

Markets recovering but concerns still remain



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Although there are more people on the market looking for a job than there were before the crisis, the pool of true talent does not grow proportionally. Moreover, the current business climate, affected by the recession, radically changed the expectations from managers and leaders.

Traditional managerial qualities such as drive, energy, dedication and motivation are still expected. But there is a lot more necessary from talented people and managers. People with high integrity, loyalty and entrepreneurship, with their feet firmly on the ground are in demand. At the same time they must be leaders with high frustration tolerance who do not want to just go along with the others, but want to be up front and lead the way. These are people who do not take this set of qualities as a nice cliché, but truly believe in them and moreover they live by them.

The interest in hardworking and decisive managers accustomed to "good weather" times is declining. People, who can cope with crisis situations, are willing to take risks and face non-standard challenges are in demand. Successful and "irreplaceable" managers will be replaced because hard skills will not be in the foreground any more. Soft skills will be more important, especially good nerves, flexibility, courage, decency and the ability to inspire and innovate.

These people will have to have a strong core personality and the ability to address various issues not only in this crisis, but in a future of continual change. According to the first signals, the war for talent has resumed. An international study The Human Resources Agenda for CEE & CIS conducted by Amrop with a focus on comparison of the human resources agenda over the past five years and the next five years showed that strategic human resources planning together with identification and utilization of talent has grown in importance. These findings are backed up by statistics showing that almost 40% of all CEOs planned in 2010 to hire new talented people.

These findings are a good sign also for the human capital consulting companies that have been affected by the crisis quite seriously. The downfall of revenue only in Executive Search in some cases was almost 70%. The news about the market recovering is therefore welcomed. The search for talent has its own peculiarities – there are different experience and qualities needed. Finding a

talented person with skills that are required today is more difficult. That is because few people have experienced a market situation similar to the one we have right now. And few of them are willing to face and fight the current challenges. Based on the aforementioned study, we can say that the toughest fight will be for people with three to five years of experience.

There is always a demand for good people in all sectors, although there are some peculiarities. For example, in the healthcare and pharmaceutical sectors, expert know-how and specializations are in high demand. On top of that it is expected they will be able to broadly sense the market in both product as well as business dimensions. Energy, green technology and the financial sectors are also attractive. The banks and other financial institutions face difficult situations stemming from international regulations such as complying with IFRS, Basel principles, etc. Therefore they need first-rate people and cannot allow falling behind in an international environment. The automotive and manufacturing industries are also picking up. In private as well as public sectors, soon they will be looking for people who understand business areas that are regulated by Brussels and other regulatory authorities.

The potential candidates are cautious about making a change

in their careers. The crisis evokes in people a strong feeling of uncertainty, so almost everybody who feels strong in his current position is hesitant to take the risk for a marginal improvement in his situation or for a questionable working challenge. Motivating top-class people to change is, and will be even more, difficult. Just pure salary increase will simply not do it as it is not an important factor in most of the cases. The candidates assess the overall attractiveness of the company including its market position, financial situation, goodwill and outlook to achieve their goals and visions. They are cagey about potential change. The job of Executive Search consultants is acquiring an additional dimension. They need to not only identify the candidates, but also convince them and motivate them to consider the challenges.

Many studies, experts and CEOs agree on one fact: the market has changed and it is still changing. The rules that were applied before are history, and the future is difficult to predict. The war for talent will be even tougher than a few years ago as it is expected that everybody will have to deliver more for less. Besides the skills that were required in good times, new professional skills and qualities are required now. The young generation has a good basis to face the new challenges since it has grown up in more turbulent and dynamic times. Managers must identify these talented people, pass onto them their experience and create space for them to discover new ways and approaches to overcome this difficult period.



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