

Generation Change in Central and Eastern Europe

Qualified returning emigrants required

Basel, 23 November. “There is presently a very strong demand for “new generation managers” from companies actively engaged in the transport and logistics field in central and eastern Europe”, said Urs B. Hug, managing partner at Meneghin & Partner. “The management that was responsible for guiding and leading companies away from communism towards a free market economy after the fall of the Iron Curtain are now gradually being replaced.”

Naturally the global economic recession has also affected businesses in central and eastern Europe. They are living through a period where turnover is at best stagnating and in many cases actually falling. Margins are tighter, and the competition is now much fiercer. And this all after a long period of sustained and vigorous growth. “This change of circumstances frankly requires new and different management skills to the ones that were required initially, indeed many older generation managers struggle with the complexity of these new and constantly changing business models. It demands a different type of executive – people with greater creativity, professionalism, and the ability to optimize processes, to effect strategic business plans, basically to think outside the box. It is true to say that whereas technicians and engineers dominated the first “manager generation” of forwarding companies, firms now need qualified forwarders, logisticians, supply chain managers and managers that have specialist business skills”, added Urs B. Hug.

“The pressure on the bottom line has meant that western companies are scrutinizing far more closely their employees within the various country organizations in central and eastern Europe. For example many organizations have implemented personnel audits in part to find out how better the company can support staff and managers from headquarters, but also precisely what qualifications are actually required by the leadership teams. Naturally Meneghin and Partners are able to bring expert knowledge and experience to this process. As an “outsider” Meneghin and Partners will be seen as impartial and with their input being recognized as objective, this frequently adds enormous value and benefit to the whole process”, said Hug.

Meneghin & Partner offers a wide range of consultancy services in the Human Resources field. The company focuses particularly on cross border executive search. “In this specialist area our expertise and service is without parallel. We search for suitable candidates for management positions in central and eastern Europe for clients in Great Britain, Germany, Austria etc as well as for executives from central and eastern Europe for positions in the companies’ headquarters to oversee business developments in the new EU member states. This is not an easy task as these specialists have to have their feet in both cultures”, explained Hug. Particularly

sought after, are executives born in central and eastern Europe that have spent some years abroad, climbed the ranks in western European companies and now wish to return home.

Due to the scarcity of such top candidates the salaries offered are as high and sometimes even higher than in western Europe. Country and regional managers can expect 200 000 EUR and more per annum. However, there is a big salary gap between top executives and those in second or third rank leadership positions.

According to Urs B. Hug it is particularly difficult to fill top positions in the CIS. Whilst the new EU countries have made big progress in the political, administrative and economic field in the last few years due to the financial support of the EU, conditions in the CIS remain difficult. Countries such as Ukraine, Tajikistan and Georgia, as well the Russian Federation have experienced a permanent economic crisis since the beginning of the transformation from Communism. This has meant large sections of the population remain impoverished and corruption is endemic, circumstances which do not entice émigrés to return. It is the more junior staff who see the attractions of working in these countries but not the senior managers.



Photo: Urs B. Hug

Company portrait

Meneghin & Partner (M&P) is the leading Swiss consultancy for the transport and logistics industry. Her main focus lies in Executive Search activities, strategy, project, M&A consultancy work as well as PR and media communication consultancy. She has supported multinational companies and candidates alike for more than twenty years. Her activities have expanded across Europe and Asia. Her competency in Central and Eastern Europe is unique. Her specialty are international assignments in the area of Executive Search where the customer is domiciled in country A, the job vacancy is in country B, and M&P looks for candidates all over the globe. www.meneghin.ch

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