

OPINION
by Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva, VUZF

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition
to occupy the academic position 'Professor'
of the Graduate School of Insurance and Finance
by field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional
direction "3.7. Administration and Management (Human Resource Management,
Leadership and Organizational Change)"

By order No. 368 of 10.11.2022. of the Rector of VUZF University, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of professor at VUZF in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction "3.7. Administration and Management (Human Resource Management, Leadership and Organizational Change)".

In the competition for a professor, announced in the State Gazette, no. 52 of 05.07.2022 and on the website of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, as the only candidate is participating Prof. Teodora Lazarova, Ph.D.

1. General presentation of the received materials

The set of electronic materials presented by Associate Professor Dr. Teodora Lazarova is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of VUZF and includes the following documents:

1. Resume in European format;
2. Copy of the diploma for the educational and scientific degree "doctor" or scientific degree "doctor of science" held;
3. Document for the occupied academic position "associate professor";
4. Monographic work with summary;
5. List of publications after taking the academic position of "associate professor" or the defense of a dissertation for awarding the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" and copies thereof;
6. Summaries in Bulgarian and English of the publications after taking the academic position of "associate professor" or the defense of a dissertation for the award of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences";
7. Medical certificate;
8. Certificate of criminal record;
Certificate of the required experience under Art. 33, para. 1, item 2;
9. Separation protocols for the joint publications, if any;
10. Evidence of supervision of doctoral students;

11. Evidence of leadership of scientific projects and other research tasks;
12. Reference on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "professor";
13. Reference to the original scientific contributions in the works and to the citations (without self-citations);
14. Form - consent to the processing of personal data in connection with participation in the competition.

The candidate Associate Professor Dr. Teodora Lazarova submitted a total of 26 (twenty-six) scientific papers, 1 (one) monograph, 2 (two) textbooks and 1 (one) study aid and 22 (twenty-two) articles and reports. All submitted materials are accepted for review. Documents are also presented for acquired certificates and conducted trainings, for participation and for implemented developments in national and international projects, as well as for their usefulness and data on the obtained effect.

2. Brief biographical data (of the applicant/s)

The candidate, Associate Professor Teodora Lazarova, PhD, has extensive practical experience in the field of human resources management - both in Bulgarian and international organizations. Prof. Lazarova successfully combines business and academic career. The CV presented shows a skillful complementarity between practical experience, academic developments and teaching practice. Participation in the current competition is a subsequent step in the candidate's academic development. The candidate is an enthusiastic global HR manager. He holds a doctorate in psychology from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), followed by a docentship and work in the higher education industry at VUZF, University of Sheffield, and other universities. Prof. Lazarova holds certificates and she herself trains delegates in the field of Leadership and Management, Communication and Conflict Resolution, Working in a Multicultural Environment, Motivational Strategies, Time Management, Stress Management, Leadership and Group Effectiveness, Group Cohesion, etc.

3. General characteristics of the applicant's activity

The candidate has submitted a certificate of educational and pedagogical activity that meets the requirements of the law and the regulations of VUZF.

I accept the reference for the scientific contributions in the main monographic work and in the textbooks. It highlights the research interest in three consecutive areas - leadership styles, human resource management and organizational change management, as well as the over-built field of scientific knowledge in the field of

the concept of self-leadership, with the connections with business practice highlighted. .

The candidate explores in depth the topic of managing change in organizations, which has always been relevant, but the global events of the last two years make the topic even more significant and important to study. Leadership is a topic that excites not only the modern organization, leader or manager, but also the educational sector and the general reader.

The main monographic work - "Leadership and Management of Organizational Change" has a volume of 195 standard pages and is divided into three parts. The introduction presents the author's hypothesis of the study - that the main challenges to the effective management of human resources and organizational change are related to 1) the criticality of effective leadership in organizations, 2) to the modern business reality, which requires the imposition of non-standard and innovative approaches to human resource management to achieve higher levels of employee motivation, satisfaction and retention, and 3) with process automation and team optimization, requires leaders to develop and implement management techniques , which they have not applied until now.

The author poses the question of leadership styles and their importance for human resource management and organizational change, paying attention to the need to define the main challenges facing modern leaders, even more so in a situation of global crisis and uncertainty. Examining this issue, the author seeks a new understanding of the effective management of human resources and organizational change by examining all non-standard approaches, methods, techniques and tools that are used in modern organizations and by modern leaders and entrepreneurs in order to achieve more high motivation, efficiency and productivity in companies.

The research is based on qualitative and comparative analysis.

The first part, entitled Leadership Styles and Organizational Management, defines fundamental and contemporary leadership theories, examining innovative techniques and practices that would contribute to increasing the effectiveness of the management process in the organization. The second part, Human Resource Management, focuses on the stages of human resource management, analyzing the key factors for long-term employee motivation and attachment to the company. The author takes an in-depth look at the covid crisis and its impact on human resource management. The third part is called Leadership and Human Resource Management and brings out the main interactions related to the higher effectiveness of certain leadership styles in different business contexts as well as different organizational dynamics. This part concludes with the topic of leadership styles and entrepreneurship. Each part offers conclusions and recommendations for improving

the overall process of human resource management and organizational change. The conclusion summarizes scientific findings, justifications and conclusions, proving the author's thesis.

The author has developed a monograph that examines a specific problem, the goal and tasks of the scientific research are clearly outlined.

The monograph proves that Assoc. Dr. Teodora Lazarova not only knows the scientific literature and scientific achievements in this field, but raises the study of leadership to a new, different level by posing questions and a field for discussion. The author makes a comparative analysis and presents to the readers a rich palette of leadership theories and concepts, referring to the traditional theories, but also to the new ones.

The work is designed and presented in an understandable and logical manner, with some of the most important conclusions presented. An excellent impression is made by the in-depth study of leadership and the various processes related to the management of human resources and organizational change.

Citations and references are correctly indicated as required. Extremely impressive is the rich bibliography with up-to-date data from 411 sources, which lends credibility to the research and proves the author's thoroughness.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the monographic work presented by Associate Professor Dr. Teodora Lazarova on the topic "Leadership and Management of Organizational Change" represents an in-depth study in the field of human resources management, organizational change, leadership and management. Therefore, I recommend to the editorial board that the work be published.

The applicant provides a significant number of publications and a citation reference exceeding the required points according to the scientometrics reference. An excellent impression is made by the international response of the candidate's publications, visible in the reference for citations.

4. Evaluation of the personal contribution of the candidate/s

All scientific works and publications presented for the competition confirm the personal contribution of the candidate in the relevant publications, as well as prove that the value of the formulated contributions and obtained results are her personal merit.

5. Critical remarks and recommendations

The candidate has excellent language skills and significant academic practice and development. I recommend publication in foreign publications and those with an indication in international databases.

6. Personal impressions

I know the colleague from our work at VUZF and at the University of Sheffield program. Thanks to this, I have been left with impressions of thoroughness in research work, in dedication to academic work and ambition in terms of career development. It should be noted that Associate Professor Dr. Teodora Lazarova successfully combines not only business and academic careers, but does not stop her personal development and improvement through additional training, certification programs and qualifications.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Assoc. Dr. Teodora Lazarova meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law and the relevant Regulations of VUZF University.

The candidate in the competition presented a significant number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of her doctoral thesis and associate professor. The candidate's works contain original scientific and applied contributions that have received national and international recognition, a representative part of which has been published in journals and scientific collections issued by prestigious academic publishing houses. The theoretical developments have practical applicability, and some of them are directly oriented to the academic work. Prof. Lazarova's academic and teaching qualifications are unquestionable.

The results achieved by the candidate in the educational and scientific research activities are fully in line with the VUZF Regulations for the application of the Law.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, scientifically-applied and applied contributions contained in them, I consider it justified to give my positive assessment and recommend the Scientific Jury to prepare a report -proposal to the Academic Council for the election of Associate Professor Dr. Teodora Lazarova to the academic position of "Professor" at VUZF in the professional direction "3.7. Administration and Management (Human Resource Management, Leadership and Organizational Change)"

28.11.2022
Sofia

Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva