

CAREER & EMPLOYMENT GUIDE 2013

Crucial code revamped

The puzzle for 2013: Higher
performance with a limited budget



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Editorial

The wheels of Slovakia's economy will not turn fast enough in 2013 to drive the country, which in December had its highest unemployment rate in nine years, standing at 14.4 percent, out of the valley of caution, austerity and high jobless rates.

It seems, nevertheless, that the government of Robert Fico and the business community disagree on what type of labour legislation is best suited for economic times when decisions are increasingly difficult to make. Employers and human resources professionals suggest that the state should lean towards greater flexibility in employment regulation, while the government argues that it rightly has what it calls the improvement of employee protection in mind.

While the state says it has some cures to address unemployment, including the notion of providing assistance to firms enduring economic hardship in order to preserve jobs, observers worry that such tools might deform the market and work only as a temporary painkiller instead of treating the core of the problem.

Yet, this challenging time will keep employers cautious with any new hires, while the question of how to achieve the increased performance of employees with decreasing budgets will continue to haunt human resources professionals.

Finally, how will the revised Labour Code impact the business environment and thus the labour market? Will the ambition of the state to make the education sector more sympathetic to the needs of businesses bring the desired results? Will programmes designed to reduce the jobless rate of the youth work? Perhaps it will take some time until thorough answers can be offered to these questions.

Nevertheless, the Career and Employment Guide 2013 does offer answers by leading human resources and labour market professionals to challenging questions while finding a ray of hope amid the gloom of the day.

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2013 promises a rocky ride

2013 is shaping up to be a tough year for Slovakia. In December 2012 the country recorded its highest unemployment rate in more than eight years and the labour market will remain in a state of caution, bracing itself to withstand the effects of fiscal consolidation as well as a major revision to the country's Labour Code. The latter has attracted divergent responses, with the government saying it brings balance but employers warning that it might push up unemployment.

The country's central bank, the National Bank of Slovakia (NBS), on January 29 reduced its forecast for Slovakia's economic growth in 2013 from 1.6 percent (a prediction made as recently as December 2012) to 1.3 percent, suggesting that its prognosis was influenced overall by two factors: moderately slower growth in foreign demand, which impacted the country's export performance, and worse-than-expected indicators in the domestic economy. Shortly afterwards, the Finance Ministry whittled its own 2013 GDP growth forecast down to 1.2 percent, explaining that the "debt crisis in the eurozone over the past months has unfavourably impacted the economies of our main trading partners and increasingly concerns Slovakia as well".

While Slovakia has avoided the fate of some of its neighbours, whose economies are already in recession, the actual performance of the country's economy, which grew by only 0.7 percent year-on-year in the last quarter of 2012, according to a flash estimate issued by Slovakia's statistics authority on February 14, 2013, has wiped the smiles off the faces of market watchers, who had been predicting growth of around 1.5 percent.

And while Slovakia's economy is continuing to grow, the labour market is generating less optimistic signals, with employment dropping 0.4 percent in the fourth quarter, and recording a year-on-year fall of 0.5 percent.

The Finance Ministry's Financial Policy Institute (IFP) admitted in its late January release that 2013 holds gloomier prospects for the labour market, suggesting that economic growth in 2012 was fuelled mainly by increasing productivity and has not brought many new jobs.

"Moreover, fiscal consolidation, too, will impact the labour market this year," reads the IFP prognosis, adding that the number of employed people might drop by a further 0.5 percent. "A more

significant increase in employment should come together with faster growth in GDP in 2014."

Unemployment should return to pre-crisis levels – somewhere around 12 percent – in 2016, the institute predicted. Nevertheless, in 2013 the jobless rate should remain at 14 percent, according to the IFP.

SHARING THE AUSTERITY BURDEN

However, the fact that Slovakia has been operating in austerity mode for some time is significantly affecting employers as well. Last year the government of Robert Fico effectively killed the flat tax and in its place introduced progressive taxation, increasing corporate income tax from the previous rate of 19 percent to 23 percent.

Revisions to the tax legislation will also significantly affect self-employed people who have a licence to run their own businesses and who have seen their minimum social and health insurance contributions increase from €160.24 per month to €185.30, among other changes. The 40-percent lump-allowance for sum deductible expenses utilised by self-employed people up through 2012 will be capped at €420 per month, or €5,040 a year, from 2013 onwards.

The government has also introduced payment of social and health insurance contributions for those working based on limited employment agreements known as "na dohodu", at a rate of 48.6 percent. Students and pensioners will pay lower payroll taxes.

The new rules embedded in the revised tax legislation as well as the modified Labour Code, which became valid at the beginning of 2013 and which equalises conditions for paying health and social insurance for those working on limited employment agreements and for regular employees, have boosted employment expenses for many firms who employ temporary staff, compared to last year.

THE CRUCIAL CODE

Human resources professionals interviewed by The Slovak Spectator for this guide generally expect that recent legislative changes such as the revised Labour Code and changes to the tax and payroll tax rules will have a negative impact on the labour market.

"They are a set of measures that prevent [businesses] from employing people, so it may be expected that unemployment will be at its highest," Mario Fondati, partner at Amrop, told The Slovak Spectator. "In the name of increased protection of employees, it seems that the changes will 'protect' people from finding a job."

Veronika Kaštovská, partner and senior consultant for the Czech Republic & Slovakia at Accord Group, suggested that the change in flexibility for employers will have an impact on their willingness to hire new people.

"I still insist that the development of the economy and not the Labour Code is what impacts employment," Slovak Labour Minister Ján Richter told The Slovak Spectator in an interview for this guide. "I want to underscore this also with the fact that not all countries in the eurozone have adopted new labour codes, and unfortunately the unemployment rate throughout the eurozone is getting close to 12 percent."

The revised Labour Code, among other things, reintroduces employee entitlement to a layoff notice period as well as to severance pay. The new code shifts the status of people working under "na dohodu" agreements closer to that of regular employees in terms of working hours and minimum wages. It also curbs the 'chaining' of fixed-term employment contracts, whereby it was possible to extend a fixed-term employment contract three times over three years. As of January 2013 it is possible to do this only twice over a 24-month period.

The revision also changes the definition of dependent work (i.e. permanent employment). The objective of this redefinition is to specify which work should be carried out under a standard employment contract, thus providing an employee with full rights and protection, rather than via self-employment, for instance.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE CONTINUES TO CLIMB

"We will fight for the salvation of each working place," said Prime Minister Robert Fico as quoted by the SITA newswire, adding that combating unemployment is the biggest challenge faced by the current government.

However, the most recent jobless numbers suggest that this will not be any easy undertaking: in December 2012 almost 400,000 people were jobless, pushing the unemployment rate up by half a percentage point to 14.4 percent, its highest since May 2004, when it stood at 14.47 percent.

The National Union of Employers (RÚZ) said that the rise in unemployment is in fact in line with its forecast that the revised Labour Code, along with other previously adopted measures, would harm the business environment and fundamentally affect the situation on the labour market. The RÚZ estimated that these changes would result in about 50,000 people becoming jobless.

One way in which the government plans to address high unemployment is by granting state aid to large companies already present in Slovakia, as well as through investments that will bring new jobs, especially in less developed regions of Slovakia.

In order to preserve jobs, the state might also provide assistance to firms that get into trouble and are forced to limit production as a result. The Labour Ministry suggests that through assistance introduced via an amendment to the law on employment services the state could preserve 5,000 jobs, according to SITA.

Yet the Federation of Employers' Associations (AZZZ) has argued that such assistance might deform the labour market.

THE EDUCATION SECTOR

The jobless rate among young people in Slovakia was the fifth highest in the European Union in November 2012, when one in three Slovaks under the age of 25 was without work, according to data presented by Eurostat, the EU's statistics office, in January.

The lingering economic crisis and the failure of Slovakia's education system to adjust its study programmes to the needs of the labour market has been taking its toll on the ability of Slovak school graduates to get jobs, according to observers. Foreign businesses continue to stress the need to foster ties between academia and business.

Education Minister Dušan Čaplovič has suggested that a lack of qualified labourers in certain industrial sectors, an overly complicated system



The labour market will remain in a state of caution.

of school financing and too many young people studying humanities subjects are some of the most troubling factors affecting the Slovak education system. According to him, the goal is to adjust professional education to the needs of the labour market and increase the number of graduates from secondary professional schools, while supporting study in fields that are required by the labour market but which currently have a low number of students.

Laws now approved by the cabinet will introduce, among other things, stricter conditions for the admission of students to secondary grammar schools (known in Slovakia as gymnasiums; these tend to be the most academic schools and are viewed as natural feeders into the university system) as well as new powers for Slovakia's eight regional governments (VÚCs) to decide on the number of first-grade classes that can be opened at such schools.

Yet human resources professionals suggest that a serious debate about school financing would also be desirable.

"I think one of the solutions would be to stop pretending that education is for free and start a serious discussion about school financing that

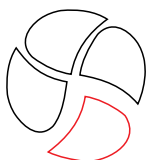
would combine public and private financing," said Fondati from Amrop, adding that this could create pressure on quality and also on what is being taught.

Fostering ties between businesses and schools at all levels has long been at the centre of discussions among foreign businesses operating in Slovakia.

"The strong and systematic cooperation between vocational schools and companies – the so-called dual system – serves as a role model," said Guido Glania, executive board member of the Slovak-German Chamber of Commerce, in an interview with The Slovak Spectator, expressing his hope that the government will put forward specific projects in the near future.

Foreign investors have welcomed the changes pursued so far by the Education Ministry in relation to vocational schools, but expect much more.

"The businesses would like to see a specific mid- and long-term vision and strategy for Slovak education," Jake Slegers, executive director of the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham), told The Slovak Spectator. "There are several changes we would expect, among them making Slovak education an apolitical priority." ■



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with the previous month, when seasonal factors and the decrease in the sick leave rate are taken into consideration,” Koršňák wrote in a memo. “The increase in the number of unemployed in October and November was caused especially by a lower number of people who were able to find a job. The influx of new unemployment into the registers did not increase fundamentally, but employers were more cautious when hiring a new labour force.”

Unemployment increased in all regions of Slovakia during December. Banská Bystrica Region reported the highest jobless rate, at 20.81 percent, and thus overtook Prešov Region, with its rate of 20.66 percent. Košice Region came close to the 20-percent level with a 19.58-percent unemployment rate.

“We view as negative the situation in which one fifth of economically active citizens are jobless in as many as three regions,” said Sadovská, adding that while Bratislava Region has the lowest unemployment rate, it still exceeds the 6-percent level.

Sadovská pointed out that the number of long-term unemployed and unemployed youth remains high.

“These are groups of citizens which have been searching for jobs with even greater difficulty,” Sadovská said, citing data of the ÚPSVaR, according to which over 295,000 jobseekers are classified as disadvantaged and make up more than two thirds of the number of jobseekers registered at job offices.

Sadovská does not expect any dramatic change in the development on the labour market in 2013.

“Unemployment will remain high,” said Sadovská, estimating its average level at 14.15 percent over 2013.

Koršňák of UniCredit Bank and Michal Kozub, analyst with Home Credit, also expect another increase in unemployment, especially when factoring traditional seasonal influences.

“December and January are two months when unemployment reaches its peak,” Kozub wrote in his memo. “Seasonal jobs practically do not exist, neither in construction nor in agriculture, and thus the unemployment rate has nothing to slow it down and help to restrain its level.”

January figures may also reflect employees who were “preventively” laid off due to the revision of the Labour Code and weaker economic

growth at the end of 2012 and the beginning of 2013. However, any impacts that the revision to the Labour Code has on unemployment can be assessed only later during the year. In general, analysts expect the labour market to gradually stabilise over the course of the year.

SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS

While the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Ján Richter, attributes the rise in unemployment exclusively to the economic situation in Slovakia and abroad, the current government has reiterated that combating unemployment is its biggest challenge.

“We will fight for the salvation of each job,” said Fico as cited by the SITA newswire.

The government aims to solve high unemployment by implementing programmes created by the Labour Ministry, revising the law on social services (which still needs a nod from the Slovak parliament), supporting the creation of new jobs, granting stimuli to large companies already established in Slovakia as well as encouraging investments that will bring new jobs, especially to less developed regions of the country. ■

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Applying neuroscience into leadership field moves assessments to a new level

Many organisations are not flexible enough to adapt to the dynamically changing environment and then utilise the potential of their key people. One of the common reasons for this might lie in the discrepancy between the internal setting of the company and the inner world of the individual employees. And it is this discrepancy that causes unproductive conflict that negatively influences further development of the company.

Companies try to exploit the potential of their employees to the maximum level, often unaware of how to work with them optimally. Often they rely on analysing their employees' levels of competence and build development programs to further develop their skills and abilities based on this. But that usually is not enough. Something has been missing in assessing people as most of the assessments have not gone into analysing features of the mind, a point that is so important for truly understanding how a person functions. There have been assumptions about how the human mind works, however, the current development of brain science and the findings of neuroscience help to understand much better what is going on in the brain and how the human mind works. Quite often the neuroscientific findings prove that assumptions are not correct.

NEUROSCIENCE HELPS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

As Brown, Swart and Meyler state in their article published in the 2009 issue of *Neuroleadership Journal*: "The development of social cognitive neuroscience and its application within the corporate environment marks a fundamental shift in the organizational application of knowledge about human beings. The essentially descriptive and declamatory writings of a hundred years of psychology and seventy-five years of management theorizing are giving way to explanatory models grounded in repli-



Igor Šulík, Managing Partner at Amrop



Amrop

cable experimental evidence as to how the brain actually works, and therefore to an early understanding of what the underlying neuro-mechanisms of human behavior really are."

Therefore it is important to try not only analyse the competence but also the features of the mind in order to get a true and full picture of the person. Only then we can see how much the person is in line with the inner environment of

the organisation and how effectively they can work together in order to optimally exploit the potential of the person for the benefit and the needs of the organisation.

PEOPLE HAVE THEIR OWN VERSION OF THE WORLD

The mismatch between the business context of the organisation and the context of the mind and the competence of an individual usually stands in the way of successful transformations. Once we realise that there is no such thing as objective reality and that everyone of us lives in his/her own version of the world, as our minds do not record an objective version of the world but only our subjective experience with the world, then we can move to a different way of assessing people. Consequently we can tell that it is incorrect to look at a person as if he/she would function in a real physical world instead of trying to understand his/her own mental version of the world. If we accept this then we can bring into alignment the inner world of the person with the inner setup of the organisation.

THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS DRIVE ACTION

The newest neuroscience findings bring innovative ideas to the field of leadership assessments. If we accept that a person's actions are determined by his thoughts and not the other way around, then it is clear that we need to understand how a person thinks and what emotions in certain situations initiate his/her action. It also needs to be understood that we are driven by emotions and therefore analysing how a person understands his/her own emotions, the level of positive thinking, drivers of motivation, intuition, empathy and perspective taking are key to effective work with people.

The growing knowledge of the brain helps to understand a number of phenomena. For example, it has been proven that no matter how rational we think we are, we cannot make decisions without our emotions and therefore they are always involved in our decision-making process; trying to be mindful in every moment makes a person's decisions better. Another example is linked to stress and fear as one of our strongest emotions when even suppressed fear creates anxiety. Most of the time all managers experience anxiety and if they do not acknowledge it, then they might be unaware that access to some of the brain centers are compromised and they do not make decisions on all available information and full brain power. Understanding pain systems and reward systems of the brain, knowing how learning happens as well as how to get our brain into optimal condition to perform at the highest level – all of that helps to get a better performance from managers.

PEOPLE SHOULD UNDERSTAND AND TAKE CARE OF THEIR BRAINS

It is fascinating to follow the discoveries of neuroscience and it is exciting to apply it to the leadership field as it helps to get a deeper and better understanding of why and how leaders and managers perform. It is like an athlete who has to perform at his best on the day of his competition, and for that he needs his body to be in the optimally trained condition. Similarly, leaders and managers need to perform at their best when making decisions and for that they need to have their brains in the optimal condition. Applying neuroscience findings provides for getting the best performance from our brains when it is needed and helps to guide us on how to prepare our brains for that.

Prepared by Igor Šulík, Managing Partner at Amrop and member of NeuroLeadership Institute

Amrop Slovakia

is a leader in Executive Search, Board Advisory, Leadership Assessment & Human Capital Consulting. It is part of the worldwide Context Driven Executive Search network with 88 offices in 58 countries. Amrop Slovakia is the longest active Slovak member of The Association of Executive Search Consultants (AESC) – most respected global association of consulting companies focused on Retained Executive Search & Leadership Consulting and still the only AESC member with fully-fledged office in Slovakia.



For more information, go to www.amrop.sk or www.aesc.org

Context Driven Leadership Assessment

Amrop has a long tradition in helping organisations to identify areas for improvement and how to make management teams more efficient. It aims to offer working tailor-made solution that reflects the specific situation of the organisation, its market position, strategic goals and values with maximum use of their human capital potential. To meet this ambitious goal and offer complex and comprehensive service, Amrop innovated one of its core services and introduced Context Driven Leadership Assessment (CDLA).

CDLA offers an answer to the question to what extent the assessed manager with his unique set of skills and knowledge, current level of competency, talent, personality and specific type of thinking is in congruence with the internal setup and needs of the organisation he/she works for or intends to work for and with the expectations the organisation has with regard to the specific position he/she holds or might hold. This is followed by a recommendation of how the gap between the corporate and individual environments could be narrowed.



CDLA is a solution that helps organisations to achieve sustainable competitiveness through strategic assessment of their management team and talent base. It builds on analysis of organisation's internal environment, reflecting the required levels of competencies and applying neuroscience findings to better understand specifics of the human mind and how it affects human behaviour. CDLA is based on assessing four contexts as shown in the scheme.

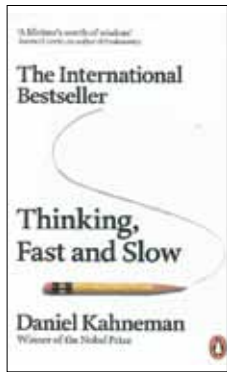
The results of this assessment offer a different and more comprehensive interpretation of how the assessed managers and leaders work and how they can bring additional value to the organisation. It is especially beneficial in situations when there is a change in top management, during succession planning or mergers & acquisitions. It is also beneficial when organisation needs to identify development needs in key personnel or find room for improvement in the functioning of their management teams.

The business books of 2012

A better understanding of oneself makes for a better leader

In this uncertain and unpredictable world it is possible to find inspiration that can actually help run a business. Apart from learning from each other, one can look for ideas in literature that addresses at least some of the issues that business leaders currently face. Here are some of the books that have been published recently that are worth reading:

Thinking, Fast and Slow by Daniel Kahneman



Written by a Nobel Prize-winning author, this is one of the most highly acclaimed books of the past year on the subject. It offers valuable insight into how we make decisions in both our personal and professional lives, and

is one of the best books on human rationality and irrationality. Kahneman points out how our minds are often ensnared by prejudice and error, and offers ways to improve our thinking to make better decisions on a daily basis.

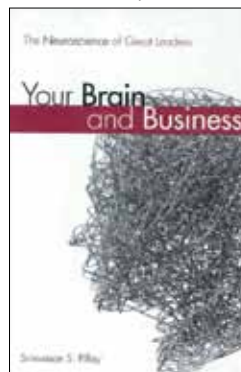
The Strategist: Be the Leader Your Business Needs by Cynthia A. Montgomery

The Harvard Business School professor uses her research and in-depth knowledge to redefine the approach to setting strategy. In the book she takes strategy from something detached and mechanical to a more compelling and self-rewarding activity that anyone dealing with strategy should experience. Montgomery embraces the approach of asking tough questions and taking on the role of a strategist whenever it becomes necessary; otherwise the leader harms the business he or she runs. Reading this book could compel anyone to explore and invent his or her own strategic competence.

Why Good People Can't Get Jobs: The Skills Gap and What Companies Can Do About It by Peter Cappelli

In a time of high unemployment, it is especially helpful to find a book that examines the issue from a novel perspective. Cappelli asks provocative questions and searches for answers to questions around who is to blame for people's inability to find jobs and why there seems to be a divide between employer expectations and the skills of employees, and offers possible solutions. Would you be surprised to learn that employers are largely responsible for their own hiring woes? Read the book and find out why.

Your Brain and Business: The Neuroscience of Great Leaders by Srinivasan S. Pillay



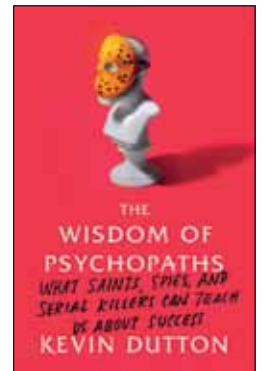
If you ever wondered how findings in neuroscience might be applied to the field of leadership, this book might be a good start. The author shows that thanks to neuroscience we now know much more about how the human brain works, and no longer have to guess (often wrongly). Based on this knowledge, managers can drive their own performance and become better leaders, even though it often might mean they have to abandon old ways of thinking and approaching leadership problems and apply completely new paradigms.

The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do, and How to Change by Charles Duhigg

Anyone dealing with change management knows that the most difficult part of achieving results is to get people to change their habits. This book analyses how habits are formed and how we can change them in order to transform ourselves. As the author says, we can be more effective in all transformations with an understanding of how habits work.

The Wisdom of Psychopaths: What Saints, Spies, and Serial Killers Can Teach Us About Success by Kevin Dutton

You think that saints, serial killers and business leaders have nothing in common? The renowned psychologist Kevin Dutton will try to prove you wrong. In his theory he argues that we all have psychopathic tendencies, as our



current society is more psychopathic than ever, valuing fearlessness, confidence and even ruthlessness – qualities that can bring you success in our current world. Acknowledging that in order to succeed in any profession a certain “functional psychopathy” is involved might be liberating and illuminating.

Risky Is the New Safe: The Rules Have Changed by Randy Gage

Although I am not a fan of motivational literature, this book is thought provoking and pushes readers to take a different view of issues that people face every day. Gage points out that the changes happening in business, technology and the economy itself create challenges and opportunities, and it is up to every individual to determine how to incorporate them into his/her business or life. Apart from being fun to read, the book also makes the reader stop and look differently at what lies ahead.

In 2013 we will be reading more about how to lead companies in uncertain times and how business leaders should approach managing companies in these ever-changing conditions. The growing knowledge in the field of neuroscience and a better understanding of what is going on in the minds of managers will influence the shift in the management paradigm. It will be exciting to follow new books that will help to understand what is coming next in the world of business and leadership. ■

Igor Šulík is a managing partner at Amrop

The challenge for 2013: Higher performance on a lower budget

How to generate increased performance among employees, but with a decreasing budget, will be one of the tough puzzles that human resources professionals have to face in 2013, according to experts in the sector. They also agree that changes to Slovakia's key labour legislation, its Labour Code, will negatively impact the willingness of employers to hire new people.

The Slovak Spectator spoke to Mario Fondati, partner at Amrop; Martin Krekáč, senior partner at Amrop and chairman of Jenewein Group; Veronika Kaštovská, partner and senior consultant for the Czech Republic & Slovakia at Accord Group; and Katarína Bobotová, operations manager at Grafton Slovakia, about anticipated changes in the HR policies of firms and organisations, the impact of the revised Labour Code on the market as well as the changing expectations of job applicants.

The Slovak Spectator (TSS): How will legislative changes such as the revised Labour Code and recent changes to the tax and payroll tax rules affect the labour market in general, as well as the sector that your company covers?

Mario Fondati (MF): The changes referred to, which came into effect this year, will have a negative impact on the labour market. They are a set of measures that prevent [businesses] from employing people, so it may be expected that unemployment will be at its highest. In the name of increased protection of employees, it seems that the changes will 'protect' people from finding a job. In a situation when in the world economy, including the Slovak economy, almost anything is difficult to predict, there should be a tendency towards greater flexibility in employment regulation. The current government has embarked on a different path, and I am afraid it will not help to increase employment or jumpstart the economy.

Veronika Kaštovská (VK): Generally, every change in flexibility for employers will have an impact on their willingness to hire new people; it will be more difficult for employers who are using third parties to hire employees (temporary employees through agencies). It will probably not have any major impact on our sector, which is the search for

top managerial positions, but overall the slowdown of the economy might influence the willingness to open and invest in new positions.

Katarína Bobotová (KB): As a consequence of the changes to the Labour Code, we have recorded lower interest in so-called temporary employees. Some companies are reporting plans to cancel positions that in the past were filled by temporary employees and distribute these tasks among current core employees. The tax hikes will most probably have the effect of lowering the competitiveness of Slovakia compared to neighbouring countries in the eyes of potential investors. The flat tax, in our experience, was one of the most fundamental attractions for new employers.

TSS: Market watchers expect that Slovakia's GDP growth will slow in 2013 compared to 2012. Do you expect any changes in the human resources policies of organisations, firms and businesses?

Martin Krekáč (MK): The existing pressure on personnel costs will remain and create pressure for higher efficiency. So HR departments will be solving that ever-present conundrum: how to achieve increased performance of employees with decreasing budgets. Efficiency in everything the organisations do will be the key to success. In terms of specific HR policies the focus will be on retaining high-performing employees and a small increase in the attrition rate will be appreciated, i.e. due to the higher cost of dismissing people, seeing people leave and not replacing them will be one of the policies used to grow efficiency in organisations. It can also be expected that the tendency toward centralisation of support functions, including HR, serving an organisation across a number of entities, will continue.

VK: Companies have been going through restructuring and cost-effectiveness changes for the last two to three years, so the trend will continue. For our business we see more companies using internal resources for hiring new people (in-house recruiters), who are using, for example, social media and other sources. Social media generally might leave an impression that anybody could do recruitment easily, but of course there are also potential dangers, for example that information that

people would like to present about themselves might not always be true. In the organisation of HR departments there are continuous trends in terms of building a partnership between HR and business (business partnering); there is also pressure to work with internal talent (focus on talent management).

KB: The slowdown of the economy has been resonating for a long time and we have been registering efforts to trim the HR departments of some companies, with pressure on the effectiveness of labour. More frequently we cooperate with clients in the form of outsourcing of HR services, be it outsourcing of parts or of the whole selection process, or outsourcing of the wage agenda. This helps our clients to react more flexibly to the needs of the business by preserving the effectiveness of the internal HR department.

TSS: What are the challenges that people aged 50+ are facing on Slovakia's labour market? Is the market tuned to use the potential of this generation of the workforce?

MF: We cannot generalise, but the 50+ generation might have difficulties accommodating the increased expectations of employers. Those who are out of the job market might have difficulty finding a new job; along with graduates and the long-term unemployed it is this group of people that find it very problematic to find a suitable job. Since the state thinks that it can create specific programmes to help employ specific groups, instead of focusing on creating favourable market condition for entrepreneurs and a flexible labour market, it is doomed to fail. So I am afraid people over 50 face difficult times, despite, and maybe due to, the policies that the government has introduced.

VK: No, the potential of this generation is not fully utilised, and they are still regarded as less flexible and with less potential for further development (during the hiring process). On the other hand I see changes in preconceptions about this generation: some companies are not afraid to hire them, and are looking for their experience and a certain level of maturity.

TSS: What are the most significant challenges for HR firms in 2013? How has the structure



Photo: TASR

of services provided by HR firms changed over the past couple of years? Do you expect further changes in this structure?

MK: HR firms need to focus on finding service offerings that will address what companies really need. The tendency towards internalisation of many services provided by consultants will continue, even if it means that the service is of a lower quality and may not be helping the company as it could. HR consulting companies that fail to find the right service offering will try to survive by aggressive pricing policies, as there will be nothing else for them to offer clients. I assume that many HR managers will try that option instead of working with consultants and investing in quality. After disappointment and losing valuable time they may turn to consultants with valuable insights and quality services.

VK: Due to economic changes, companies are trying to save money on external services. In international corporations there are changes in the decision-making process: decisions are not taken locally, but at headquarters level. HR firms need to be more flexible; they need to be close to their customers, to be able to predict future changes and react to them; they have to offer services responding to the current situation. Again, I see the future in building professional partnerships to understand the needs of customers. For the future, I see more possibilities for using online services and social media, where HR companies have to be able to use their potential and generate value-added services. There will be continuous pressure on price and timing. Hopefully the quality of service (references) will still be awarded.

KB: Classical forms of recruitment services have become outdated and we feel the need to

continuously offer clients new solutions, mainly in the area of talent identification.

TSS: The Education Ministry is, among other things, considering more support from the state for study programmes in technical and science-oriented schools, as well as steps that would restrict the number of graduates from humanities subjects, in order to address the challenges of the education system. In your opinion, what steps would help to improve the education sector so that it is better suited to meet the needs of the labour market?

MF: In general, any regulation is counter-productive; on the other hand, the mismatch between what the job market needs and what schools generate is obvious. The quality of education is another question. I think one of the solutions would be to stop pretending that education is for free and start serious discussion about school financing that would combine public and private financing. That could create pressure on quality and also on what is being taught. With a system of loans provided by future employers to students, it could help the education system as well as employers to have graduates with the knowledge and skills they need. I think this could be beneficial to students, the education sector, employers and our country.

VK: Generally, closer cooperation between the education system and the labour market – closer cooperation with corporations and companies, listening to their needs, and getting their participation in creating the education system; incentives for companies to offer work for students to obtain experience during their studies.

KB: Our education system would need more [practical aspects] in the form of lecturers from successful companies. At the same time there is a need for intense participation by current employers in the education process so that graduates leave schools ready to operate based on the real requirements of employers.

TSS: Have the expectations of job applicants in managerial positions changed compared to two or three years ago?

MK: Managers have not changed much. What has changed is that the competition for open positions is tougher. There are fewer opportunities than managers who are able to apply for them. In this situation some managers are inclined to modify their expectations in order to increase their chances of landing a job. The premise that there is only a limited number of exceptional candidates is still true. Good companies try to retain them and make them happy, so that these managers do not wander into the job market searching for a better place. Identifying, approaching and attracting them takes the wits and skills of a true professional.

VK: Yes, today managers are generally looking for a stable position, and the reputation of their future employer is also important. Also, there is more pressure on work-life balance (managers are looking for positions where they can spend some time with their families and be able to relax, or pursue hobbies).

KB: In general we can say that applicants for managerial positions are slightly more cautious about changing their current employment. In comparison with the previous period, we observe that for these people stability is often more important than challenge. However, we do not record fundamental changes in their expectations. ■

Who's who

Professionals at HR companies



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Life philosophy: Whether you think that you can, or that you can't, you are usually right.



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Life philosophy: What really matters before you leave is how well you lived, how well you loved and what you learned.



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Life philosophy: Be yourself.

Work credo: Keep expectations high.



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Life philosophy: There are always things to improve.

Work credo: Everything is just about people.



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Life philosophy: Everyone creates their own happiness.

Work credo: Only if you try will you find out whether you can do it.



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Life philosophy: Always treat others the way you want them to treat you.

Work credo: Be proactive.



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Life philosophy: Being old does not mean refusing to learn from one's grandchildren.



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Life philosophy: To live in such a way that I am not ashamed of my feelings, thoughts, words or deeds.

Work credo: Work hard but enjoy the rest.



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Life philosophy: Life is about creating and re-creating energy in a cohesive balance.

Work credo: Be a good listener and use innovative thinking while considering all options and selecting the solution to achieve mutual success.



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Life philosophy: In the end, it's not going to matter how many breaths you took, but how many moments took your breath away.

Work credo: It's better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation.



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Life philosophy: Keep your mind open and free and you can accomplish anything.

Work credo: Always have more information than what others expect will be enough.



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Life philosophy: To live my life in truth.

Work credo: With belief in character, competence, commitment and teamwork to strive for excellence.



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Life philosophy: You will never achieve what you never begin.

Work credo: Practise, practise and everything will come.



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Work credo: Ready to walk the extra mile!

CONFERENCES, EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS IN SLOVAKIA FOCUSING ON HUMAN CAPITAL OR EDUCATION

Name of conference / exhibition (Listed by date of events) Organiser Address, City, Postal code E-mail Názov konferencie / výstavy (zoraďené podľa dátumu konania) Organizátor Adresa, Mesto, PSČ E-mail	Phone Fax www Telefón Fax www	Conference director Phone E-mail Riaditeľ konferencie Telefón E-mail	PR manager Phone E-mail PR manažér Telefón E-mail	Conference / Konferencia Exhibition / Výstava Event / Podujatie	Month (date) event is held / Conference (exhibition) (exhibition) www / Conference (exhibition) e-mail / Obdobie konania konferencie (výstavy) / www.konferencie (výstavy) / E-mail konferencie (výstavy)	Conference (exhibition) was first held in (year) / No. of visitors in 2012 / Location of the event / Rok prvého konania konferencie (výstavy) / Počet návštevníkov v roku 2012 / Miesto konania konferencie (výstavy)	Description / Popis
1 Secondary School - Student		Emil Dobiáš	Eva Majerníková				
EXPO CENTER a. s. Pod Sokolicami 43, Trenčín 911 01 expocenter@expocenter.sk	+421(0)32 770-4320 +421(0)32 770-4324 www.expocenter.sk	+421(0)32 770-4320 dobias@expocenter.sk	+421(0)32 770-4311 expocenter@expocenter.sk		February www.expocenter.sk dobias@expocenter.sk	1999 NA Trenčín	International high schools, specialised secondary schools, training institutions fair.
2 HR days		Peter Krutý	Martin Menšík				
Profesia, s.r.o. Pribinova 25, Bratislava - Staré Mesto 811 09 profesia@profesia.sk	+421(0)2 3220-9110 +421(0)2 3220-9118 www.profesia.sk	+421(0)915 912-827 kruty@profesia.sk	+421(0)2 3220-9110 mensik@hrclub.sk		March www.hrdays.sk vystava@profesia.sk	2011 1,500 Bratislava	Unique job fair in the area of HR for recruitment professionals, HR managers and professionals in the labour market.
3 Practical Experiences in HR: Performance Management and Motivation		Jitka Žatkuliaková	Andrea Gondová				
ZDRUŽENIE PRE RIADENIE A ROZVOJ LUDSKÝCH ZDROJOV Kominárska 2, Bratislava - Nové Mesto 831 04 zrzrz@zrzrz.sk	+421(0)2 5564-2471 +421(0)2 5564-2472 www.zrzrz.sk	+421(0)2 5564-2472 jitka.zatkuliakova@zrzrz.sk	+421(0)2 5564-2471 andrea.gondova@zrzrz.sk		April www.zrzrz.sk konferencia@zrzrz.sk	2000 102 Demänovská dolina	Exchange of experience (information). Inspiration for companies in fields of performance management and motivation of employees.
4 Human Resources Development and Employee Training		Jitka Žatkuliaková	Andrea Gondová				
ZDRUŽENIE PRE RIADENIE A ROZVOJ LUDSKÝCH ZDROJOV Kominárska 2, Bratislava - Nové Mesto 831 04 zrzrz@zrzrz.sk	+421(0)2 5564-2471 +421(0)2 5564-2472 www.zrzrz.sk	+421(0)2 5564-2472 jitka.zatkuliakova@zrzrz.sk	+421(0)2 5564-2471 andrea.gondova@zrzrz.sk		June www.zrzrz.sk konferencia@zrzrz.sk	1997 87 Demänovská dolina	Exchange of experience of corporate training specialists and providers of training. Inspiration for development of personality.
5 HR for Children. THANK YOU!		Mario Fondati	Jana Hyžová				
Amrop Slovakia - Context Driven Executive Search Štefanovičova 12, Bratislava - Staré Mesto 811 04 hrdetom@amrop.sk	+421(0)2 5443-6001 +421(0)2 5443-6004 www.amrop.sk	+421(0)2 5443-6001 mario.fondati@amrop.sk	+421(0)2 5443-6001 hyzova@jenewingroup.com		September 8 www.21kmpredeti.lidi.sk hrdetom@amrop.sk	2009 169 Bratislava	This initiative is part of a charitable 21-km run for children in need organised by Children's Safety Line.
6 New Vision in HR		Erika Jankajová	Erika Jankajová				
In Form Slovakia, s.r.o. Račianska 69/B, Bratislava - Nové Mesto 831 02 inform@informslovakia.sk	+421(0)2 3301-4457 NA www.informslovakia.sk	+421(0)904 859-228 jankajova@informslovakia.sk	+421(0)904 859-228 jankajova@informslovakia.sk		September www.hrvision.sk inform@informslovakia.sk	2008 180 Bratislava	How to avoid discrimination; How to lay off in a fair way; Flexibility of the labour market & flexibility in life; Benefits.
7 Personal Management		Pavla Pohanková	Ingrid Schnurmacherová				
TREND Representative, s.r.o. Tomášikova 23, Bratislava - Ružinov 821 01 promotion@trend.sk	+421(0)2 2082-2109 +421(0)2 2082-2223 www.etrend.sk	+421(0)2 2082-2109 pohankova@trend.sk	+421(0)2 2082-2137 schnurmacherova@trend.sk		September www.trendkonferencie.sk promotion@trend.sk	1994 202 Bratislava	One of the greatest HR conferences in SR, organised by Trend and ZRRLZ. Part of conference is HR Gold 2012.
8 ICETA 2013 - 11th IEEE International Conference		František Jakob	Štefan Fejedelem				
elfa, s.r.o. Park Komenského 7, Košice - Staré Mesto 040 01 iceta@elfa.sk	+421(0)55 625-3839 +421(0)55 625-3200 www.iceta.sk	+421(0)905 716-816 fjakab@iceta.com	+421(0)915 886-827 fejedelem@elfa.sk		October www.iceta.sk iceta@elfa.sk	2001 150 The High Tatras	11th IEEE international conference focused on utilisation of information and communication technologies in education.
9 Bibliotéka/Pedagogika		Marek Mesáros	Martina Sekulová				
Incheba, a. s. Viedenská cesta 3-7, Bratislava - Petržalka 850 01 incheba@incheba.sk	+421(0)2 6727-1111 +421(0)2 6727-2254 www.incheba.sk	+421(0)2 6727-2485 mmesaros@incheba.sk	+421(0)2 6727-3345 msekulova@incheba.sk		November www.incheba.sk biblioteka@incheba.sk	1992 34,102 Bratislava	Presentation of books, magazines, library equipments, book design, an exhibition of education and learning technology.
10 Job Forum		Dominika Sulová	Ivana Ridékýová				
EXPO CENTER a.s. Pod Sokolicami 43, Trenčín 911 01 expocenter@expocenter.sk	+421(0)32 770-4320 +421(0)32 770-4324 www.expocenter.sk	+421(0)32 770-4334 sulova@expocenter.sk	+421(0)32 770-4311 expocenter@expocenter.sk		November www.expocenter.sk expocenter@expocenter.sk	2009 3,800 Trenčín	International job & education opportunities fair.



Company (Listed alphabetically) Address City, Postal code E-mail	www Phone Fax	Chief executive officer Phone E-mail	Year of establishment / No. of permanent employees in SK / Languages Rok založenia v SK / Počet stálych zamestnancov v SK / Jazyky	Active also as / Aktívna aj v oblasti	Recruitment agency Human capital consulting firm Temporary employment agency Employment agency	Professional standards / Average search time (weeks) / No. of branches in SK (No. of branches worldwide) / Profesionálny štandard / Priemerný čas vyhľadávania v výdavkoch / Počet pobočiek v SK (vo svete)	Target sectors / Obsadzované sektory											Share of executive search methods in 2012 (in %) / Percentuálny podiel metód v executive search v roku 2012 (v %)	Other services / Ostatné služby																																					
							Production / Výroba	Automotive / Automobilový priemysel	Energy sector / Energetika	Telecommunications & IT / Telekomunikácie & IT	Finance / Finančný sektor	Logistics / Logistika	Sales / Predaj	Advertising & media / Reklama a média	Travel & restaurants / Gastovníctvo a reštaurácie	Health care / Zdravníctvo	Public sector / Verejný sektor		Professionals (lawyers, auditors...) / Odborníci (právnik, audítor...)	Executive board consulting / Poradenstvo správnym orgánom spol.	Management audits / Manažerské audity	Interim management / Interim manažment	Training / Tréning	Outplacement / Ouplacements																																
1 Accord Group Ceska s.r.o., organizačná zložka																			Jana Martin																			Affiliated with: AltoPartners Executive Search Worldwide																		
Zámocká 3 Bratislava - Staré Mesto 811 01 bratislava@accord-ece.com	www.accord-ece.com +421(0)2 2051-2501 NA	+420 2 4245-8401 prague@accord-ece.com	2004 3 E, F, G,			AESC 4-6 1 (45)													100% 0%																																					
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3 Appel Counseling, s.r.o.																			Lubomír Dranga																																					
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4 Aqinti (Slovakia), s.r.o.																			Tomáš Revaj																																					
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5 Arthur Hunt, s.r.o.																			Blanka Schellingová																			Affiliated with: Arthur Hunt Group																		
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6 BUSINESS ESSENTIALS spol. s r.o.																			Jana Srpoňová																																					
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7 Caledonia Group, s.r.o.																			Antonín Mrocek																																					
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9 Dr. Pendl & Dr. Piswanger Management Consulting s.r.o.																			Eva Strečková																			Affiliated with: Intersearch Worldwide, Dr. Pendl & Dr. Piswanger Group																		
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10 EUROPEAN MANAGEMENT CONSULTING INSTITUTE, s.r.o.																			Csaba Benkó																																					
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11 ISG s.r.o., executive search																			Peter Pliešovský																			Affiliated with: ISG International, Searchnet International																		
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12 Iventa Slovakia Management Consulting, s.r.o.																			Dana Blechová																																					
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14 Menkyna & Partners Management Consulting, s.r.o.																			Ján Menkyna																																					
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15 Neumann & Partners, s.r.o.																			Marta Kubinská																			Affiliated with: Neumann & Partners																		
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1 A-OMEGA, s.r.o.		Katarína Ikrényiová												
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2 Aujob s.r.o.		Pavol Zuffa												
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3 Eduka, spol. s r.o.		Ján Smik												
Špitálska 57 Bratislava - Staré Mesto 811 08 eduka@eduka.sk	+421(0)905 443-065 NA www.eduka.sk	+421(0)905 443-065 jsmik@eduka.sk	1993 Slovakia E, C, R, I,	7 12 0									banks, insurance companies, IT/telecom, retail, production, public sector	
4 For Business Excellence - FBE		Daniel Laco												
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5 gd-Team, a.s.		Erik Gottschall												
Moyzesova 4/A Pezinok 902 01 obchod@gd-team.sk	+421(0)33 641-4173 NA www.gd-team.sk	+421(0)33 641-4173 obchod@gd-team.sk	2005 E, C,	25 19									utilities, public sector, industry	
6 HRman, s.r.o.		Pavel Uhrinčat												
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7 Hudson Global Resources, s.r.o.		Andrea Colantoni												
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8 Human Dynamic Central & Eastern Europe s.r.o.		Miriám Lachova												
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9 Human Progress Centre, s.r.o.		Boris Kapucian												
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10 Jenewein Group		Martin Krekáč												
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13 Maxman Consultants, s.r.o.		Lukáš Bakoš												
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15 PDI Ninth House		Jana Kupkovičová												
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16 SLÁVIK & STELL s. r. o.		Dalibor Slávik												
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