

## HOW ROMANIAN LEADERS TAKE CHARGE AND DEVELOP THEIR TEAMS

Cosmina Ioana NOAGHEA<sup>1</sup>

Mădălina BĂLAN<sup>2</sup>

Cristian-Virgil MARINAȘ<sup>3</sup>

Ramona Ștefania IGREȚ<sup>4</sup>

---

### ABSTRACT

*The role of leaders in developing organisations and increasing the engagement of personnel was widely debated in the academic literature. The relationships between managers and employees are essential motivating factors and research demonstrate that the personality of a manager enhance or inhibit engagement (Howell, 2017) finally contributing to teams development. As leaders are influential in determining the fate of their organizations through their decisions, strategies, and influence on others, this research is a quantitative leadership study conducted to draw the personality profile of Romanian leaders and to verify if there are differences among industries. It explores the values, day-to-day characteristic and stress reactions on a sample of 870 to 1116 top, middle managers and high potentials using Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) (Hogan, 1992), Hogan Development Survey (HDS) (Hogan, 1997) and Hogan Motives, Values and Preferences Inventory (HMVI)(Hogan, 1996).*

*The results showed that Romanian leaders displayed average scores for most of their personality characteristics. Their top 3 motivational drivers are power, science and affiliation. They are motivated to get ambitious results, they are interested in learning and being up to date and making decisions based on data and they enjoy networking. In terms of usual working style, their top 3 scores are for ambition, prudence and learning approach. They are competitive and energetic, committed to get things done, they do display good planning and organizing skills, and they are well-informed and value education. Under stress, their top 3 derails are bold, diligent and colourful. They become overconfident and arrogant, they micromanage their teams being too much controlling and details oriented, and they are keen for self-display and getting others' attention.*

*Looking for difference between professional services and pharma, we found that leaders and high potentials working in professional services showed higher drivers (status, social, and business interests) compared with the ones working in pharma.*

**KEYWORDS:** leadership style, personality, values, industry differences, Hogan assessment.

**JEL CLASSIFICATION:** M1, M10, M12.

---

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership and leaders are essential in organizational development and in consolidating teams. The performance and engagement of employees are highly influenced by their managers. Previous studies show that leaders influence the human resource of a company through their decisions, strategical options and own behaviour (Kaiser et al., 2008; Radu, Deaconu & Frasineanu, 2017). Moreover, when working on projects, project leaders are the ones that obtain more personnel and

---

<sup>1</sup> HART Consulting, Romania, cosmina.noaghea@hart.ro

<sup>2</sup> HART Consulting, Romania, madalina.balan@hart.ro

<sup>3</sup> Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania, cristian.marinas@man.ase.ro

<sup>4</sup> Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania, ramona.igret@man.ase.ro

larger budget for the team project and motivate the team members (Aronson, Reilly and Lynn, 2006), determining them for collective action. Previous studies relating personality to leadership usually use the five – factor model, considering that personality traits predict how people behave and perform during their work. The conclusions of Aronson, Reilly and Lynn (2006) research stated that leaders' openness to experiences had a significant influence on new product development project performance, while leader conscientiousness, extroversion and emotional stability had a significant indirect influence. The study stated that most of the effects of leader personality also depend on the levels of uncertainty. In more certain conditions, extraverted leaders were able to better communicate their vision on project goals, fostering team working.

Another study using Jackson Personality Inventory examined the influence of personality over the leaders' reactions to multisource feedback (Smither, London and Richmond, 2005). The results show that leaders high in emotional stability are more determined to use the feedback while leaders high in responsibility felt obligated to use the feedback. While accepting and providing feedback is very important in motivating people, leaders should continuously improve these skills in order to obtain teams performance and engagement.

Studies using Hogan assessment demonstrate that certain personality traits of leaders have a positive effect on the followers' engagement (Howell, 2017). Sociability contribute to team performance and climate, curiosity can create an agile organizational culture, and rigidity might decrease engagement.

The results of a quantitative study conducted by Noaghea (2014) on 378 Romanian top and middle managers, showed that men had higher scores for adjustment, ambition, inquisitive compared to women. They tended to seduce others and women to intimidate. Men valued commerce while women had higher scores for social interests and aesthetics. Top managers had lower scores for adjustment, ambition, prudence and higher scores for intimidation behaviours and being imaginative compared to middle managers. Entrepreneurs had lower scores for ambition, adjustment and seduction derailleurs than the multinational company managers, but higher scores for intimidation derailleurs.

## **2. THE PRESENT STUDY**

Starting from the theoretical insights, the present study intends to discuss the psychological profile of Romanian leaders in terms of values, personality characteristics, and reactions under stress. The main objectives of the study are:

1. Identify the Romanian leaders' personality profile, leadership derailleurs and values.
2. Identify the differences in terms of personality among certain industries.

Based on literature review, we infer that:

H1: The Romanian leaders will display average scores for their values, personality characteristics and derailleurs. The key drivers would most likely be power and science, the top scores in terms of personality characteristics will be for ambition and learning approach, and under stress they will display charismatic behaviours and micromanagement (diligent).

H2: Leaders working in professional services will be more driven to get results compared to the ones working in pharma.

## Participants

The convenient sample of this research was selected from among persons with higher education, working in the urban environment, in private companies, mostly multinational companies working in Romania. The sample comprised over 870 to 1.116 top, middle managers and high potentials working mostly in multinational companies across several industries (professional services, Pharma, retail, agribusiness, FMCG, IT). The number of subjects for each personality inventory varies and, as such, the exact details of each sample will be specified when discussing the results of each category.

## Procedure

The study was conducted by a research team from the Bucharest University of Economic Studies and Hart Consulting. The database was provided by Hart Consulting (the Romanian company owning the rights for distributing Hogan Personality Inventories in Romania). The Hogan Assessments personality inventories were applied online during several months.

## Measures

The research employs psychological testing using Hogan assessment tools: Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI), Hogan Development Survey (HDS) and Hogan Motives, Values and Preferences Inventory (HMVI). Hogan Assessments advance a multi-dimensional approach of the personality targeting three key areas: individual values, strengths, and risks. Scores are expressed into percentiles, allowing pertinent comparisons to be performed.

Firstly, Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) assesses personality and predicts performances. The dimensions of the instrument are thoroughly depicted in Table 1.

**Table 1. Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI)**

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Low scorers are...</b>	<b>High scorers are...</b>
<b>Adjustment</b>	Responsive, easy to coach; susceptible to stress	Stress tolerant, resilient; feedback resistant
<b>Ambition</b>	Team-player; stays within comfort zone	Assertive, self-initiating; overly competitive
<b>Sociability</b>	Good listener; Socially reactive rather than proactive	Outgoing; can be perceived as attention-seeking
<b>Interpersonal Sensitivity</b>	Direct & objective; can be overly critical, harsh	Warm, agreeable and friendly; averse to conflict
<b>Prudence</b>	Adapts to ambiguity well, impulsive	Detail oriented, follows rules, executes plans; inflexible
<b>Inquisitive</b>	Grounded in practicality; but 'short-sighted'	Open, curious, seen as strategic; lacks pragmatism
<b>Learning Approach</b>	Hands-on learner; endures training	Traditional 'book-learner'; can be perceived as know-it-all

Secondly, Hogan Development Survey (HDS) assesses personal characteristics associated with derailment and dysfunction. The dimensions of HDS are thoroughly depicted in Table 2.

**Table 2. Hogan Development Survey (HDS)**

Dimensions	Everyday Strengths	Risks
<b>Excitable</b>	Intense & energetic	Moody, inconsistent & unpredictable
<b>Skeptical</b>	Perceptive & insightful	Cynical, distrustful & fault-finding
<b>Cautious</b>	Careful & thorough	Risk-averse & fearful of failure
<b>Reserved</b>	Independent & businesslike	Socially withdrawn & unapproachable
<b>Leisurely</b>	Cooperative & agreeable	Privately irritable & resistant
<b>Bold</b>	Confident & assertive	Exceptionally self-promoting & smug
<b>Mischievous</b>	Charming & excitement-seeking	Risk-taking & untrustworthy
<b>Colorful</b>	Outgoing & socially-skilled	Attention-seeking & dramatic
<b>Imaginative</b>	Innovative & creative	Eccentric, flighty, & impractical
<b>Diligent</b>	Detail oriented & conscientious	Perfectionistic & micromanaging
<b>Dutiful</b>	Supportive & loyal	Eager to please & ingratiating

Thirdly, the Hogan Motives Values Preferences Inventory (HMVI) looks at people's core values essential for organizational and cultural fit. The dimensions of HMVI are thoroughly depicted in Table 3.

**Table 3. Motives, Values, Preferences Inventory (HMVI)**

Dimensions	
Recognition	Public acknowledgement and "pats on back"
Power	Being in charge and being perceived as influential
Hedonism	Fun, lighthearted and open-minded work environments
Altruistic	Helping others and providing excellent customer service
Affiliation	Networking, building relationships, social belonging
Tradition	Conservative cultures and strength of convictions
Security	Secure, predictable and risk-free work environments
Commerce	Managing finances, profitability, bottom-line focused
Aesthetics	Focusing on quality and product "look and feel"
Science	Analytic problem solving and working with technology

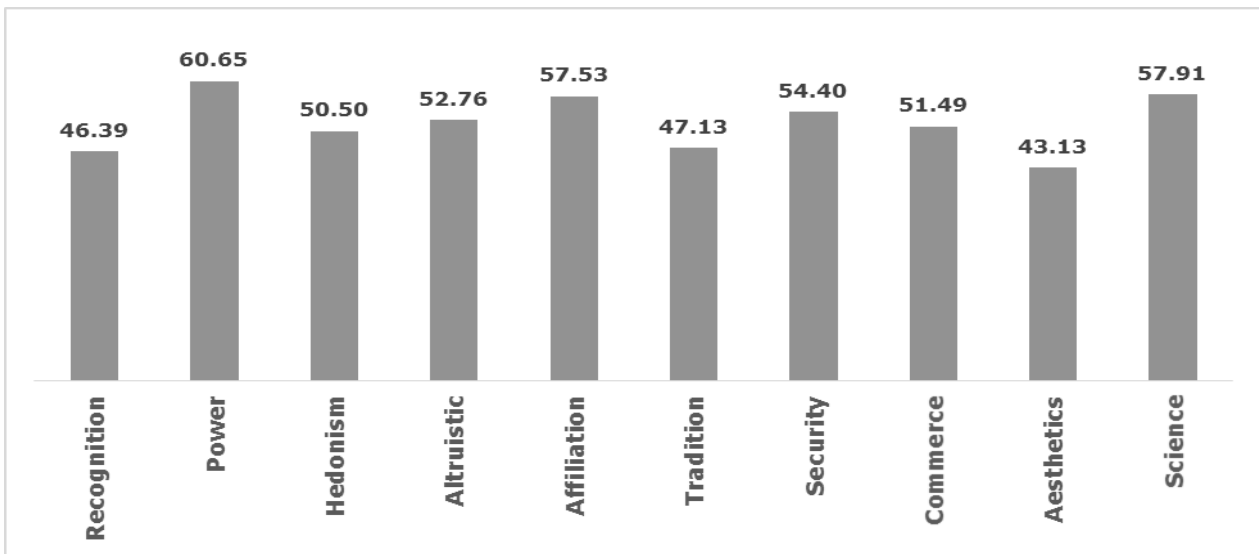
### 3. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The profile of Romanian leaders and high potentials

After applying the 3 instruments on Romanian leaders we can conclude that H1, the first hypothesis, was confirmed. The scored for values, personality characteristics and derailers were within the average scores, the raking within this range being the one predicted that shows results orientation, learning and development, as well as too much charisma and micromanagement under pressure.

Romanian Leaders and High Potentials Values

We firstly applied HMVI on a number of 870 respondents. The average scores of the Romanian leaders (N=870) for their values were between 36 and 65 percentiles for all values, therefore in the average range of the Romanian population. The score for power, science and affiliation were the highest, but still within the average percentiles range. The fact that power had the highest value is significant for the Romanian organisational context, where the power distance has high values too.

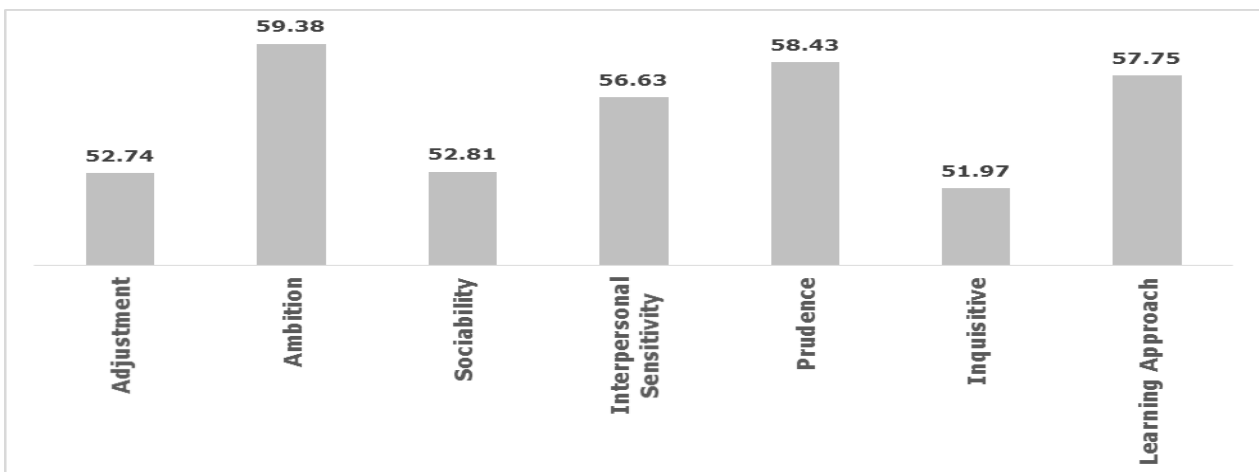


**Figure 1. Motives Values and Preferences Inventory mean scores**

*Source:* Data processed by the authors

### Romanian Leaders and High Potentials Personality Characteristics

The second tool, HPI was applied on 1116 respondents and provided us insights regarding everyday strengths and weaknesses and the way leaders approach other people at work. The average scores of the Romanian leaders (N=1.116) for their personality characteristics were between 36 and 65 percentiles, therefore in line with the average range for the Romanian population. The scores for ambition, prudence and learning approach were the highest.

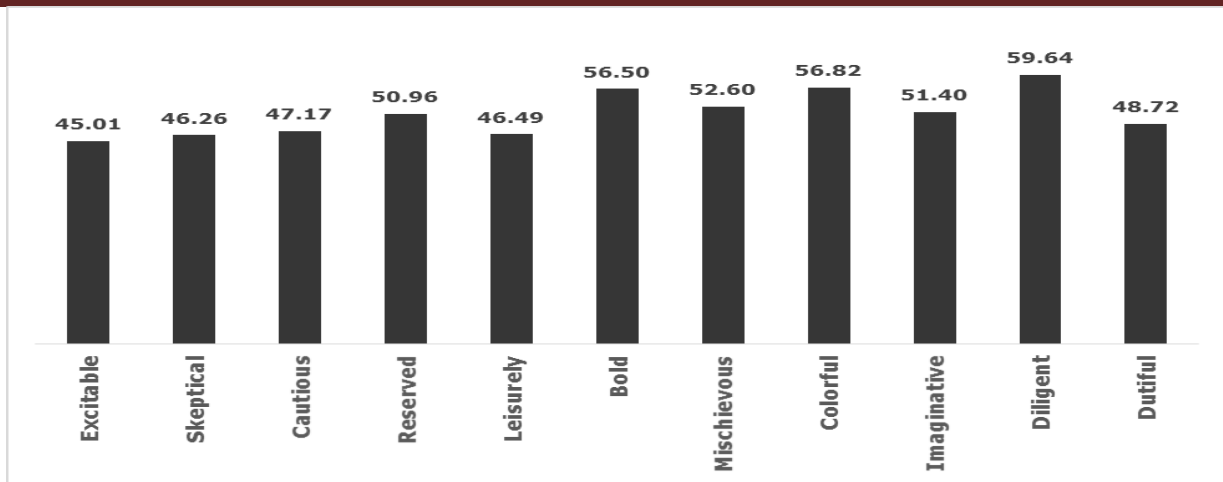


**Figure 2. Hogan Personality Inventory mean scores**

*Source:* Data processed by the authors

### Romanian Leaders and High Potentials Derailers

The third tool refers to the negative tendencies that leaders might disclose during times of pressure, stressful work, complacency, boredom or tight deadlines. The average scores of the Romanian leaders (N=882) for their leadership derailers were in the "low risk area" (between 41 and 70 percentiles). They had the highest scores for bold, colorful (charismatic behaviors) and diligent.



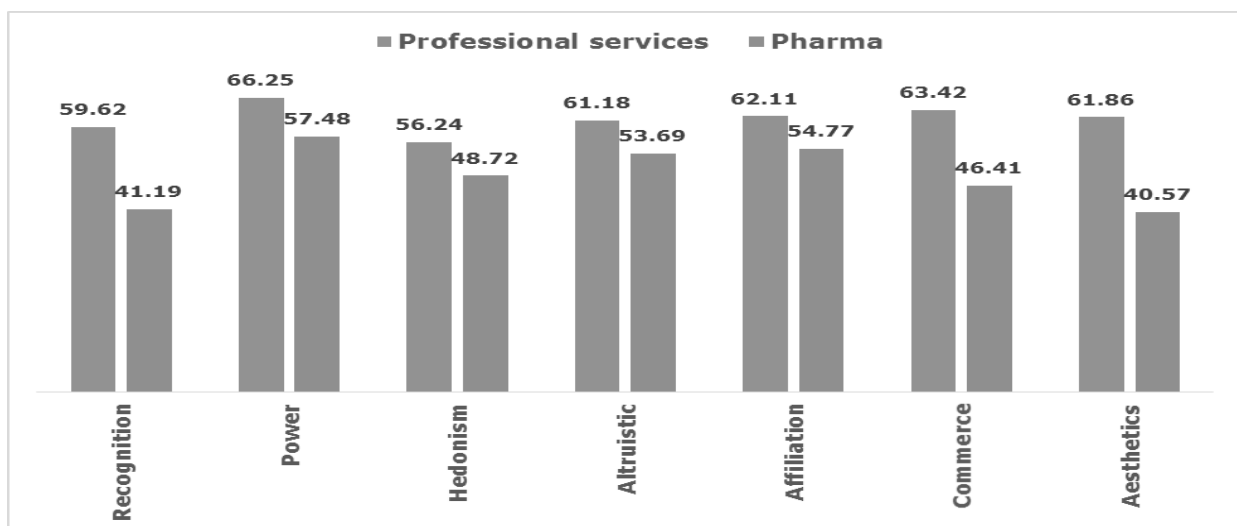
**Figure 3. Hogan Development Survey mean scores**

*Source:* Data processed by the authors

### Differences among industries

Examining the number of people working in several industries, we decided to explore the differences between professional services and Pharma. Therefore, T tests for independent samples have been computed. H2, the second hypothesis was partially confirmed. Leaders and high potentials working in professional services showed higher interest in getting ahead and setting ambitious goals, but when looking at the behavior the ones working in pharma proved to be more ambitious (competitive and energetic in order to get things done). This tendency was similar looking at social interests (customer orientation) and business interests (commerce).

Leaders working in professional services (N=108) had higher scores for recognition ( $t=5.998$ ,  $p<.05$ ), power ( $t=53.021$ ,  $p<.05$ ), hedonism ( $t=2.5444$ ,  $p<.05$ ), altruistic ( $t=2.462$ ,  $p<.05$ ), affiliation ( $t=2.427$ ,  $p<.05$ ), commerce ( $t=5.966$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and aesthetics ( $t=7.112$ ,  $p<.05$ ) than the ones working in pharma (N=385). The results are presented in Figure 4.

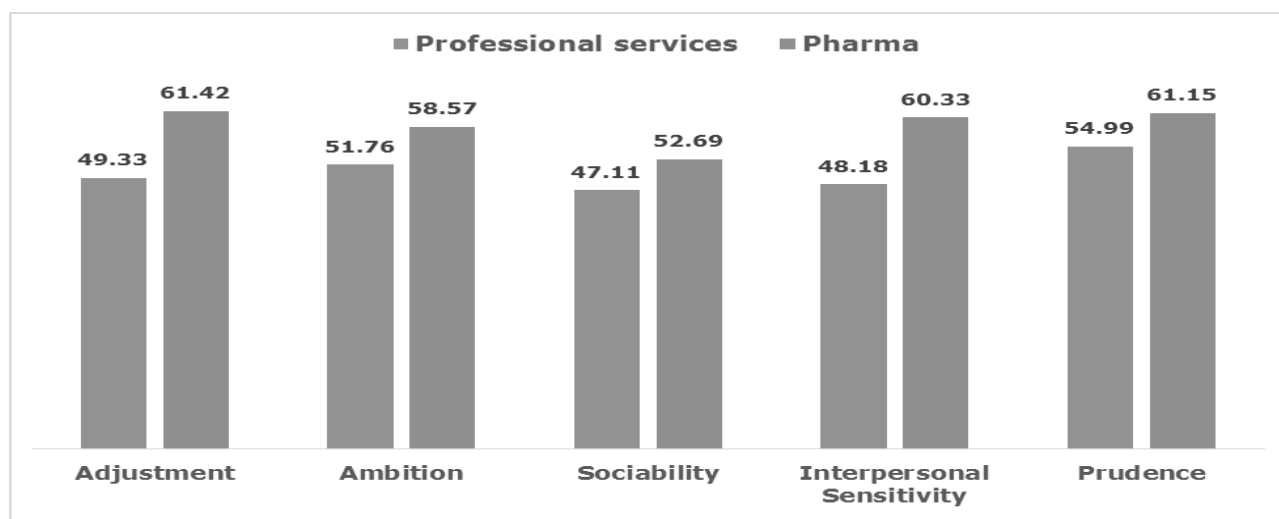


**Figure 4. Motives Values and Preferences Inventory mean scores for professional services versus pharma**

*Source:* Data processed by the authors

Analyzing the differences in terms of personality characteristics, the data showed that leaders working in professional services (N=245) had lower scores for adjustment ( $t=-5.459$ ,  $p<.05$ ),

ambition ( $t=-2.819$ ,  $p<.05$ ), sociability ( $t=-2.341$ ,  $p<.05$ ), interpersonal sensitivity ( $t=-5.251$ ,  $p<.05$ ), and prudence ( $t=-2.793$ ,  $p<.05$ ) than the ones working in pharma ( $N=467$ ). The results are presented in Figure 5.



**Figure 4. Hogan Personality Inventory mean scores for professional services versus pharma**  
 Source: Data processed by the authors

We did not compute differences in terms of leadership derailers due to the samples' size of leaders tested with Hogan Development Survey working in the two industries compared.

#### 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

They Romanian leaders and high potentials are motivated to get high results, they are interested in learning and being up to date and making decisions based on data and they enjoy networking. They are competitive and energetic, committed to get things done, they do display good planning and organizing skills, they are well-informed and value education. Under stress, they tend to become overconfident and arrogant, they micromanage their teams being too much controlling and details oriented, and they are keen for self-display and getting others' attention.

In terms of values and motivations, leaders and high potentials working in professional services are more driven to get ahead (results) and to get along (relationships), they identify easily business opportunities and value quality compared to the ones working in Pharma. They will create a high-performance culture and will encourage communication and teamwork. In term of behaviors, managers and high potentials working in pharma keeps better their composure under pressure and stay focus on achieving results, they pay more attention to how they achieve results (processes and relationships) compared to the ones working in professional services.

#### REFERENCES

- Aronson, Z. H., Reilly, R. R., Lynn, G. S. (2006). The impact of leader personality on new product development teamwork and performance: The moderating role of uncertainty. *Journal of Engineering and Technology Management*, 23 (3), 221-247. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jengtecman.2006.06.003>.
- Hogan, R. & Blake, R. (1996). Vocational interests: Matching self-concept with the work environment. In K. R. Murphy (Ed.), *Behavior in organizations* (pp. 89- 144). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hogan, R. & Hogan, J. (1992). *Hogan Personality Inventory Manual*, Tulsa.
- Hogan, R. & Hogan, J. (1996). *Motives, Values, Preferences Inventory Manual*, Tulsa.

- Hogan, R. & Hogan, J. (1997). *Hogan Development Survey Manual*, Tulsa.
- Howell, A. (2017). Engagement starts at the top: the role of a leader's personality on employee engagement. *Strategic HR Review*, 16(3),144-146. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SHR-03-2017-0017>.
- Kaiser, R. B., Hogan, R. & Craig, S. B. (2008). Leadership and the faith of organizations. *American Psychologist*, 63, 96-110.
- Radu, C., Deaconu, A., Frăsineanu, C. (2017). Leadership and Gender Differences—Are Men and Women Leading in the Same Way?. In *Contemporary Leadership Challenges*, InTech, 2017, ISBN 978-953-51-2904-2, Print ISBN 978-953-51-2903-5, <https://www.intechopen.com/books/contemporary-leadership-challenges/leadership-and-gender-differences-are-men-and-women-leading-in-the-same-way->.
- Smither, J., London, M., Richmond, K. R., (2005). The relationship between leaders' personality and their reactions to and use of multisource feedback. *Group & Organization Management*, 30 (2), 181-210, DOI: 10.1177/1059601103254912.