



INTERVIEW

A REAL LEADER IS A LEADER FOR WHAT'S NEXT

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1 ■ **How was the year 2018 for AMROP Romania and what are the perspectives for 2019?**

We had a great 2018 so far. In 2017 we became market leaders (based on the revenues generated by the two legal entities we operate) and this great achievement fueled our aim to get better and better. In 2018 we have enlarged and strengthened our team, we grew our international exposure and collaboration with other Amrop offices in the world and we have further developed the partnership with our clients locally. In many more projects than before we are asked to become solution finders and future leaders architects rather than executive searchers. We invest more time in understanding the client's context and in matching the challenges with available talent in the market.

For 2019 we expect a slightly different market evolution. Some of the industries will slow down the development pace and will get into a realignment mood, looking for additional talent to either refuel the growth or right size. On the other side, the digital

processes will further develop and will touch more industries, therefore we expect talents around RPA (Robotic Process Automation) and Digital Transformation to be again in the lime light.

2 ■ **What's your view about the workforce crisis in Romania? When will this crisis come to an end?**

This is here to stay and it might be a huge opportunity for Romanian companies to shift the focus from competitive cost structure to extra value creation. We, as a country, are known internationally for a low cost base. We need to prove otherwise, through investing in developing talents that can provide a higher service level and higher added value for clients. Hiring a full time employee should be the last solution to cover our business needs: working with freelancers, with part time and with service suppliers, developing cross-industry partnerships and digital/automation of processes should be the first options. This will have another positive effect: developing the entrepreneurial spirit of the Romanian workforce, because we desperately need it.

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Looking at the demographic forecasts, I am afraid we will have to live with this workforce crisis for the rest of our professional life, and we will not be around to witness it coming to an end.

3 ■ We witness a general scarcity on the workforce market. What about the scarcity of the crème de la crème – executive leaders for the companies?

Apart from the local trends in the workforce, we witness a global shift in leadership as well. Each industrial revolution brought in not only a dramatic improvement of the technology, but also a big shift in the human mind. Not all the current leaders are able to make the shift from the 20th century leadership to the 21st century leadership i.e. a leadership that is more humble, more hands on, less hierarchical and much more inclusive.

4 ■ What are the criteria for selecting executives for the companies in Romania? Can you give us some examples?

Executive search continues to be our strongest arm while we have started few very promising strategic partnerships on talent scouting, onboarding and leadership assessment. In terms of dynamic, talent scouting, where we look proactively for high potentials (Leaders for What's Next – how we call them) brings us the most satisfaction because we really feel we are part of our client's journey and we address the leadership and capabilities need in a very proactive way.

6 ■ How does the executive search look like in the digital era? Can we state that technology has disrupted how executive search professionals look for people and how candidates are assessed?

Technology will continue to disrupt what we do -or, better said- it will continue to improve what we do. While the technology is now part of the recruitment process for lower levels (blue collars, entry level, and specialized workers), for executive level we are very connected with the developments in one

Stay curious, put yourself in situations where you do not have the answers, engage with as much diversity as you can and train your resilience daily. Be a Leader for What's Next!

We walk the talk when we say we are a context driven executive search organization and we invest a lot of time in understanding the client before we start a new search. Once we understand where the organization is in its dynamic, what are the issues to be solved and what are the needs beyond the current issues we start searching for the right candidate. We search for the leader that can bring in the skills and experience to solve the issues but who also has the right cultural fit. For a multinational we will most likely search for a great functional leader who can be a successor to the CEO in few years, while for a local company we will most likely look for somebody that could realign the organization and find new ways to grow the business and to improve both the financials and the attractiveness of the organization to potential clients and employees.

5 ■ Which was your most dynamic segment in 2018: executive search, HR consulting services or leadership assessment?

particular area: gamification. Gamification developed greatly over the last years and the moment it will be better developed to identify weaknesses, not only strengths, it might become a tool for executive recruitment as well.

7 ■ Going personal now, how do you prepare yourself, as a leader to become better? How do you get out of your comfort zone? How do you find the right work-life balance?

There are two essential ways for me to get better: increase the time dedicated to learning and increase the connectivity with clients and the global network. I constantly have topics on my learning agenda on the evolution of artificial intelligence and human intelligence, being it big data, block chain, gamification, agile, reframing or design thinking. As leader of the Global Amrop University Lead, I engage with top business schools and consultants to develop programs for our Amropeans on both technology and leadership developments. As a consultant myself, I engage

daily with my clients in discussions around their own quests for answers and solutions, about how these trends impact their business and industry. And, let's face it, in most fields,, Romania is 10 years behind what happens in the developed markets, which is why I constantly travel abroad to engage with my colleagues, with clients and with scholars and every time I do this my mind opens up to new possibilities. And when I do this, I forget about work-life balance because I can hardly see the difference.

8 ■ In your opinion, as a CEO, which is the most important question to ask in the investment committee: what can go right or what mistake can we not afford to make? Why? Is there another question that you ask your investment committee for 2019?

The most important questions to ask are: Are we still relevant and important to our clients? Are we part of their goals? Can we engage with them and understand them better? Are there any other ways to look at a situation? Then, as a leader, go and try out new things and have no fear of being fired by

your company but do fear of being fired or rejected by your client. I like the tagline of Singularity University: plan to grow 10 times where others plan to grow 10%. Think big, be bold but, as they say in Silicon Valley, never mistake a clear view with a short distance!

9 ■ What's your "Be careful at..." advice for 2019?

Be careful at becoming irrelevant for your clients and for your people. Be careful at the risk of missing a purpose in what you are doing. Be careful at what you can afford to lose without losing yourself and your dreams.

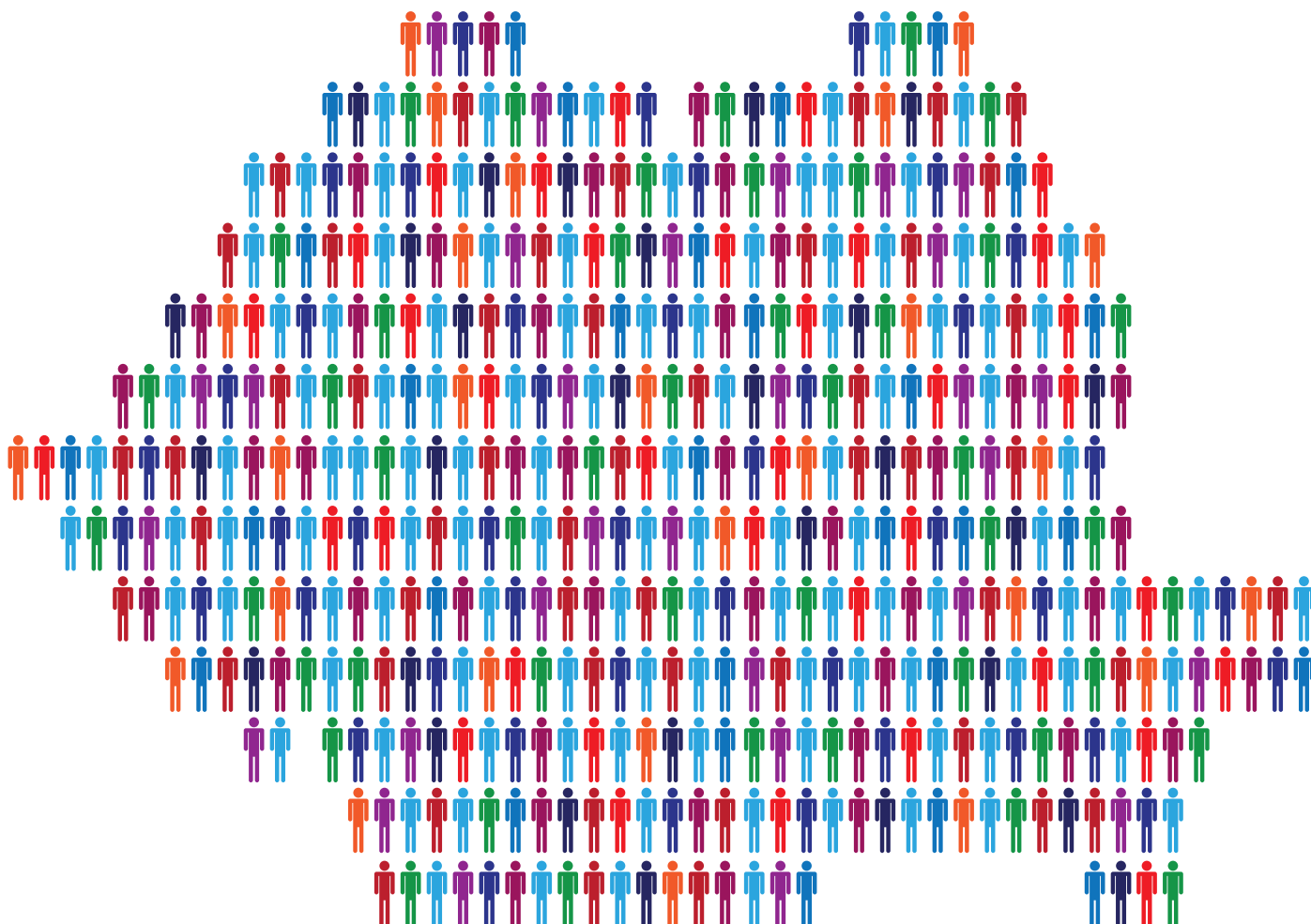
10 ■ These are all our questions. Please share with us if you have something else to add for our readers.

We live in times when everything is accelerating. The place where you are is extremely important. Stay curious, put yourself in situations where you do not have the answers, engage with as much diversity as you can and train your resilience daily. Be a Leader for What's Next!



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the Talent Market in Romania!

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