

The Leader of the Future Seen By Millennials

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Abstract: Two university events took place in spring and autumn 2019, having the following themes: Sustainable Education & Development in EU28 and Entrepreneurial Student Societies in Romania of the Creative Students.

The objectives of the two events were the formation of the student leadership and entrepreneurial skills.

Partner in the organization of these two events was a Romanian training & consultancy company which held two workshops whose themes were: transformational leadership and business simulation. In the former event, there was a team decision-making exercise which lay the stress on the leader's role. The participant students were also administered a career questionnaire. In the latter event, there was a strategy building case-study and company coordination for a whole year. A focus group was also achieved, dealing with how the digital organization and the leader of the future look like.

The main issues were certain concepts regarding the difference between a manager and a leader, the roles of the leader, the methods of the team decision-making, the leader's necessary skills for building of a digital organization.

The paper describes the results of the two workshops, each event involving about seventy students from more than ten university centers from Romania, as well as students from abroad - Europe and Africa. The research methodology was based on both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The romanian academic environment is ready to develop talents in the entrepreneurship and leader-

ship field. Millennials represent a major change in the employment market, and their vision about digital organization and the leader of the future helps companies to adapt their organizational culture to the new managerial profile.

Keywords: university events, leadership skills, entrepreneurial skills, digital organization, leader of the future

JEL Classification: L22, M14, M53

1. Introduction

In January 2018, the European Commission said that education and training are the best investments in the future of Europe. Education helps young people acquire the necessary skills for modelling the future of Europe, characterized by democracy, solidarity and inclusion. Digital technologies improve the learning process and prepare millennials for the future. Some directions targeted by the European Commission in digital education are: digitally signed qualifications, higher education hub, cybersecurity, training in digital and entrepreneurial skills, studies on ICT, artificial intelligence and analytics. The predictions for the digital transformation in the following years say that some jobs will disappear, others will be replaced, many industries will transform and new jobs will be created. All these transformations involve entrepreneurship, vision and leadership, both in the business and in the academic environment.

In order to ensure that the curricular portfolios can provide high-quality results for students, and implicitly for employers, universities must address difficult questions: what mix of programs is the most adequate to generate durable growth, what skills are really critical for the future, what innovations are worth investing in?

¹ Ferrari T. B., Phan H. P, sept. 2018, Universities and the Conglomerate Challenge, McKinsey Quarterly, p.3

Romania has aligned to the aforementioned development directions. This was showcased by two university events organized in the spring and autumn of 2019, with the following themes: SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN EU and STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPANIES IN CREATIVE STUDENTS' ROMANIA. The objectives of the two events were to help the participants develop leadership and entrepreneurial skills, starting from the digital skills they already have. A Romanian training and consultancy company was a partner in the organization of the two events and organized two workshops on transformational leadership and business simulation. The paper presents the results of the two workshops on the millennials' vision about the leader of the future who responds to the digital transformations organizations are and will be subjected to. Approximately 70 students from over 10 university centers from Romania and other university centers in Europe attended each event.

2. Review of the scientific literature

The transition from analogue to digital technology has been ongoing since the 80's. The triumphant advance of the Internet started in the 90's, but in the 2000's there was the leap of mobile devices. Currently, digitization is seeping into our everyday lives, and the Internet allows communication not only between people, but also between things, namely data-transmitting objects,

IOT, Internet of Things². The technologies that cause structural digital changes continue to quickly develop, so self-driving vehicles, robots that provide sophisticated services, T-shirts that measure the heart rate and body temperature and sends data directly to a medical center have become reality. The processing power of computers will double every two years. The implication is that performance improvements will continue to grow and replace human activities with digital instruments. This affects any industry that has integrated computers into its operations - which practically cover the entire economy. And the progress in machine learning and cloud computing has consolidated this trend, the so-called DIGITAL DOMINO EFFECT.³

The expectations of society for the business environment are growing, and the expectations of the business environment for the university environment are changing. Generations change. Nine out of ten consumers from Generation Z believe that the responsibility of companies to approach environment and social matters is essential. For millennials, companies focused on the environment and social responsibility are better potential employers, and most of them say they would be more loyal to companies aligned to these values.⁴

As social responsibility increases,

² Re-Imagining the Word, White-paper, Arbeiten Work 4.0, 2017, Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Berlin, March, p.20

³Iansiti M. and Lakhani K. R., 2017, Strategy, Ethics, and Network Competition in the Age of Digital Superpowers, Harvard Business Review, pp. 88, 92

⁴Balchandani A., A., Baggio, Cherny A. at al., nov. 2019, Answering society's call: A new leadership imperative How do transparency, empathy, and meaning work in practice?, McKinsey Quarterly, pp.1-7

another leader profile is shaping up. The research performed by McKinsey shows the image of the new leadership style. It refers to stimulating transparency and more empathy, as shown by the new McKinsey research based on surveys and interviews with a group of people from the Ashoka community, one of the most important communities of social entrepreneurs in the world. People are starting to invest money in businesses that focus on ethics and social values, according to two CEOs who have recently described their activities within a panel discussion that marked the 50-year anniversary of the Graziadio business school within Pepperdine University. Transparency, empathy and social responsibility are starting to define a new reference point in the management of organizations. Approaching social goals and values is reflected by examples such as: our main account offers 2% interests and the promise that your deposits will not be invested in fossil fuels. At the same time, hub companies must be aware of the fact that their organizations are similar to the "key" species from biological ecosystems - they play an essential role in environment protection. Apple, Alibaba, Google, Amazon and other companies that disproportionally benefit from the ecosystems they dominate have rational and ethical reasons to support the economic vitality not only of their direct participants, but also of the largest industries they serve. Hub companies especially need to include value sharing in their business models, with value creation and value capturing.⁵

⁵Iansiti M. and Lakhani K. R., 2017, Strategy, Ethics, and Network Competition in the Age of Digital Superpowers, Harvard Business Review, pp. 88, 92

Currently there are initiatives and measures for consolidating the connections between educational systems and the labor market. These are concepts for improving the quality and relevance of the initial training provided to young people by schools and university classes, and development programs that provide young people the possibility to alternate training periods and work periods. Consequently, we expect these initiatives to approach the unemployment problem among young people, allowing millennials to make better career choices, to develop the skills required to be successful on the labor market, to find high-quality jobs and improve their life chances. Thus, in 2015 Italy launched the "National plan for digital schools", involving 35 actions that promote the innovation and digitization of the Italian educational system, including the introduction of a dedicated "digital catalyst" and an innovation team made up of teachers responsible for implementing the plan in every school; the results of the plan include 70% of the schools that implement educational robotics, digital entrepreneurship and digital citizenship. The Japanese government encourages the development of partnerships between industry and the academic environment, and building systems for training teachers by using trainers with real practical experience. The Government of the United Kingdom has also announced financing of 170 million pounds in order to incorporate 12 technology institutes all over England, based on collaborations between higher education providers and employers. Last but not least: the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, which is one of the 10 actions of the Skills Agenda for Europe brings together Member States, companies, social partners, non-profit

organizations and education providers, who take action to tackle the digital skills gap in Europe.⁶

The age of automation, with technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things, may trigger profound structural changes in the workforce from Great Britain - which will be amplified by other trends, such as population aging. Consequently, the demand for occupations such as managers, technology specialists and healthcare professionals could increase by almost 20% until 2030, while the demand for administrative and manual roles could decrease at a similar rate. The impact of the fourth industrial revolution on the future labor form will be profound. The modeling of the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) on the effects of using new technologies on the workforce from Great Britain shows that until 2030 there may need to be a transition between professions or qualification levels that affect very differently employees with higher and lower qualifications. There is an increasing trend regarding highly qualified employees, for example, which makes physicians more efficient in treating patients, and increasing the demand for the services which these professionals provide. However, routine tasks may be slightly robotized. Short term, this tends to cause talent deficiencies among high-qualification professions, implicitly managers. In order to test the application of this trend on the job market from Great Britain, MGI and the McKinsey Office for Great Britain and Ireland analyzed the projected increase of the occupancy of 369

⁶ G7 Social Background doc., 2019, G7 Responses to Tackle the Digital Skills Gap, G7 Biarritz, France, pp.3-4, 7.

different professions from 2017 to 2030. This modelling suggests that the demand for occupations that include management roles in several sectors such as professional roles in information and communication technology (ICT), engineering, health and education will increase by an average of approximately 19% from 2017 to 2030, namely 1.4% a year ⁷.

Introductory notions on using robotics in order to understand what transformation needs to focus on for maximum impact are increasingly included in management education programs. ⁸

Our tireless unattended bots accelerate automation of high-volume, repetitive tasks, bridging system and data integration gaps at scale, according to Pega Robotic Process Automation. 69% of the senior managers who were questioned expect the workforce to comprise both human employees and robots. How can businesses prepare for these changes? More than 7 out of 10 believe that the use of AI will be common in the next 10 years in assessing employee performance and ascertaining rewards, and in recruiting⁹. The responsibilities that are almost always best managed by AI on central level are things such as data management, setting systems

⁷ Allas T., Dimson J., Foote E. and Jeffery B., nov. 2019, The future of work: Rethinking skills to tackle the UK's looming talent shortage, McKinsey Company, pp. 7-8

⁸ Pega/Robotic Automatisation, available at: <https://www.pega.com/products/pega-platform/robotic-automation?> - accessed in nov.2019

⁹ A report from Pega and Marketforce, 2017, The Future of the Work, Marketforce surveyed 845 senior executives working globally in Financial, Services, Insurance, Manufacturing, Telecoms & Media, Technology, Public Sector, Healthcare & Life Sciences, Energy & Utilities, Travel, Transport & Logistics and Retail, p.14

and standards, recruitment and training, re-designing workflows, choosing where to focus organizational change¹⁰.

Digital transformation challenge leaders. They must have various skills in order to adapt to their environments. The metaphor of the legendary Uroborus, who eats his own tail in order to survive, in an eternal cycle of renewal, is representative. Continuity, completeness, repetition, autonomy, rebirth - all these can be seen in the Uroborus cycle. Whether we like it or not, it is important to escape our own mental prison in order to get where we want to be. The way in which people in an organization think about, assess, view and create the future for themselves and their associates, Toma (2016) says¹¹. Leaders must get out of their comfort area, and continuously look for the way towards renewal and authenticity, De Vries says¹².(2017) In 2001 De Vries created a Model for the Leadership of the Digital Age, where he synthetically included its qualities, a model which is current in 2020. It is a model of a leader connected to the external environment and to the organization, in which the Architectural Role (System design, Control) is balanced with the Charismatic Role (Vision, Empowerment,

¹⁰Fountain T., Saleh T., and London S., Getting to Scale with Artificial Intelligence, McKinsey Digital, available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/mckinsey-digital/our-insights/getting-to-scale-with-artificial-intelligence> - accessed in oct. 2019

¹¹Toma S. G., Marinescu P. and Grădinaru C., 2016, Strategic planning and strategic thinking, Revista Economică, Volume 68, Issue 5, ISSN 1582-6260, pp. 168-175, available at <http://economice.ulbsibiu.ro/revista.economica/archive/68515toma&marinescu&gradinaru.pdf>

¹²De Vries M.K., 2017, Mindfull Leadership Coaching- Călătorii către sine, Bucharest, pp.210-211

Trust management, People motivation), in which Impetuosity, Dynamism and Sociability are built on Emotional Stability. However, there are traits which today are decisive for the changes to which organizations are subjected in the present: Generativity, Cultural relativity, Cognitive complexity management, Self-management.¹³

3. Research methodology

The research methodology was based on both quantitative and qualitative methods.

With all these scenarios and possibilities, what should we consider? The world changes increasingly fast and we are assaulted by data, ideas, promises, threats. While in the past having power meant having access to data, today, having power means knowing what to ignore. What should we focus on, in this chaotic world? These are conclusions and questions Harari (2018) presents to us. A potential economic crisis, the unrest on the labor market, global warming are balanced out by the transformations technology is starting to create. What is more valuable - intelligence or conscience? What will happen to society, politics and everyday life when non-conscious but highly intelligent algorithms know us better than we know ourselves?¹⁴

Drafting a questionnaire with questions guided towards certain career directions, certain organizational characteristics and certain personal qualities of the future manager/

¹³ De Vries M.K., Leadership – Arta și măiestria de a conduce, De la paradigma clinică la pragmatismul schimbării, 2003, Bucharest, CODECS Publishing House, page 331

¹⁴ Harari N.Y., 2018, Homo Deus – Scurtă istorie a viitorului, Iași, Polirom, pp.344-345

mentor was the instrument used for knowing millennials' perceptions. The context in which the questionnaire was applied was the event EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY DAYS, 6th Edition, SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN EU 28, a project financed by the Ministry of National Education, Theme: DEVELOPING THE LEADERSHIP SKILLS OF THE EUROPEAN YOUTH. The event was organized by a university of economic sciences in partnership with a student league and a training and consultancy company¹⁵, and the number of applicants was: 68 students and 10 high school students, grades 11 and 12. Students from other European university centers also participated.

The management career questionnaire comprises 4 questions, detailed below:

1. What is your vision regarding your career for the next 3-5 years?
 - 1.1. Career in the field in which you studied in university
 - 1.2. Management career
 - 1.3. Entrepreneurial career
 - 1.4. Other options:

¹⁵EXELO Training&Development web, available at: <https://exelo.ro/>

2. Indicate three characteristics you want the organization for which you will work to have:

Empowerment	Innovation	Client focus	High-quality services/products	High-performance technologies	Continuous learning
Holistic approach	Leadership	Information sharing	Performance management	Shared vision	Positive employee morale

3. Indicate three qualities you have and think will help you be successful in your career:

Vision	Honesty	Competence	Intelligence	Determination	Cooperation
Courage	Ambition	Creativity	Independence	Loyalty	Self-control

4. What are the three qualities you want your future manager/mentor to have?

Trustworthy	Open-minded	Vision	Motivates people	Creative	Result-oriented
Dynamic	Shares knowledge	Fair	Intelligent	Professionally competent	Capable to inspire

At the second event, which took place in Nov. 2019 STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPANIES IN THE ROMANIA OF CREATIVE STUDENTS, organized by the same partners indicated for the first event, the training and consultancy company used Focus Group as a research instrument. 6 student groups were created, approximately 12 students in each group, who were challenged to answer the following questions:

1. What are three essential qualities for the leader of the future?

2. What are three characteristics of a successful organization in the future?

Students from over 10 university centers from Romania attended the event, as well as students from Africa, studying at the

Romanian university center that organized the event. After a training exercise with the 6 teams, the groups presented their vision on the leader and organization of the future, resulted from 30-minute debates that took place in each team. After the presentations, the facilitating trainer extracted conclusions regarding the predominant qualities and characteristics, indicated in the following chapter. A Business Simulation followed, with an online platform, with a case study which asked them to develop the strategy of a company for 1 year. The students acted as project manager, financial manager, HR manager, sales manager and strategy manager. At the end of the exercise, they analyzed the strategic performance, and also their model for a leader profile. There is a probability for using a computer simulation in teaching, for example the simulation of an organization

and the simulation of management roles. With the current technology, we can create a virtual reality in which a student can work with case studies, and observe leader behaviors, styles, managerial team values and business strategies. The business simulation is beneficial in the academic environment, but it has a considerable cost.¹⁶

¹⁶Bider I., Henkel M., Kowalski S. and Perjons E., (2015, Simulating apprenticeship using multimedia in higher education: A case from the information systems field Interactive Technology and Smart Education, Interactive Technology and Smart Education, Vol. 12 Issue: 2, pp.137-154, doi: 10.1108/ITSE-04-2015-0004, p.140

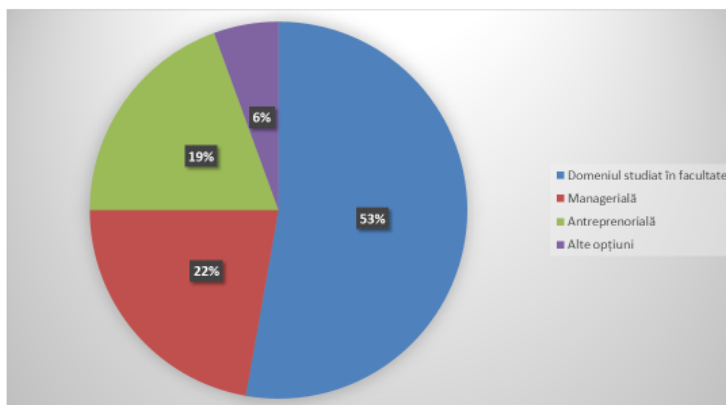
4.Results and discussion

The results processed for the Career Questionnaire within the SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN EU 28 event, see Fig 4.1 Career objectives for millennials

show the following weights regarding the directions which the participating students will follow: the field studied in college (53%, 38 students), the managerial field (22%, 16 students), entrepreneurship (19%,14 students), other options (6%, 4 students). The 22% for the managerial field reflects the deficiency indicated for the talent in the managerial area, mentioned by the McKinsey study conducted in Great Britain and Ireland, indicated in chapter 2.

Fig 4.1 Career objectives for millennials

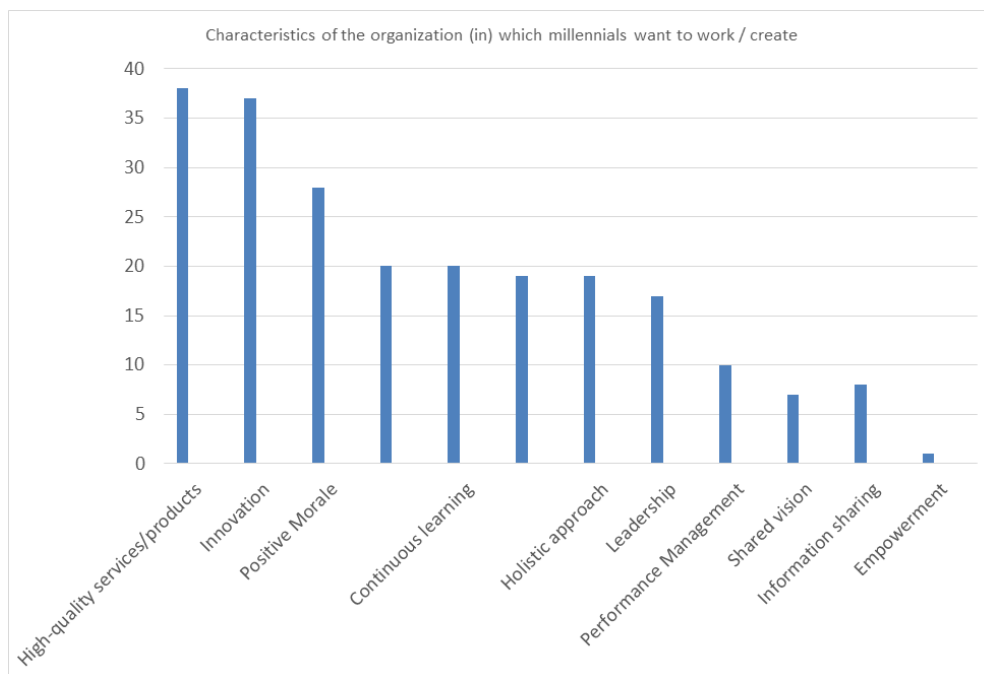
Mention by encirclement what is your vision regarding your career for the next 3-5 years



The fact that more than 50% of the responding students were in the 1st year of study explains the high weight of the field studied in university. Starting from the testing model used by Jenny Roper, we intend,

for the next questionnaire application, to conduct student interviews, in order to better understand how they think about their future, by detailing the various stages they intend to follow.

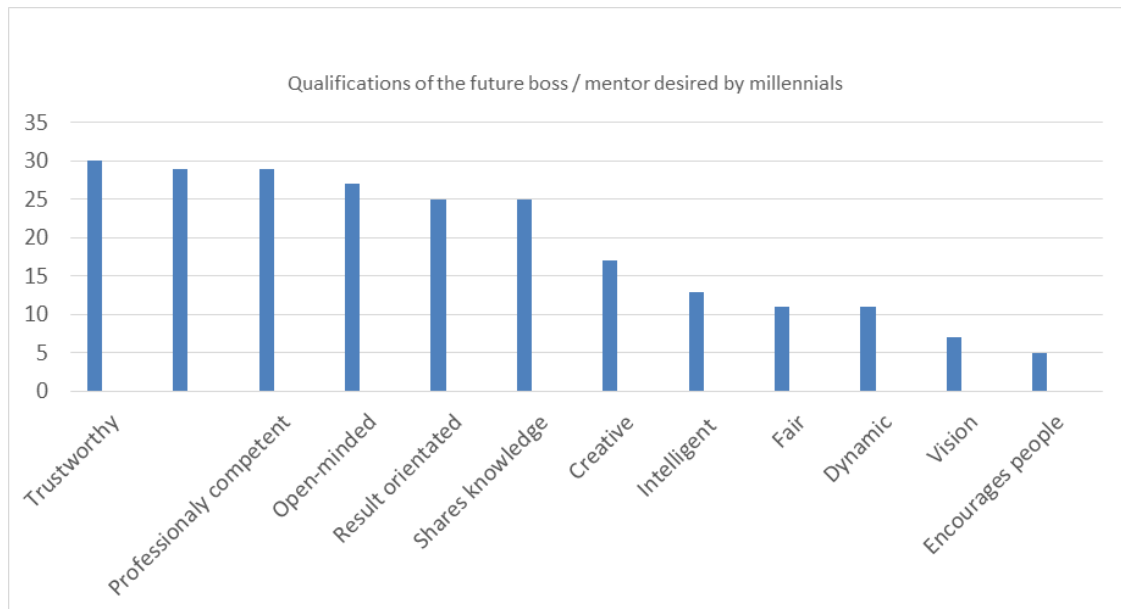
Fig. 4.2 Characteristics of the organization (in) which millennials want to work / create



The organization of the future millennials aspire to is characterized by high-quality services and products, innovation, positive employee morale and high-performance technology. The students' orientation was surprising, mainly regarding high-quality products, with a difference of 18 points to high-performance technology. This shows the necessity of introducing in the curriculum introductory notions about using robotics, in order for them to understand the transformation of the business environment

and the overall society which they will build. At the same time, innovation is very important to the participating students, with a difference of 20 points to leadership. Innovation is related more to technology than to managerial concepts and practices, as shown by the workshop free talks. The theme of the event helped the students in this regard, by defining the Leadership and Leader notions, by understanding several theoretical management models, and by learning concrete examples from the business environment.

Fig. 4.3 Qualities of the future manager/mentor desired by the millennials



The portrait of the future manager/mentor focuses on the following moral values and principles: Trustworthy (30 points) and Fair (11 points) and leader qualities: Capable of inspiring (29 points), Open-minded (27 points), Creative (17 points), managerial qualities: Result-oriented (25), and professional qualities: Professionally competent (29 points). The model of the Leader in the Digital Age formulated by Kets de Vries, presented in Chapter 2, indicates: Trust management, Intelligence, Vision and People motivation¹⁷.

The results processed for the focus group within the STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPANIES IN THE ROMANIA OF CREATIVE STUDENTS event are presented in Fig. 4.4 Leader of the future according to millennials, and in Fig. 4.5 Organization of the future according to millennials.

¹⁷ De Vries M.K., 2003, Leadership – Artă și măiestria de a conduce, De la paradigma clinică la pragmatismul schimbării, Bucharest, CODECS Publishing House, p.331

The leader of the future according to millennials is innovative, flexible, empathetic, human and emotionally intelligent. At the same time, he is a visionary and takes risks. We find the qualities indicated in the McKinsey study¹⁸, previously mentioned in Chapter 2, which provides an image on the new leadership style, based on transparency stimulation and empathy. The key to the profitability and sustainability of future organizations is talent management, according to Marinescu (2016)¹⁹. Attracting and developing talent is critical to the agility of the or-

¹⁸ Allas T., Dimson J., Foote E. and Jeffery B., nov. 2019, The future of work: Rethinking skills to tackle the UK's looming talent shortage, McKinsey Company, pp. 7-8

¹⁹ Marinescu P., Toma S.G., Constantin I., 2016, Talent management in the age of globalization, Manager, 24, 2016, ISSN-L 1453-0503, ISSN (e) 2286-170X, ISSN (p) 1453-0503, pp. 180-184, available at: <http://manager.faa.ro/en/article/Talent-Management-in-the-Age-of-Globalization-902.html>, p.182

ganization of the future.

The organization of the future described in the aforementioned focus group is digitalized, innovative, adaptable, but environment-friendly. Its organizational culture is people-oriented and transparent. In the results of the questionnaire 13% of the participants see the organization as people-oriented and transparent, and 8% see it as environment-friendly. Here we find the characteristics mentioned by Balchandani²⁰:

Transparency and environment-oriented, de
²⁰ Balchandani A., Baggio A., Cherny A. et al., nov. 2019, Answering society's call: A new leadership imperative How do transparency, empathy, and meaning work in practice?, McKinsey Quarterly, pages 1-7

tailed in Chapter. 2. The impact AI will have on organizational processes and systems, such as: recruitment, performance assessment, organizational flow, indicated in the PEGA and Marketforce report²¹, is reflected in the results of the focus group by the 22% for digitalized organization and very advanced technology, and 22% for innovative organization, creating new field, new brands.

²¹ The Future of the Work, A report from Pega and Marketforce, 2017, Marketforce surveyed 845 senior executives working globally in Financial, Services, Insurance, Manufacturing, Telecoms & Media, Technology, Public Sector, Healthcare & Life Sciences, Energy & Utilities, Travel, Transport & Logistics and Retail.

Fig. 4.4 Leader of the future according to millennials
 Leader of the future

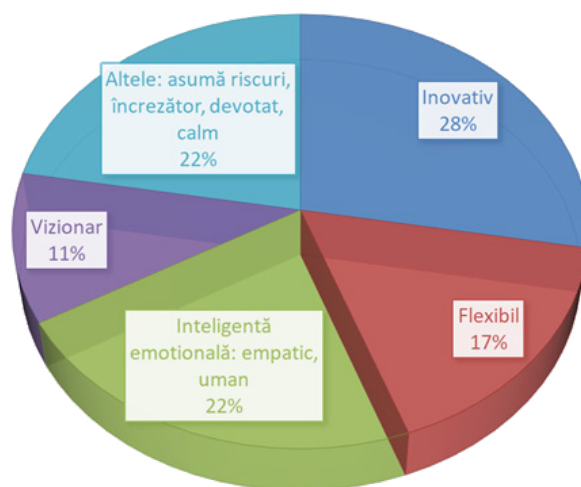
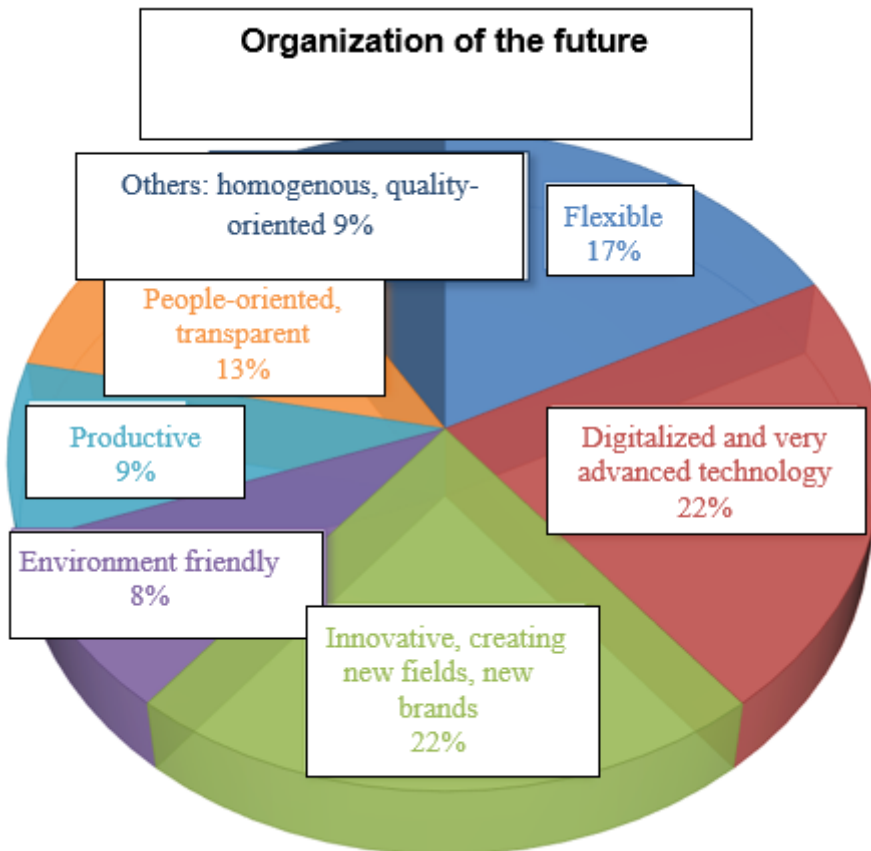


Fig. 4.5 Organization of the future according to millennials



5. Conclusions

The conclusions of the paper predominantly relate to the manner in which millennials see the leader of the future. From the results analyzed in the previous chapter, conscience is more important than intelligence for the leader of the future. The leader of the future is trustworthy, capable to inspire, open-minded, empathetic and human. Emotional intelligence helps him/her in building, developing the organization of tomorrow, a digitalized, flexible and creative organization, but with a people-oriented organizational culture, promoting transparency and caring for the environment.

We need models for the profile of the leader of tomorrow, models originated both from the literature and from the visions of the millennials, models underlying the curriculums developed by the Romanian academia, and also the development solutions provided by Romanian training and consultancy companies. Taking over the Italian model "National plan for digital schools"²², representing a set of actions that promote the innovation and digitalization of the educational system, would represent a "digital

²² G7 Social Background doc., 2019, G7 Responses to Tackle the Digital Skills Gap, G7 Biarritz, France, pp.3-4, 7.

catalyst" for development fields such as: educational robotics, digital entrepreneurship and digital citizenship.

The role of Romanian training and consultancy companies is to support the transformation of organizational cultures and the development of millennials' leadership skills that are suitable for this type of changes. Organizing or attending events such as the aforementioned ones, focused in the business simulator, explaining leadership models and concepts, will help students build and develop management career plans.

Motivating millennials in choosing a successful management career must be supported by the formation of a national

educational structure aligned to the directions indicated by the European Commission in digital education: digitally signed qualifications, higher education hub, cybersecurity, training in digital and entrepreneurial skills, studies on ICT, artificial intelligence and analytics²³, and by creating technology institutes, based on the British model²⁴, based on collaborations between higher education providers and employers.

²³ European Commission/Education and Training/ Digital Education Action Plan, ian. 2018, Bruxelles, pp. 1-10

²⁴ Allas T., Dimson J., Foote E. and Jeffery B., nov. 2019, The future of work: Rethinking skills to tackle the UK's looming talent shortage, McKinsey Company, pp. 7-8

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