





# INTERVIEW

## VALUABLE GUIDANCE IN A MARKET WITH A STRONG WORKFORCE DEFICIT

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CIPRIAN DARABAN, COUNTRY MANAGER, Quanta Resurse Umane

**1** You are running the Romanian operations of a successful HR consulting company, which supports companies in developing activities in Romania. What is your company position now and what do you think contributed most to its success in Romania?

Following a transformation process started in 2017 we are proud to say that Quanta Resurse Umane is ranked in the top 10 HR Services providers. I strongly believe that our main attribute as HR service provider is to take our time and understand the project or business challenges our customers are facing, offer them a real and updated feedback from the market perspective and, in the same time, offer valuable guidance to our candidates.

In a market with a strong workforce deficit in all the areas of economy, starting with low-skilled blue collars and ending with specialist or highly qualified workforce, we did follow and sustain our

customers' growth, delivering profiles in areas as Business Process Solutions, Shared Service Centers, Production, Logistics and Retail.

We have seen a constant increase of our Direct Hire solution, the direct result of market transformation and employer's intention to retain the talent.

**2** How complex is the job market disruption and what are the solutions to meet companies' increasing need of skilled employees? Is re-skilling the workforce the solution? Also, how do you plan to develop the necessary skills in your workforce, considering that it is becoming more and more difficult to find skilled labor?

As long as the Romanian employers will have to face the continuous migration of skilled workforce towards Western Europe and other developed regions in search for higher wages, the market disruption will continue and the companies will have to build their own training classes or invest

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together with companies from similar areas to create and develop unified training centers. Quanta is successfully delivering training and development programs and until now we were able to enhance the skills of more than 400 unskilled employees, delivering to the local market skilled workforce for Aerospace industry and IT&C segment.

**3. What kind of new technologies should the employee of the future know how to operate and how fast do you think a massive adoption of new technologies could happen?**

Technological changes are reshaping the workplace continually and the development of automation enabled by technologies like robotics or artificial intelligence is showing an impressive potential to increase the workplace productivity and efficiency, influencing and disrupting the world of work. Many activities that require a repetitive manual work have the potential to be automated in the near future.

Even if technologies are replacing some jobs, they are creating new work opportunities. At the global level in the last 20 years new jobs appeared in areas as IT, Marketing or Retail and positions like mobile applications developer, data architect, marketing analyst or business intelligence analyst are in high demand all over the country.

I believe that the adoption of new technologies will happen in time, but I don't expect to have a large-scale adoption in the next 10-15 years.

This will give time to employees around the country to adapt, to learn, and it is our role, together with the Romanian authorities, to guide them through this process and to help them better understand what lies ahead and what the opportunities are on a medium and long term.

We must communicate better with people, especially in certain areas of the country that are less favored by new investors, and to provide them with a better perspective and predictability.

**4. Taking into consideration the ever-changing legislation in Romania, how difficult is it for a company to adapt to local HR business practices? What is your role in making this process as smooth as possible?**

There is always a certain level of difficulty when the legislation is updated, and I believe that is the case anywhere in the world. The local HR business practices are aligned with the HR business practices you can find at the European level, with some small particularities specific to different regions of Romania. Our main objective is to understand our customers' expectations and support their business scenarios with relevant and specific information related to the Romanian HR legislation and to the local workforce market, allowing them to focus on their core business. Our role is very important specifically for the new investors looking to expand their operations on the Romanian market, considering that the skill level and availability of workforce, current legislation and local culture will influence greatly the outcome of their investment.

**5. What is the most valuable lesson you, as head of a leading company in Romania, have learned throughout 2019? Based on this, what will be the best advice you can give to people working with you?**

One of the most valuable lessons learned in the last years and in 2019 more than ever is the fact that internal HR policies must be aligned constantly with the workforce market potential and local realities. New times ask for new solutions, and today we are living in a candidate's market.

We all should take this into consideration and build the HR strategy based on local market capabilities. I wouldn't go so far to offer advices but I have two recommendations to my colleagues and also to other employees in general: be curious and constantly develop your skills and competencies.

**6. What is the most important aspect businesses should pay attention to in 2020? What are you doing to address it?**

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The workforce deficit affects all the economic areas, and according to recent studies the total labor force deficit in Romania is estimated at around 0,3 mil. people for this year, with a prospect to grow to 0,5 mil in 2023. Demographic decline and migration are among the main causes that have led to the widening of the labor deficit.

Taking into consideration that the higher request for additional workforce is coming from cities like Bucharest, Timisoara, Arad, Cluj, Oradea, Sibiu, and on the other side there are areas where the available workforce is higher then the demand, we believe that the workforce mobility inside the

country should be greatly stimulated, creating the opportunity for the available workforce to stay in the country.

In 2020 the workforce deficit will continue to increase and one of the solutions implemented by Quanta in 2019 for medium and large clients is to attract candidates from rural areas, or underdeveloped locations, offering them daily transportation between their homes and working place. We have seen a positive attitude from our customers towards the category of candidates over 50 years old, and we encourage the employers to start looking deeper into this potential.