOPCLASS PEOPLE IN BUSINESS, INNOVATORS, POLITICIANS, ETC. I DON'T REGRET A SINGLE STEP.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

The process of the preparation and adoption of legislation is lagging behind. I would suggest (and impose!) that all ministries introduce a consultation process with the private sector and market professionals to be able to raise the quality of legislation and its wider and quick acceptance. This would help accelerate economic growth in Slovakia, as well.

PETER NEMČOK

CO-FOUNDER
AND PARTNER
MENITY



Peter is a successful entrepreneur and trusted advisor to top European executives. With over 25 years of experience, including 16 dedicated to entrepreneurship, he has honed his expertise while working with leading global companies in the telecommunications and automotive sectors. As a distinguished leadership advisor, Peter has earned a reputation for reliability and trust. Co-founding Menity, an international boutique executive search firm, Peter has played an instrumental role in connecting organizations with top-tier candidates for regional and local executive positions. Peter's executive search expertise spans various roles, including VP, BoD, and C-suite executives, primarily within the European digital, technology, and financial services sectors.

HOW HAS THE DEMAND FOR SPECIFIC TRAITS AND SKILLS IN TOP-LEVEL CANDIDATES EVOLVED IN RECENT YEARS?

In today's fast-paced and ever-evolving business landscape, we focus on identifying candidates who possess a strong combination of strategic thinking, adaptability, and exceptional leadership skills. We seek individuals with a proven track record of driving innovation and achieving sustainable growth while promoting a culture of inclusivity. Emotional intelligence and cultural fit are also crucial factors, as they contribute to creating a collaborative and inclusive work environment. By prioritizing these qualities, we ensure that the executives we place are well-equipped to navigate complex challenges, inspire their teams, and keep organizations competitive in the markets.

HOW HAS YOUR FIRM EMBRACED NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO STAY AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION IN TALENT ACQUISITION?

At our executive search firm, we recognize the evolving nature of the work landscape and have adapted our search process to stay ahead of the curve. By integrating advanced technological tools such as AI-driven sourcing, data analytics, and digital tools to help us minimize unconscious biases in hiring, we can identify and evaluate potential candidates across the region with greater speed and precision. Our expanded talent pool now includes professionals with diverse backgrounds and expertise in emerging fields, such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, sustainability, diversity & inclusion, and ESR, ensuring that we can meet the unique needs of our clients.

In addition to our innovative search methods, we are committed to continuously improving the customer

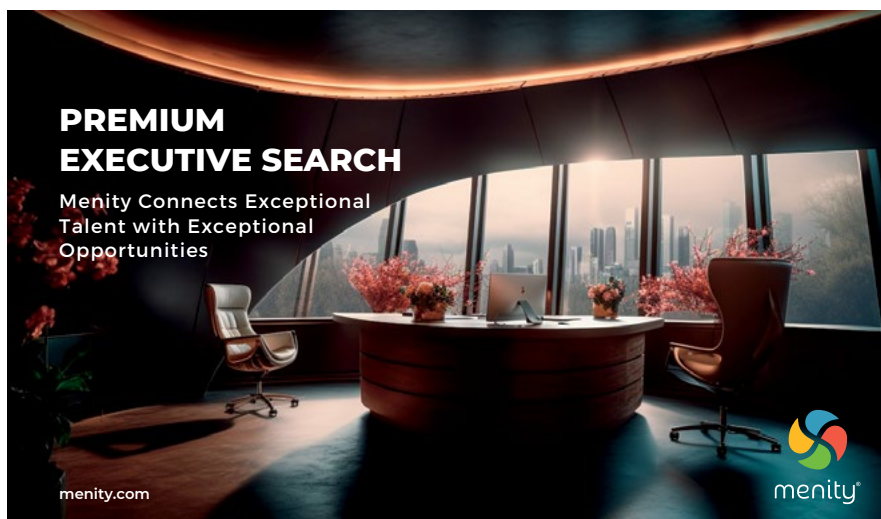
and candidate experience. With our deep industry knowledge and extensive professional networks, we provide exceptional service to both clients and candidates, ensuring that the search process is efficient, effective, and transparent. By combining these strategies, we can consistently deliver outstanding results and help our clients secure the top-tier talent they need to succeed in today's dynamic business environment.

WHY ARE MANY CEOS AND BUSINESS OWNERS CONCERNED ABOUT SUCCESSION PLANNING?

Succession planning and leadership development are indeed critical concerns for CEOs and business owners. Our firm takes a comprehensive approach to address these challenges, beginning with a thorough understanding of the organization's culture, vision, and strategic goals. We then work closely with clients to identify the skills and attributes required for executive positions and proactively source top talent from both internal and external sources. Our support extends beyond the initial placement; we also offer tailored onboarding and coaching programs to ensure a seamless transition and foster the long-term success of both the new executive and the company. By partnering with our clients in this way, we help them build a strong foundation for the future and navigate leadership changes with confidence.



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MAREK REŠOVSKÝ

MANAGING DIRECTOR DTSE
SK & CZ
DEUTSCHE TELEKOM SERVICES
EUROPE SLOVAKIA



Marek Rešovský has been working in Deutsche Telekom Group for 17 years. During this period, he has gone through various management positions. Since 2012, he was acting as CFO of T-Systems Slovakia, and has been active also in chambers of commerce, as well as other professional organizations (AmCham, IT Valley, CFO Club). Marek studied at the Faculty of Economics, TU in Košice, which he graduated in 2002.

He has been acting as Managing Director in Deutsche Telekom Services Europe Slovakia since June 2017 and also Managing Director in Deutsche Telekom Services Europe Czech Republic since August 2022. Thanks to the successful transformation of Deutsche Telekom Services Europe Slovakia, he managed to build one of the most awarded Shared Service Center in Slovakia.

WWW.DTSE.SK

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

1. **Innovative thinking:** I look for employees who can come up with creative solutions to problems, think outside the box, and generate new ideas. This involves a willingness to take risks, try new things, and explore unconventional approaches.
2. **Courage to disrupt the status quo:** In today's rapidly changing business landscape, we need employees who are willing to challenge established norms and push for change. This requires a willingness to challenge authority, take a stand, and speak up when necessary.
3. **Team spirit:** I also look for employees who can work effectively in a team environment. This involves being able to communicate effectively, collaborate with others, and contribute to the success of the team as a whole. It also involves a willingness to help out others and go above and beyond to achieve shared goals.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

In spite of extensive digitalisation and automation, the business of shared service centres is a people business, therefore I am eager to investing in people and leadership in an intensive and structured way. We are aware of the connection between these factors and the company culture. Leadership should be the ambassador of that culture. Although the activities our employees perform are digital activities carried out on technologies, it's still human work. And it will remain so in the future, of course with a greater degree of digitalisation and automation, so we have to learn how to use new technologies and how to get the most out of it. Therefore I am dedicated to supporting the development of our talents mainly in these areas.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Looking back at myself 15 years ago, there are some valuable lessons I've learned that I would like to share. Firstly, learning is a vital component of personal and professional growth. I would encourage my younger self to make a daily effort to learn something new, whether it's a new skill, language, or hobby.

In addition, taking care of my health is essential to living a fulfilling life. Eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, managing stress, and getting enough sleep are crucial habits to develop in order to stay healthy and energetic as I age.

It's also important to have a clear vision of what I want to achieve in life and to set realistic goals that will help me get there. Consistent action towards achieving these goals is the key to success.

Furthermore, building strong relationships with family, friends, and colleagues can provide invaluable support and happiness throughout life. Taking time to invest in these relationships is a worthwhile endeavor that will pay off in the long run.

Lastly, embracing change is crucial. Change is an inevitable part of life, and it's important to approach it with an open mind and a willingness to try new things. Being receptive to new experiences and opportunities, and not being afraid to take risks, can lead to personal and professional growth.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

As a leader with a passion for driving change and growth, I am supporting new initiatives, projects and ideas to make our business more attractive, competitive, and sustainable. I strongly believe that most important is to share understandable vision to motivate and to support coaching of people, but this will not be possible without listening them. In addition to that I am trying to support also failing culture, it means to make it safe to fail.

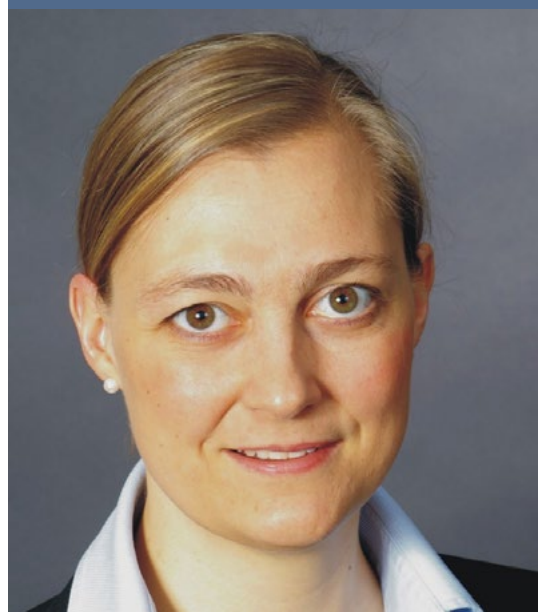
NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

1. **Digitalization:** With the growing importance of digitalization in today's world, a new government in Slovakia may prioritize digital transformation across all sectors. This could include investing in digital infrastructure, promoting the development of digital skills, and creating a regulatory framework that supports digital innovation.
2. **Efficiency:** A new government may prioritize improving efficiency in the public sector by simplifying administrative procedures, streamlining decision-making processes, and ensuring greater transparency and accountability.
3. **Education:** Slovakia's education system has been facing a number of challenges in recent years, including low funding, unequal access to education, and low levels of student performance. A new government may prioritize improving the quality of education by increasing funding, addressing inequalities, promoting digital literacy, and improving teacher training and support.



CONSTANCE ROST-BIETSCH

COUNTRY MANAGER
ROCHE SLOVENSKO S.R.O.
DIAGNOSTICKÁ DIVÍZIA



Dr. Constance Rost-Bietsch brings 18 years experience in the Healthcare Industry through different roles in Strategy, Sales, Marketing, Market Access, Health Economics, Pricing & Reimbursement, and Business Development. After having worked 6 years in Management Consulting with Boston Consulting Group, she joined Roche in 2011 in Switzerland, where she held different global roles in Business Development and as International Business Leader for Roche Blood Safety Solutions, prior moving to France as Business Director for Roche Diagnostics France and having moved to Bratislava in November 2022 to take the responsibility as Country Manager for Roche Diagnostics Slovakia. She has studied physics and gained her PhD through the University of Bayreuth in collaboration with IBM Research Laboratory at Rüschlikon, Switzerland.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

At Roche, we are passionate about transforming patients' lives. We believe it's urgent to deliver medical solutions right now – even as we develop innovations for the future. We are courageous in both decision and action. And we believe that good business means a better world.

With our focus on long-term growth through continuous innovation, Roche depends on the contributions of talented and committed professionals who are determined to drive our progress and shape the future of healthcare.

We continuously seek internal and external diverse talents in science, medicine and business, who can help us innovate, shape the future of healthcare and deliver on our business objectives. We believe to shape the future of healthcare, mindset and behavior is as critical as expertise, skills and capabilities: we are looking for patient and customer-centric mindsets, employees who are embracing continuous learning, being a system thinker and who are enjoying collaborating with a focus on outcomes and impact.

Three values sustain our culture and further our quest to help people achieve good health and longevity: integrity, courage and passion. We aspire to embody these values in everything we do.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

At Roche, you never stop learning: we offer a broad range of attractive learning and development programs and robust succession and talent management practices.

We ensure that our employees are able to deal with the challenges arising from an increasingly complex, connected and fast changing environment and feel familiar using methodologies and technologies of tomorrow. Only if our employees can develop indispensable new skills, they are able to provide the best solutions to our patients and are able to change healthcare through scientific and technological innovations.

We provide a variety of learning offerings adapted to our employees' needs: We develop skills and capabilities that ensure future readiness based on the three pillars: education and training, exposure and coaching as well as gaining further experience through on-the-job learning.

We embrace a coaching culture through mentoring and leadership development programs, complemented by a learning and development portfolio for self-study and facilitator-led training.

At Roche, we foster a culture of debate, mutual respect, and diversity. We encourage everyone to be open to discussing and considering new ideas, and we are taking an individual approach to diversity & inclusion. We create opportunities for employees that are as unique as they are and that enable all people to bring their unique selves to Roche and achieve their best work on behalf of patients.

In order to leverage diversity as an engine of innovation, we strive for an inclusive workplace where each individual is respected and can contribute fully his or her skills, experiences and perspectives.

Our business environment is changing and we must continually adapt. We need to ensure that we have, and make best use of, varied skills, perspectives and backgrounds to address these business issues in order to be successful today and tomorrow. The best solutions will come by gaining different perspectives, asking and answering hard questions and challenging the status quo. Our success in creating a truly diverse and inclusive workplace will directly impact our ability to bring new medicines and diagnostics to patients and establish data-based insights that evolve the practice of medicine and help patients live longer, better lives.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND VALUES?

At Roche, we foster a mindset for every employee to demonstrate leadership by being authentic, self-aware, empathetic and taking a holistic view.

I would describe my personal leadership style as enabling empowerment: empowering employees to take ownership of their work and contribute to meaningful decision-making, and enabling them to do so by ensuring they are equipped with the required skill set, and they have a clear understanding of the vision and expected outcomes. This requires listening, coaching and transparent sharing and communication.

I aim to create a work environment where people can be authentic and truly invested in their work, encouraging big thinking and giving everyone the support and flexibility they need to make their mark.

Overall, I strive to lead by example, consistent with our values integrity, passion and courage.

WWW.ROCHE.SK

TOMÁŠ RYBÁR

PARTNER
ČECHOVÁ & PARTNERS
S. R. O.



Tomáš is a partner at Čechová & Partners, a leading independent Slovak law firm with more than 30 years of history. His practice encompasses in particular employment, general commercial and corporate and pharmaceutical matters. He leads the firm's labour and employment practice group and is top-ranked as an expert in the field by major international directories.

Tomáš is also a leading expert in pharmaceutical law, assisting numerous pharmaceutical and healthcare companies operating in Slovakia. Last year, Tomáš became the Secretary General of AIJA – the International Association of Young Lawyers, one of the largest international organisations of lawyers. Tomáš is the first Slovak attorney serving in such a top-level international role.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES.

The first thing you see when you enter our company is the motto: We ask all those who say something is impossible not to discourage those who are already doing it. That probably says the most about the kind of people we have in our team. And I have to say, they are doing a pretty good job. Of course, with this way of seeing the world comes a requirement for teamwork, courage, a willingness to take some risk and a fair amount of responsibility. We are therefore primarily concerned with the personal qualities of our people, that are followed by their high level of expertise. Knowledge can be acquired and developed, but you cannot change a person's character. Thanks to this approach, we built a great team, made up of top professionals, and within a flat organisational structure we use the unique perspectives of each of them to solve everyday challenges.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

I see the ever-present family character of the company as a huge advantage of DYNAMIK. This is reflected in a simple, relatively flat organizational structure, where we as owners are involved in the management of the company and its day-to-day running. We know in detail every project we built and that allows us to react and make decisions or changes very quickly if necessary. However, we also have a high degree of flexibility and possibility to involve a large part of the employees in decision-making. The essence of such management is fairness, transparency and an overall value setting based on good relationships. Not only with employees, but also with business partners and the community in which we operate. As DYNAMIK combines many activities from different fields and therefore employees are different and need different leadership styles, we combine them just depending on the nature of the work. However, I think that the predominant style of management in our company is transformational management, aimed at creating an environment that encourages innovation and creativity and allows us to push the boundaries of possibilities not only for the company itself, but for each team member. At the same time, this management style helps us to adapt more quickly to a rapidly changing and highly competitive market.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

The family and purely Slovak character of the company can be seen as a disadvantage in our business – we do not have clearly defined corporate processes, international know-how or, for example, the possibility of simply adopting established systems from other developed markets where we could draw inspiration. We set everything up ourselves. We are aware of all this, which is why we work with external consultancies from whom we get a critical, but above all independent, expert view of our management. This allows us to develop not only the business, but above all the human potential. At the same time, a few years ago we successfully launched the DYNAMIK Academy project, in which we regularly train both employees and the company's top management and focus on developing soft skills.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

If I were to give advice to my younger self from 15 years ago, I would tell him to try to be more patient. To make decisions sensibly and to be able to react calmly, especially in tense situations. On the other hand, I would advise him to be more open in his relationships and to learn to communicate his thoughts and feelings earlier. And I would certainly advise him to focus on what truly motivates and fulfils him.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

I would like to see a change in the mindset of the public, but also of a large part of politicians, which has its roots somewhere in the previous era. That it is not a battle of people versus businessmen, or a battle of politicians versus businessmen. Most of the Slovak businessmen I know are trying to do the right things, not only for their company, but also for the community in which they operate. So, if the business sector is doing well, the whole society is doing well. All it would take is a little – for each of these groups to treat each other with more respect.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES.

Initiative, Reliability and Adaptability. Employees who take initiative, who are self-motivated and proactive in identifying and addressing problems, while getting the job done on time and to a high standard, are the driving force behind any successful business story. In today's technology-driven world, it is important to be able to adapt to new situations, take on new responsibilities and challenges as they arise. This is especially crucial for small and medium-sized enterprises, and therefore we at CEEOR, highly value employees' ability to flexibly adapt to changing conditions and quickly learn new skills.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Looking back, there are a few key pieces of advice I would give myself if I could go back in time. First and foremost, do not be afraid to take a risk, especially when it comes to pursuing goals and dreams. It's important to always weigh the potential benefits against the risks, but only trying new things, even at the cost of occasional failure, will lead you to new opportunities, experiences and will help you grow personally.

And never forget to take care of your wellbeing, do things that make you happy, surround yourself with people who make you happy, cherish your relationships and always prioritize your physical and mental health. Your health is your most valuable asset.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

I consider healthcare to be an area that must be a top priority for the next government. Years of lack of reforms, investments and financial underfunding of the health sector are more evident than ever after the Covid-19 pandemic and have a direct negative impact on the quality of life of people in Slovakia.

In addition to healthcare, other priorities should certainly be education and its reform, so that it can respond adequately and, in particular, flexibly to the needs of the market and produce a qualified and skilled workforce.

As a third I would mention climate change and sustainability. Like many other countries, Slovakia faces challenges related to climate change. The new government should seriously address the need for sustainable development and promote sustainable practices in agriculture, transportation, and industry.

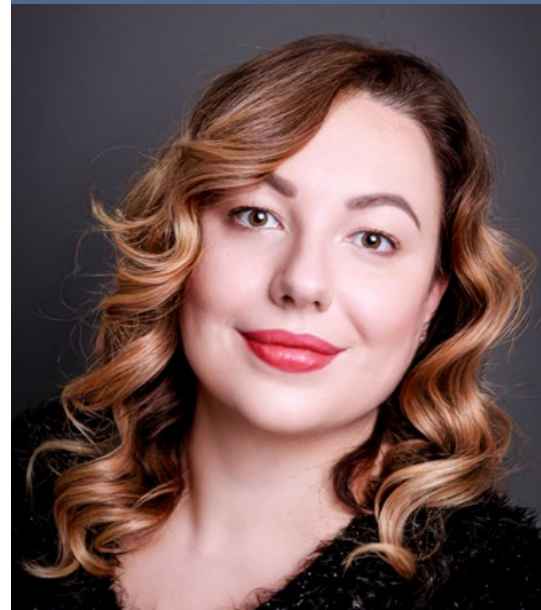
// I CONSIDER HEALTHCARE TO BE AN AREA THAT MUST BE A TOP PRIORITY FOR THE NEXT GOVERNMENT.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

It is difficult to identify just one change that would make Slovakia a better place to do business, because we all know that there are more changes and comprehensive reforms needed. However, if I have to name just one, it is transparency, predictability and, above all, continuity of the regulatory environment, which would go a long way to improving the business environment in Slovakia. Businesses need to have confidence in the stability and consistency of government regulations so that they can plan to make long-term investments. Improving transparency and predictability could help reduce both the uncertainty and risk for businesses operating and make Slovakia an investment-friendly country.

IVANA ŠARKANOVÁ

DIRECTOR
& BUSINESS PARTNER
CEEOR SLOVAKIA O.Z.



Ivana started working at CEEOR, an established provider of data, research, and analysis for the healthcare industries, right after completing her PhD in Biochemistry and has held various managing positions, both locally and regionally. In 2019, she was appointed Director to expand the scope of activities and business in the CEE region. She became a business partner in 2022. Her expertise includes business development, people management, health & outcomes research, and health economics.

MICHAL ŠEVČÍK

GENERAL MANAGER
DXC TECHNOLOGY SLOVAKIA



Michal obtained his Master degree at the STU in Computer Science. He started to gather his professional experience in Digital. Later he was working on software development projects in New Zealand and Australia. Since his return to Slovakia in 2001 he has been working for Compaq and then Hewlett-Packard as a business analyst and solution architect on complex IT projects primarily in the public sector. Since 2004 he was focusing on projects related to the ePassports, national eIDs, and other documents. He was involved in successful implementation of National Schengen and Visa IS. Since 2014 he took different roles overlooking business development and delivery of projects on the Slovak market. One of his most important recent projects is implementation of data integration platform to enable once and only principle in Slovak eGovernment. Since April 2020 Michal has the honour to lead DXC Technology in Slovakia as General Manager.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

- Inner motivation and enthusiasm
- Eager to learn new things and work on development
- Thinking out of the box

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

Our Employee Development Program in Slovakia is built on pillars as Leadership Program, Soft Skills Trainings, Mentoring & Knowledge sharing – everyone can choose what suits them the best for talent development. Our role as managers is to create space for attendees to implement gained skills in projects we are running with our customers and internally. I believe we are successful. This program obtained Learning & Development Award 2021.

Reskilling and upskilling in IT industry is the must have topic. Reskilling is supported through our Virtual Talent Pool program which offers our employees time and learning environment to find and prepare for the job that is better match. We are talking to our people honestly and very openly that we need them to take care about their future. We will need new skills in positions which will occur because IT technologies are moving incredibly fast. We want to be ready for this change to serve our customers best in class. As said by Wayne Gretzky: "Good player is where the puck is, but the excellent one is where the puck will be". DXC has program (including DXC Academy, certifications, meetups, tech partners cooperation) which is covering this topic very well.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

I would say that authentic leadership is the style which resonates with me the best. I am also trying to implement principles of adaptive leadership in what I am doing. I very much like the explanation I heard comparing the leader with beekeeper. Someone who is invisible but makes sure that everything in the beehive runs smoothly. Who empowers and equips people so that they can make their decisions. I very much promote learning and growth and I encourage innovation

and creativity. Together with my team we are working on a shared vision that inspires and motivates others in the company.

If I need to pick one principle, I will choose "Say what you do and do what you say" as the most important one to build trust and transparency in all what we are doing.

If I pick one tool that we are trying to promote, it would be feedback. We are focusing on educating our people why it is important, how and when to use it and how is it related to our strategic priorities.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

It would be an advice that one should not use the word must. As you always have a choice. You can either accept the situation, you can change it, or you can leave. Choice is yours. If you realize the consequences, it gives you enormous power and freedom.

In addition to that I would advise myself to invest in my education. Education and skill development are increasingly important in today's rapidly changing economy, and it is even more visible working in an IT industry.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

1. Transparency and professionalism in every aspect of the government to regain trust in public services.
2. Support economic growth by focusing on respective policies, legislation and projects such as e-government implementation, digital transformation for industries, investment in education and training programs to develop a skilled workforce (with special focus on IT), and infrastructure development.
3. A new government should prioritize policies aimed at protecting the environment and addressing climate change. This could involve implementing regulations to measure, report and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promoting renewable energy sources, and investing in sustainable infrastructure and transportation systems.

SIEMENS HEALTHINEERS BRINGS BENEFITS TO DOCTORS AND PATIENTS

Technology innovations and smart solutions have the potential to bring benefits in the form of precision medicine. They are opening new dimensions for healthcare providers and doctors for the benefit of patients. Top technologies bring new standards that every modern hospital should meet. Vladimír Šolík, Executive Director of Siemens Healthineers Slovakia, explains how smart solutions provided by Siemens Healthineers will be explored by Bory hospital.

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND HOSPITALS' OPERATION ARE THE BIG TOPICS OF TODAY. WHAT EXACTLY SHOULD WE IMAGINE UNDER THESE GENERAL TERMS? MOST PEOPLE ARE MORE INTERESTED IN DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT, WHY IS THE OPERATION OF THE HOSPITAL ITSELF IMPORTANT?

In the current situation in the healthcare industry, when many countries including outside Europe are struggling with a shortage of medical staff, efficiency and reduction of work tasks are crucial. Digitization and artificial intelligence are elevating the processes in healthcare to a significantly higher level. With a shortage of healthcare staff, smart solutions are appreciated which simplify and speed up several processes, thus enabling staff to receive education without having to spend time training away from their workplace. Technological innovations also contribute to the trouble-free operation of hospitals and a higher efficiency in operating costs. Several customer services and technical support are available non-stop and remotely. Correctly operating medical technology enabling precise diagnostics is a benefit for the patient. Siemens Healthineers is constantly innovating its products' and services portfolio, supported by artificial intelligence based applications and digitization. In Slovakia, we have a wide base, counting in total more than 800 installations. Our teams of top programmers in Bratislava, Žilina, and Košice develop medical software and applications for hospitals globally.

SIEMENS HEALTHINEERS IS A LEADER IN THE FIELD OF MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY IN SLOVAKIA. ARE YOU SUCCESSFUL IN INTRODUCING NEW AI BASED TECHNOLOGIES AND DIGITIZATION TO SLOVAK HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS?

Siemens Healthineers is the number one choice in the field of imaging as well as laboratory diagnostics. Regarding

artificial intelligence, our company has 64 commercially available products using AI (artificial intelligence) and we are constantly working on developing more. However, it is not only up to us whether the newest and most effective products and procedures are used also in Slovakia. We are ready and able to bring the most modern solutions to Slovak hospitals as well.

SIEMENS HEALTHINEERS OFFERS VALUE PARTNERSHIP - ENTERPRISE SERVICES TO HOSPITALS. WHAT IS THE BASE OF THIS COOPERATION FORM AND WHAT ARE THE MAIN BENEFITS?

Value Partnership - Enterprise Services is a unique form of long-term cooperation, developed together with Siemens Healthineers' most prestigious state and private customers. It combines the complete portfolio of Siemens Healthineers products and services in diagnostics, oncology care, and laboratory diagnostics, as well as third-party products. In this way, we can comprehensively contribute to accurate and thus more effective healthcare. At the same time, our strength, which lies in the development of state-of-the-art healthcare software and innovations, enables us to actively shape the digital transformation of healthcare. We will provide the hospital with a combination of know-how, reliability, and quality, especially when it comes to actively responding to the pressure of rising costs in healthcare while achieving better clinical outcomes.

SIEMENS HEALTHINEERS SLOVAKIA HAS SIGNED A VALUE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH BORY HOSPITAL. WHAT DOES IT FOCUS ON?

During our 15-year strategic partnership, Siemens Healthineers will provide Bory Hospital with comprehensive services and replace more than 20 imaging and monitoring devices. The scope of this agreement includes equipment for computed tomography, magnetic resonance, X-ray, and nuclear medicine technology. The collaboration also includes a unique educational program focused on innovative tools for medical specialists. All together - the education of doctors, top diagnostic equipment, and modern digital solutions will bring many benefits to healthcare professionals while also significantly contributing to the diagnostics and treatment of patients in the new generation hospital - BORY.

VLADIMÍR ŠOLÍK

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SIEMENS HEALTHINEERS
SLOVAKIA



Since 2006: He has worked at Siemens s.r.o. as the Technical Head of the Medical Technology Division in Slovakia
2010 - 2015: Head of the healthcare sector at Siemens s.r.o.
2015 : Global Siemens AG Group created a separate legal entity for the healthcare sector - Siemens Healthineers
May 2015: Independent company Siemens Healthcare s.r.o. in Slovakia founded
March 16, 2018: Siemens Healthineers was listed on the stock exchange
He became Executive Director of Siemens Healthcare s.r.o. in Slovakia
In the field of healthcare, he is an expert in medical technology and processes. His professional leadership is enhanced by almost 30 years of experience.



ANDREAS TRULS

MANAGING DIRECTOR
DEUTSCHE TELEKOM SYSTEMS SOLUTIONS SLOVAKIA S.R.O.
DEUTSCHE TELEKOM IT & TELECOMMUNICATIONS SLOVAKIA S.R.O.



Andreas is the managing director of Deutsche Telekom IT Solutions Slovakia. He is also active in business ecosystem activities and regional growth. He combines international management experience with skills in designing and implementing scalable growth strategies that deliver shareholder value in the IT, outsourcing and shared service center industry. Andreas carries more than 20 years experience in leadership positions across the globe. He is currently directing large technical & service delivery teams of over 4000 members with a track-record in Complex Infrastructure Services, Cloud Transformations and Data Centre Consolidation. Andreas holds a master in communication sciences with major in IT and a master in business administration.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES

Today's success doesn't guarantee tomorrow's victory. To remain relevant, we need to embrace change and evolve continuously. As such, we foster the defined key behaviors of our employees. We want them to be accountable and carry out the promises that they make. In addition, we are looking for a strong collaboration which is compulsory for our distributed delivery models and hybrid working models. This requires us to be open to working in flexible and agile ways. We also aim for a strong performance culture that encourages everyone to contribute with their ideas. The above-mentioned approach is based on the belief that mindset drives behavior and behavior drives results.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

At Deutsche Telekom IT Solutions Slovakia we take great pride in the professional development of our employees. We increased the number of trainings in the last years, culminating in over 1,800 in 2022. We collaborate with educational institutions since a broad portfolio of skilled IT workforce is needed. We focus on internal mobility and have also defined a specific portfolio of "Future Skills" that make up 60% - 70% of our training efforts. The number of academies was increased last year with a special focus on public cloud services and software development, whereas about half of the participants are internal candidates to be re-deployed later. The rest are external candidates interested in working for us. Last but not least, we have so-called skill shifter programs that foster the acquisition of new skills on the job with an option for employees to change into a new role within the company later.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

I believe that effective leadership varies depending on the situation. As such, I try to adapt to the specific needs of our people and the organization's requirements. In ideal circumstances, my primary focus is to empower and support team members in achieving their goals. In uncommon, mission-critical, or high-stress situations, more direction is given on my end.

Lastly, I consider a trustful collaboration within the leadership team a precondition for success. Hence, I lead with honesty, care, and compassion.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

As a senior IT executive, I have gathered deep experience designing and implementing scalable growth strategies that deliver added value to the business and clients.

In hindsight, I believe that my secret to success was paying less attention to people that claimed "It can't be done". I preferred to listen to those who would say "Yes, we can - let us try hard". However, you can't always win, so you need to learn to adapt quickly.

Today, Agile and its respective methods are common practices. Thus, looking back 15 years, I would not have changed too much. However, shorter sprints and more retrospectives would have brought smoother failings and faster achievements.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

As an ex-pat, I often observe what I would call "the glass is half empty attitude" despite the fact that Slovakia has made significant progress in becoming a modern economy. Nevertheless, the country still faces challenges that need to be addressed.

Firstly, we can prioritize policies that create a conducive environment for innovation, research, development, and entrepreneurship to provide more opportunities for talented individuals in their home country.

Regarding the education system and the lack of experts, we should focus on developing the skills required by the labor market and invest in teachers, training, and support. In addition, there is still much to be done in addressing the issues such as air pollution, waste management, and climate change. We should prioritize policies that reduce carbon emissions, increase investment in sustainable infrastructure, and strengthen environmental regulations.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

Any future government in Slovakia is strongly advised to prioritize policies that increase transparency and strengthen the rule of law, to increase public trust in government institutions and foster economic growth.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES?

Since every employee is an individual, the characteristics you are searching for in a candidate depend on the specifics of the job. In general, soft skills are preferred above hard skills because they can be learned. The three qualities I value most in employees are their capacity to learn, adapt, and be motivated in today's dynamic workplace climate.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

I think of myself as a leader who is both transformative and participatory. I'm result-oriented, creative, and people- and result-oriented based on my personality. I make an effort to set a good example for others every day, approach projects with a can-do attitude, and hold myself to a high standard. As I believe that is the recipe for success and excellent outcomes, I expect from my staff that they will strive to be the best, concentrate on results, work ethically, and most importantly, love what they do.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

To identify abilities and learning and development requirements in our

organization, I'm collaborating closely with management and our HR department. The strategy we employ combines leadership by example, coaching, internal training, and external training. Giving our staff the trust and skills they need, as well as the freedom to make mistakes so they can develop and learn, is one of the most crucial things, in my opinion. We must adapt in this field and be prepared to respond to the current trend, such as using artificial intelligence (AI), as the world is changing extremely quickly.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

Enjoy every second and be authentic. Buy two or three apartments using a mortgage as an investment.

NAME THREE AREAS A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS SHOULD SET AS ITS PRIORITIES.

From my perspective unfortunately this country is facing difficult times and would need a major reconstruction therefore it should be more than three areas, but if I have to prioritize it would be: healthcare, education and justice area.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

Reductions in taxes and social charges.

Adecco

IVANA HERETIK VAČOKOVÁ

GENERAL MANAGER
ADECCO SLOVAKIA



With over 17 years of agency side experience, expert in recruitment services, labour market expert and experienced manager including exposure to other countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Romania). Specialties: foreign direct investment consulting, green field projects, interim management, project management, process implementation, performance management, training & development, SSC, RPO, and HR consultancy. All-rounder with a passion for business.

ADECCO SLOVAKIA SERVICES

We provide a wide range of services to reflect the needs of our clients, in various business segments throughout the Slovak Republic.

We always tailor the offer for clients, according to their current needs.



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and audit



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WWW.ADECCO.SK

GIJS VAN DER LOO

SALES DIRECTOR
HEINEKEN
SLOVENSKO, A.S.



My name is Gijs van der Loo, I am Dutch and in my daily job I am a sales director for HEINEKEN Slovensko. HEINEKEN probably doesn't need much of an introduction, but what many people don't know is that we have an extensive portfolio of Slovak brands that we produce and sell; the most famous ones being Zlatý Bazant, Corgon and Kelt. We have a very large brewery and maltery in Hurbanovo, where we produce more than 150 million liters of beer. After having worked in the Netherlands, Mexico and Romania, I moved to Slovakia at the start of the year 2022 with my wife and our baby son.

YOU HAVE BEEN WORKING IN SLOVAKIA FOR OVER A YEAR. HOW IS LIVING AND WORKING IN THIS COUNTRY FOR YOU SO FAR?

Since my wife and I arrived to Slovakia with our young son, we have been very positively surprised by the absolute beauty of the Slovak nature and culture. Behind every corner of the highway you find a beautiful landscape and the richness of the Slovak culture is fascinating as well. We have been enjoying our time here very much so far.

HOW DO YOU EVALUATE COOPERATION WITH PEOPLE FROM SLOVAKIA SO FAR?

I would like to use the analogy of a coconut to describe collaborating with Slovaks. At the start they have a hard shell and will not show too many emotions, but once you open up yourself and get to know them there is a lot of very nice things inside them: creativity, warmth and engagement.

HOW DID YOU GET USED TO THE SLOVAK ENVIRONMENT?

Slovakia is the 4th country I am working in, so over the years you learn a few do's and don'ts when arriving to a new country. One of things we now do, is to get involved in as many activities as possible that are taking place in the city where we live to get a feeling for the Slovak culture. I have also become the president of the Netherlands-Slovak chamber of commerce, which accelerated my understanding of Slovakia. On top of that, listening to my colleagues and team members have taught me the most about what the Slovak environment actually is.

HOW DOES SLOVAKIA DIFFER FROM THE COUNTRIES IN WHICH YOU WORKED BEFORE?

After working in The Netherlands, Mexico and Romania I see Slovakia as a nice mix between all those countries. You have the diligence and punctuality of the Netherlands, the entrepreneurship of all these countries and the celebration of life like the Mexicans and the Romanians do. One key difference I would mention is that I still see a bit less striving for progress as I have seen in the other countries. I believe that the country has a lot of potential and when people start to believe this potential exists and will put their energy behind this, the country has a great future ahead.

YOU ARE THE SALES DIRECTOR OF HEINEKEN SLOVENSKO. HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE LOCAL CULTURE IN TERMS OF BUSINESS?

The key thing here is that relationships are very important. People take the time to get to know each other before big decisions are being taken. This is true within our company but also in relationship with our customers. I am also impressed by the knowledge of and passion for our products that exists within our customers and colleagues. People are absolutely passionate about beer and love to tell you all about each beer's ingredients and production process.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF SALES IN SLOVAKIA?

Like in the rest of the world, sales will digitalize more and more. Consumers will start buying more online and also advertisement will move more and more digitally. At the same time the personal relationships will remain important. Next to that, due to the increased transparency consumers will also increasingly focus on the sustainability of products and companies: what is this product made of? How has it been produced? And how many kilometers has it travelled to reach my kitchen table? are questions that will become extremely important to answer for companies.

WHAT IS A SALES STRATEGY OF HEINEKEN SLOVENSKO?

HEINEKEN are running the biggest B2B digital sales platform in Europe, called Eazle. In Slovakia we are also running a state-of-the art B2B sales platform called partner HEINEKEN by Eazle. One of our strategic priorities is leverage this platform to give our customers the best possible experience and drive customer satisfaction. We will use customer feedback on a continuous basis to improve this experience and with that customer satisfaction. Another key element is our Zlatý Bazant brand that we are relaunching this year. We are so proud to have the biggest Slovak beer brand in Slovakia and we will make sure the whole country is going to be proud of this Slovak brand, to the new Golden Times!



BEING NATURAL IS BETTER THAN CREATING PERFECT ILLUSION

Telecommunications operator SWAN in the second largest B2B telecommunications company and is among TOP investors in Slovakia. We have asked Roman Vavrik, CEO at SWAN, what is the story behind the success of the company.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE SWAN?

We have been operating in IT and Telco industries in Slovakia for more than two decades, during this time period we have built our own fixed and mobile networks and expanded our operations to all regions of Slovakia. We grew organically and at the same time acquired other smaller and larger competitors. This is how we became a company that achieved last year sales of 137 million and a profit of 40 million (EBITDA). We are a cost-effective company and provide services based on value for money. In addition, as an operator among the four largest TELCO companies in Slovakia with mobile and fixed services under one roof, we are the only one owned by Slovak capital.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES YOU FACED LAST YEAR AND WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATION FOR 2023?

Last year was difficult for everybody due to all the economic and political events that have happened globally. Despite these unpredictable circumstances, we managed to accomplish several key projects. After negotiations under the leadership of the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Communications and Postal Services, an agreement was established between four mobile operators, and each of us now gained a full intact block of frequencies, thanks to which we can provide better services to end customers. In the fixed services part, we have finished our own optical backbone network across Slovakia ranging over two thousand kilometers of fiber optic cables and connecting all main regions of Slovakia. I am still worried about how this year will go. At the same time, I am optimist and I see a great potential in automating and digitizing including cloud and managed services we provide our corporate clients.

SWAN IS ONE OF THE TOP 30 INVESTORS IN SLOVAKIA, WHAT DO YOU INVEST IN?

The telecommunications industry is very demanding in terms of investment. Technologies are developing rapidly, and if we want to provide them efficiently, we need to invest in them. We have invested in the purchase of mobile frequencies, we have already built more than a thousand base stations, thus achieving coverage of

more than 86 percent of the population, which is respectable considering the time we operate on the market. At the same time, we built the first 5G in Slovakia in which we invest millions of euros every year. We are number two on the market in the corporate segment, where we have over five thousand corporate clients.

YOU ARE ALSO ENGAGED IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY. WHICH PROJECTS OR INITIATIVES DO YOU SUPPORT?

As a technology company, we support and develop innovations in the field of charity. Eleven years ago, our shareholders founded the People4People charity project, which serves as an online donor portal that has already provided people in need with almost 20 million EUR from more than 238,000 donors. The important thing is that it provides direct, transparent and effective help to those in need. We are financing almost the entire operation of this project and despite costs we are happy that our project makes a difference.

WHY HAVE YOU DECIDED TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH IN YOUR CAMPAIGNS?

As a telecommunications operator, we realize that we have to raise awareness about the fact that the Internet is a double-edged sword. We need to be careful what content our children get access to. At the same time, we want to point out that it is natural for people to make mistakes. As part of our long-term cooperation with the League for Mental Health, we created several campaigns such as "Making mistakes is not a mistake", which communicate that being yourself and doing things naturally is more valuable than creating your perfect illusion.

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS WITH SWAN? DO YOU HAVE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL VISIONS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO FULFILL THIS YEAR?

My goal in the past years was the merger of SWAN with its sister company SWAN Mobile, which was achieved at the beginning of 2022. As an integrated operator, we have the ability to continue to grow naturally and reach sales of over 150 million euros. I am convinced that we can also achieve growth by consolidating other smaller operators. Last year, we exceeded the goal of 600,000 mobile customers, and I would like to see 4ka reach the milestone of one million customers. In the means of my personal goals, I mainly wish for good health and the opportunity to raise my children in a safe world.

ROMAN VAVRÍK

CHIEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SWAN



Roman Vavrik studied strategic management at Faculty of Management at Comenius University in Bratislava and business at Webster University in Vienna. In 2007, he joined Slovak Telekom as a strategy consultant, where he acted in several managerial positions and in 2014, he became the Marketing and Sales Director of the subsidiary DIGI Slovakia. Later he acted as an advisor to the Board of Directors at SWAN and in February 2019 he was appointed CEO of the company.

VLADIMÍR VIKOR

CEO / MEMBER OF THE BOARD
DYNAMIK HOLDING, A.S.



Vladimír Vikor Jr. is the CEO of DYNAMIK HOLDING, one of the most important Slovak construction companies, which, despite its size, activities of several separate divisions and expansion into foreign markets, keeps its family character. In the family company, which was founded by his father Vladimír Vikor Sr. in 1990, he was in on the ground floor 22 years ago, worked his way up through several departments and positions and 12 years ago he took over the management of the company from his father. Under his leadership, DYNAMIK has received many international certificates, several prestigious awards, such as Best Managed Companies Slovakia for 2022 or TOP 10 Employers in the construction industry. Under his leadership, DYNAMIK as a general contractor delivered many major turnkey construction projects including design and built projects. Vladimír Vikor Jr. is also the managing director of BESICO REAL ESTATE and a member of the Board of SOAS.

NAME TWO-THREE KEY QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN EMPLOYEES.

The first thing you see when you enter our company is the motto: We ask all those who say something is impossible not to discourage those who are already doing it. That probably says the most about the kind of people we have in our team. And I have to say, they are doing a pretty good job. Of course, with this way of seeing the world comes a requirement for teamwork, courage, a willingness to take some risk and a fair amount of responsibility. We are therefore primarily concerned with the personal qualities of our people, that are followed by their high level of expertise. Knowledge can be acquired and developed, but you cannot change a person's character. Thanks to this approach, we built a great team, made up of top professionals, and within a flat organisational structure we use the unique perspectives of each of them to solve everyday challenges.

WHAT DEFINES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? / HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PRINCIPLES?

I see the ever-present family character of the company as a huge advantage of DYNAMIK. This is reflected in a simple, relatively flat organizational structure, where we as owners are involved in the management of the company and its day-to-day running. We know in detail every project we built and that allows us to react and make decisions or changes very quickly if necessary. However, we also have a high degree of flexibility and possibility to involve a large part of the employees in decision-making. The essence of such management is fairness, transparency and an overall value setting based on good relationships. Not only with employees, but also with business partners and the community in which we operate. As DYNAMIK combines many activities from different fields and therefore employees are different and need different leadership styles, we combine them just depending on the nature of the work. However, I think that the predominant style of management in our company is transformational management, aimed at creating an environment that encourages innovation and creativity and allows us to push the boundaries of possibilities not only for the company itself, but for each team member. At the same time, this management style helps us to adapt more quickly to a rapidly changing and highly competitive market.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP TALENT WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE AND HOW DO YOU APPROACH RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING?

The family and purely Slovak character of the company can be seen as a disadvantage in our business – we do not have clearly defined corporate processes, international know-how or, for example, the possibility of simply adopting established systems from other developed markets where we could draw inspiration. We set everything up ourselves. We are aware of all this, which is why we work with external consultancies from whom we get a critical, but above all independent, expert view of our management. This allows us to develop not only the business, but above all the human potential. At the same time, a few years ago we successfully launched the DYNAMIK Academy project, in which we regularly train both employees and the company's top management and focus on developing soft skills.

GIVEN YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF 15 YEARS AGO?

If I were to give advice to my younger self from 15 years ago, I would tell him to try to be more patient. To make decisions sensibly and to be able to react calmly, especially in tense situations. On the other hand, I would advise him to be more open in his relationships and to learn to communicate his thoughts and feelings earlier. And I would certainly advise him to focus on what truly motivates and fulfils him.

WHAT SINGLE CHANGE WOULD MAKE SLOVAKIA A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS?

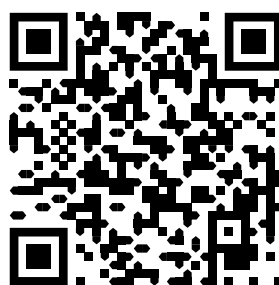
I would like to see a change in the mindset of the public, but also of a large part of politicians, which has its roots somewhere in the previous era. That it is not a battle of people versus businessmen, or a battle of politicians versus businessmen. Most of the Slovak businessmen I know are trying to do the right things, not only for their company, but also for the community in which they operate. So, if the business sector is doing well, the whole society is doing well. All it would take is a little – for each of these groups to treat each other with more respect.

NEW BUSINESS LEADERS PODCAST



AmChat
BUSINESS LEADERS PODCAST

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