



## Spotlight on Talents

Shortage of skilled labour, talent management and employer branding are current buzzwords in all media. If large concerns are making record profits, but at the same time are cutting back on thousands of employees, there can't really be much behind this hype. Or is there? Read what experts have to say in this edition of the Management Mailer.



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## Editorial

*Shortage of skilled labour, talent management and employer branding are current buzzwords in all media. If large concerns are making record profits, but at the same time are cutting back on thousands of employees, there can't really be much behind this hype. Or is there?*

*It is clear that the demographic change in the industrialized countries cannot be stopped – the baby boom is long over, and the working population will continually shrink. On top of this, due to increasing globalisation, the international competition for excellent, qualified employees is rising. Companies no longer*

*recruit only in their own country, but rather in the global job market.*

*In our practice we observe that in some markets and branches, candidates are extremely willing to change employment. A few euros extra are sufficient incentive for a candidate to leave their current employer. Where money is the only incentive, loyalty is lacking. Vital knowledge is thus lost. And the competition never sleeps: firms such as SAP invest heavily to get the best people on board and to retain them in the company.*

*Talent management and employer branding must be more than a mere PR campaign. It is about building a talent oriented leadership culture, future oriented HR planning and offering real perspectives in the company. Find more on the topic in this edition of the Management Mailer. Enjoy the read!*



# Attractive Values

## Employer Branding in the Practice of Our Readers

What does talent management look like in practice? What do companies actually do to attract the attention of the best and brightest? What value is placed on employer branding in the corporate strategies and how are top talents made loyal to the company? Our readers permitted us a glance into their practice.

»Employer branding is the foundation for all personnel marketing activities«, states **Stephanie Schmitt**, who is in charge of recruiting/personnel marketing at **Schott AG**. »Only when we know what distinguishes us as an employer can we take effective, target group oriented measures«, explains Schmitt.

This is also confirmed by **Franz Reisner**, Head of HR Recruiting of the **Allianz Group** in Austria. For him, it is first and foremost »companies with clear core messages, who can be perceived as distinguishable on the job market«, who will consequently win the war for talent.

Also for the HR Manager of the **Bramac Group**, **Manfred Peterseil**, »employer branding is a main focus of the company strategy, and functions when those values projected outwards are actually lived by all employees«. In his opinion, the company retains the best employees only when this overall picture is harmonious.

**Wolfgang Horak**, Managing Director of **Fujitsu Siemens Computers**, states that employer branding has always been important; only the values have shifted: while earlier in IT generally products were in focus, today »people and their values are more in the foreground. The people of a company mould the branding and have a more or less attractive effect on the ›best and brightest«.

**Peter Rieder**, responsible for recruiting & personnel development of the division Private and Business Customers of **Raiffeisenlandesbank NÖ-Wien AG**, stresses that

young people want orientation and therefore the transport of values, but also the culture and interaction with the employees is very important; employer branding therefore has huge significance. »Our secret here is, that we make the values perceptible and tangible in concrete missions and instruments, because ultimately culture consists only of deeds«, says Rieder.

**Levend Alkan**, Manager of **Bosch Termoteknik**, sees the secret of employee loyalty rather in the work environment itself: »challenging projects« linked to »a strong team management« are for him the most important factors for ensuring the loyalty to the firm of the best employees.

To sum up, our readers display an image of a very conscious and engaged approach regarding talent management and employer branding. A surely rewarding motto: whoever strategically plans also has the edge in the race for the best and brightest!

### Current question to the reader

Would you like to share your thoughts and experiences with the readers of the next HILL Management Mailer? We would be delighted to have your feedback on the following questions: »**What were your personal highlights in the last business year? What are you most proud of – also concerning the further development of your own management competencies?**« Please send us your answer to [marketing@hill.co.at](mailto:marketing@hill.co.at). We are looking forward to your commentary!



# Courage for Individuality

## Working Actively on the Company Culture Instead of Copying Hypes

**War for talent, talent management and employer branding are buzzwords in all media at the moment. How much really is behind this hype, in your opinion?**

In most cases a completely home-made problem lies behind this: too many or the wrong employees were shed (»the more fixed costs fall, the better«), an on-time recruitment was ignored (»the applicants will come by themselves anyway«), the company climate neglected (»they should be happy to have a job«), contact with colleges minimised (»we've no time for that«), the employer image not taken into consideration (»the marketing department takes care of that«) – overall a tragic list of deficiencies. The reaction is unfortunately even more tragic: one jumps on some catchphrase or other of this hype and quickly copies everything possible in the manner of an uninspired benchmarking – without really understanding it.

**In your study you come to the conclusion that companies have been twiddling their thumbs too long. What measures do you recommend most urgently? Or are they in any case powerless with regard to the changed attitudes of employees?**

No, they are not powerless. They must however recognize the new situation and above all initiate long term measures. This also means putting the personnel work to test. This begins with the personnel strategy, embraces company culture analysis, and environment analysis, in order to for example already know today what employees will be required in the coming years.

Unfortunately however this task description is repulsive for some HR professionals – but luckily not for all, which proves that professional personnel management is absolutely feasible.

**Employer branding must be more than a pure PR campaign. On the long run, how can companies effectively build an attractive employer image?**

Here too one must first do one's internal »homework« and find the personnel ma-

agement-related »Unique Selling Proposition«. An employer must really know what distinguishes him/her, and why he/she stands out against the masses and the competition. The finding of this information is a difficult and painful process, in which one »goes into oneself« for two to three days and systematically, above all however critically and realistically considers. After this step, outward communication is an easy and simple task.

However here it is important, instead of trying to curry favour, to have the courage for individuality. The result: workplace derived offers, which are so unique that the applicants want to work for precisely this company.

**You call a talent oriented leadership culture the secret key to success, at the same time companies have the greatest implementation problems here. What consequences are therefore necessary?**

By talent oriented leadership culture I mean, on the one hand, that talent (as human ability in the sense of qualification, motivation and retention) is embodied as a central value in the company culture. On the other hand managers play an important role here, if one desires to further develop employees and achieve the long-term loyalty of talent. Managers mould the communication culture in the departments and through regular feedback can show employees that their performances are being noticed and how they are assessed.

### About the person

Univ. Prof. Dr. Christian Scholz is since 1986 holder of the chair of Business Administration, particularly organisation, personnel and information management at the University of Saarland/Germany. His current research focus includes strategic personnel management, virtual organization, empirical organization research, as well as »Darwiportunism«.



*Put your own personnel work to test*

Christian Scholz <<



Before one now rashly states that »but we all do exactly that«, one should look at the catastrophic values in the areas of motivation and

retention. There one can see that management culture is to be taken much more seriously, and thus, as a result, existing management seminars are wrongly constructed.

**According to your study the »business parties« have differentiated responsibilities with regard to talent management. What are the most important insights here?**

These are four actors: executives, the personnel department, the general management and of course the employees themselves. There are various interaction models. But whichever is chosen must be transparent and clear for everyone.

Moreover all four actors require, on the one hand, skills in the sense of a »tool kit«, in which tools must be known and professionally mastered. On the other hand all actors must be vested with specific authority. But what I said previously applies here too: all this is not trivial and requires work as well as a professional focus.

**Many thanks for the interview!**



# Laying the Foundation for Success

## Competence Models as a Long Term Basis for Talent Management



*Transparency improves competitiveness*

Vesselin Kantchev



How can companies plan their human resources requirements in a future oriented manner and build a suitable talent pool? Competence management has undergone a tremendous development in the last number of years as a basis for the answer to this question.

As a part of the strategic company management, the concept serves to strengthen the company's performance and competitive capabilities. »Broadly speaking, competence management is the way in which organizations manage the competencies of the corporation, the groups and the individuals. It has the primary objective to define, and continuously maintain competencies, according to the objectives of the corporation« (Berio & Harzallah, 2005).

In the HR area, the concept can be applied for the identification of manager and employee competencies necessary for existing and future company success. Leading international companies develop and implement their own competence models, which have the efficient application and development of existing human resources as their goal. Core competencies are unique and exclusive for every company; they represent typical behavioural patterns derived from company strategy and serve to reach strategic company goals. Based on abilities, knowledge and attitudes, core competencies portray learnable, measurable behavioural models.

Based on the identified core competencies, the future HR needs can be planned with a gap analysis. The optimal positioning and development of existing and the recruiting of missing key personnel can be specifically derived.

### Operating future orientedly

How can we create employee loyalty through fair personnel policy and a talent oriented management culture? An internationally operating Bulgarian company in the tourist branch posed itself these questions. After 15 years of tremendous company development top management sought a path towards stabilization and continual further development. The aim was to ensure that the company successfully aligned itself today to the challenges of the future.

Customer orientation was the company's first priority. Instruments for the measurement of customer requirements and satisfaction were already being implemented. The management was however aware that customer satisfaction in the services area could be greatly influenced by employee satisfaction. In the process, satisfaction was seen as a future-oriented aspect: if a respectful leadership culture was being experienced day-to-day, and if employees were shown future perspectives in the company, then they would be truly motivated and engaged. With a headcount of many thousands, this was only possible through attentive contact with every individual.

Therefore a solution was sought which would serve as both a basis for action for management and a systematic framework for career development. It was meant to support 250 managers to lead their employees in a targeted manner, so that not only business goals

would be reached, but also that employee satisfaction would be raised and retained. In addition a fair system was to be introduced, to discover, develop and optimally place talents at the earliest possible stage.

The company proved itself to be innovative in the search for a solution, and in collaboration with HILL Communications was one of the first companies in Bulgaria to develop a company specific competence model.

### Identifying core competencies

The creation and introduction of an own, unique and exclusive competence model took place in four phases, as in Berio & Harzallah (2005).

#### 1. Audit:

By means of the HILL Competence Analysis® data on the existing competencies of top, middle and line management was collected. Structured interviews delivered information on typical behavioural patterns and problem solution strategies. With the help of the data a realistic picture of the existing, unstructured behavioural patterns could be created. The findings were discussed and more precisely defined in focus groups. A created primary list contained a total of 20 competencies, both existing competencies and also those recommended by the consultants as contributing to effective work.

#### 2. Identification:

The compiled competency list was presented to the top management. In the course of multiple workshops with all management levels, the competencies which would be of future strategic significance were identified:

- > Goal achievement
- > Decision making capability
- > Further development
- > Emotional balance
- > Goal oriented communication
- > Innovation capability
- > Leadership
- > Identification and development of talents
- > Time management

### About the person

Dr. Vesselin Kantchev, Partner at HILL Communications Bulgaria, obtained his doctorate in business psychology at the Technical University Dresden/Germany. Through more than 17 years of HILL project experience with international clients, the Professor of personnel management of the faculty for German business management at the TU Sofia possesses extensive valuable experience, especially in the area of personnel development.



### 3. Development:

With the goal of creating a realistic-as-possible description, middle and line management made a catalogue of behavioural patterns for the newly identified core competencies. In collaboration with the top management the created competence model was pilot-checked for applicability and viability. Assessment centres for the entire management followed, to ascertain the existing levels of competencies and to arrange and implement development measures.

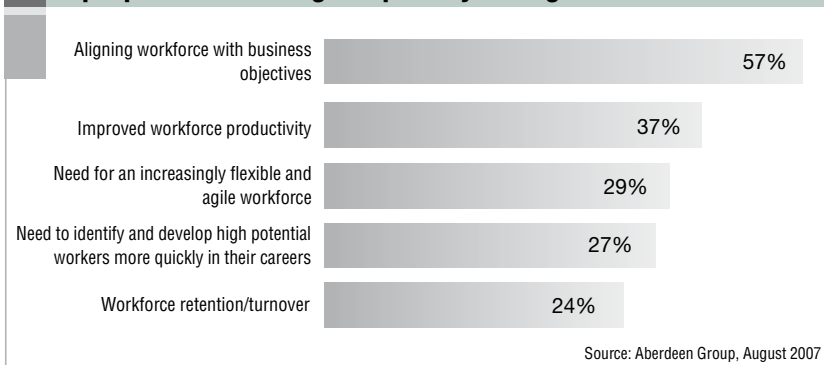
### 4. Application:

The unique competence model is applied in the daily work: as a model for target oriented development measures as well as a foundation for personnel decisions on the basis of biannual employee appraisal interviews, employee evaluations and assessment centres. Targeted recruitment can take place in the area of personnel search and selection; employees and managers can be recruited on the basis of the match between their behavioural patterns and the competence model.

## Improved competitiveness

The project was a complete success: within only six months considerable improvements were achieved. Precisely in times of permanent change, the introduction of a competence model forms the basis of a stable company development. It offers a perspective for a fair career development – the evaluation is connected to transparent core competencies, thus clear and free from subjectivity. Talents can be detected at an early stage and employees can be targetedly developed in terms of competence management, which means greater loyalty to the company, less fluctuation and thus also economic benefits. A climate is created in which proactive action and self-development are promoted, which increases organization culture, motivation and competitiveness. Simultaneously the introduction of competence management strengthens the image on the market, which again leads to increased attractiveness of the company for top applicants.

## Top 5 pressures driving competency management



## HILL's tips for successful talent management

- 1. Make talent management a CEO priority.** Communicate the importance of the topic to your whole management team and make sure that programs have the necessary funding. Get personally involved, e.g. as a mentor for outstanding talents. Be the Chief Talent Agent in your company – look out for and honor top performances.
- 2. Base all your actions on the business strategy.** Know the future plans and goals of the company. Don't start with the solution before knowing what talents you will need to achieve your corporate goals. Make talent management an important part of your business planning process.
- 3. Know what competencies your company will require.** What will be the key roles, tasks, and competencies of your future leaders? Identify the core competencies – your company's talent DNA – required to stay successful in the future. Use your competence model as a basis for talent management programs.
- 4. Plan your future HR needs.** Once you know which resources you will need to achieve the corporate goals, you can analyze which talents you already have on board and which you need to recruit and develop. Plan ahead to reduce pressure and shortages.
- 5. Create a talent-oriented culture.** Develop a clear employer branding and live it on all levels. Talents seek autonomy, creativity, development, and empowerment. Make sure that these personal values are aligned with the corporate culture.
- 6. Make all leaders responsible.** Leaders throughout the organization have to be accountable for creating a high-performance work climate. Leaders should be mentors to their staff; they should encourage and recognize accomplishments, and act as talent scouts.
- 7. Design the whole process.** How can you recruit, deploy, reward, develop, and retain your key talents? Tactical measures such as »buying« talent only have short-term effects. Create a holistic strategic talent program on an international level and support it with incentives.
- 8. Build a talent pool.** Plan your demand in advance and have enough talents ready in the pipeline. Include staff from all levels in the talent pool. Base decisions on who will be part of the talent pool on objective assessments and your company's competence model.
- 9. Recruit talents internationally.** Both internally and externally, there is a clear trend towards global recruiting in order to overcome skills shortages in certain markets. Use international standards and methods and take cultural differences into account.
- 10. Be realistic.** Adapt your requirements to the market. If some skills are simply unavailable on the market you have to develop talents within your company. Base decisions on objective assessment of current competencies and development potential.

### Literature:

Berio, Guiseppe; Harzallah, Mounira: Knowledge Management for Competence Management. In: Journal of Universal Knowledge Management, Vol. 0, No. 1, p. 21-28, 2005

# Strategically Prepared

## Employee Loyalty through Systematic Further Development of High Performers



*More emphasis on strategic HR work*

*Christian Arbeiter*

**Mr. Arbeiter, SAP is well known to invest heavily in personnel development. To what extent are you concerned by the currently much discussed topics such as skills shortages and war for talent?**

Even though we consider the term war for talent to be exaggerated, it is also in our branch ever more difficult to quickly get qualified employees on board. It is therefore increasingly more important for us to keep our well-trained and talented employees loyal to the company on the long term.

**What measures do you take to keep your high potentials and high performers in the company? How do you handle management succession?**

Some years ago we already began to implement a systematic, company wide process for the identification of talents and top performers. At the beginning of every year we focus on reviewing the performance of our employees, and during the summer of the same year we take a closer look at high potentials in our company. In special manager meetings the key players and extraordinary talents in particular are being identified and suitable career development measures are discussed. We offer our top talents special company-wide programs, also to broaden their horizons regarding the career and development possibilities within the company. Such perspectives, along with a modern company culture, extensive further training possibilities, benefits, and a performance-based salary, contribute greatly to employee loyalty. A further annually conducted HR process is dedicated to succession management. Every manager suggests possible candidates as his/her potential successor.

For key positions, the management also openly discusses such suggestions.

**Within a company, effective talent management should be viewed as a cross-divisional task. What are your most important discoveries in this regard in practice?**

Talent management is a very important, intrinsic management task, which – actively and purposefully carried out – can ensure that the management and their team can also be equal to the constantly growing challenges in the future. At SAP this important concept is consequently propounded and demanded by the management, as a result of which the topic is targetedly pursued on all management levels. The model set by the executives and the management team has, in my view, the largest influence on a lasting talent management and should not be underestimated.



**SAP offers solutions for integrated talent management. What contribution is made by infrastructure and systems, what value does the company culture have in terms of employer branding?**

Just as we constantly consider how we can create relevant value added and productivity benefits for our customers through appropriate software process support, we have also considered how important HR themes and processes can be implemented with software support in our own company. In particular this means delivering all HR relevant information to the responsible mana-

ger, in real time. Employer branding is a part of the SAP understanding and involves the constant cultivation and further development of the company and management culture: we place our employees according to their abilities and talents, constantly further develop them and thus prepare them for the challenges of the future.

**What are your priorities for the coming years? What do you advise other companies to urgently undertake?**

In the future SAP will place even more emphasis on strategic HR work and ensure that all HR processes are subordinate to the strategic company goals. Already today recruiting, strategic personnel development and compensation management make this increased orientation towards the corporate goals apparent. At the same time we will further increase the efficiency of the HR work. The outsourcing of not only transaction-oriented services in our HR service centre already today enables all employees a quick and uncomplicated processing of personal HR inquiries. Other (electronic self) services will follow and complete our HR services. Leadership and HR work is supported by modern work equipment and professional consulting by local HR business partners.

Depending on the current HR situation of the company, I would suggest a transitional development from simple personnel administration towards a strategic HR management, and thus an active contribution towards lasting company development can be made.

**Many thanks for the discussion!**

### Company profile

**SAP** develops and sells, together with partners, business software for companies of all sizes and branches, and also offers related consultation and training. Founded in 1972, SAP is today the third largest independent software supplier worldwide, with branches in more than 50 countries. SAP applications are being used by over 47,800 customers in more than 120 countries. In the business year 2007 the company recorded a turnover of 10.2 billion euro. SAP currently possesses over 51,200 employees, of which around 500 in Austria.

**Dr. Christian Arbeiter**, law graduate, has been working at SAP since 1995 in the areas of sales and management of large-scale international project. In 2003 he took over the overall HR responsibility for SAP Austria as Director Human Resources.

[www.sap.com](http://www.sap.com)



# Time to Rethink

## Strategic Talent Management Secures the Future

Experience has shown us that small and middle-sized businesses, the backbone of the economy, hardly ever perform long-term strategic planning. That means that more than 80% of our economic scene is managing planlessly, is stressed by operative day-to-day business and reacts much too hectically to market fluctuations. In large companies merely 2.8% of working time of the management and owner representatives is invested in strategic planning. The awareness and know-how of how realistic scenarios can be developed from visions of the future, and thus how to align business decisions accordingly, seems to be low and simply underdeveloped.

### Strategic positioning

Let's start from an ideal case: a company – it doesn't matter what size – possesses a profound strategic planning team. In this team owner representatives and management as well as some informal management persons are permanently represented about eight days a year and constantly work on the future vision of the company as well as the implementation of the latter in the form of action plans. It is clear that not only financing, technology, sales and product innovation are dealt with, but that especially HR management will be a central topic. The future strategy of this company will be broken down to the departmental level. This establishes already how every part of the organization must change in the coming years in order to stay attuned to the market dynamic. Every team knows in advance what will be required in the future, and can therefore align personnel planning accordingly.

When I read the militarist myths of the »War for Talent«, I have to yawn. Whatever about demographic change, this attitude assumes that 1. we either all slowly become zombies and only a very few »smarty-pants« are left or 2. the business challenges in our world will suddenly grow to unbelievable proportions. However neither of these will be the case. In short: s/he who invests at least 4% of the working time of the top management

level in strategy finding and thus learns to see the requirements of the future in advance also knows who is needed now, will be in two to three years time in a position to be still reaping success ahead of the competitors.

We will have to get rid of the rather antiquated personnel approach of job titles and get used to thinking in terms of competencies for whole job families. The company strategy with vision and mission statement should contain all core competencies which will be required in the future. If the company management has already today strategically planned, for example, to enter the Turkish market in three years, it is a simple matter to think of training linguistically talented, intercultural flexible and assertive people within the company or recruiting young top performers on the job market.

In long term planning, substitution regulation and succession planning play a fundamental role. However most managers don't see the point in exerting themselves to implement these minimal planning procedures. Then it is not to be wondered at when panic-laden chaos breaks out due to unforeseen personnel fluctuation!

### Early recognition

CEOs must incite their management teams to act as »talent agents« and comb the company for top talents, as ultimately good talent management begins at the very top. Many companies do not need to exert themselves greatly: most talents are already to be found

#### About the person

Dr. Othmar Hill, founder and president of HILL International, has been a business psychologist and HR-strategist for over thirty years. He is a pioneer in the development of structured analysis of potential as well as a specialist in intercultural management, competence management and strategic planning, and in addition is the founder of the Institute for Humanistic Management.



*Plan requirements  
in time*

Othmar Hill



in the company – and are unrecognized. Of course it will always be necessary to seek high potentials on the free job market as well.

### Permanent demands

How can personnel management circumnavigate the skills shortage? There are many possibilities: on the one hand the requirements profile can be reduced. This is much too seldom considered. HR professionals sometimes persist in creating unrealisable job profiles. On the other hand increasing the attractiveness of working conditions (higher salary, flexi-time, benefits etc.) can still mobilize excellent job seekers in all markets, even in thinned out job groups. In addition, also here long-term planning is key to increasing success: don't just begin hectically searching when you are already under pressure, but rather spread your procedures throughout the year.

A fundamental misconception, which we are constantly encountering, is that personnel search as a tiresome problem situation, which should be solved as quickly and cheaply as possible. Precisely the opposite must be the case: strategic personnel management must be seen as a permanent challenge, so to speak the supreme discipline of management.

Seeking the key players of tomorrow on the basis of strategic planning today, correctly diagnosing these with analysis of potential, fostering their abilities through suitable training and coaching procedures, and creating conditions which make staying in the company an attractive prospect: four keys to a guaranteed company success story!





## HILL International's Triple Expansion

### New Offices in the West and Southeast

**H**ILL International is now operating with an American partner in the global search for managers. The USA partner is the number 20 of the American executive search firms, Gilbert Tweed. The firm operates five offices in the USA, three offices in India (New Delhi, Bangalore and Mumbai) and one in Paris. A further expansion in the States is planned, as is market entry in Argentina and Brazil.



*The HILL Network is constantly growing*

This partnership makes it easier for American companies to open up markets in CEE and SEE. Investment in the quality of management position allocations is a decisive factor for the quick development of companies in new and foreign markets. HILL also supports expanding companies in the creation of correct market entry strategies. Simultaneously it is easier for Austrian, German, but also e.g. Russian clients to identify outstanding managers in the USA. Gilbert Tweed has existed, like HILL, for approximately 35 years and possesses an ex-

cellent data basis for executive search projects in America, Asia and in the Gulf region.

Simultaneously to the USA, a new office for Benelux based in Rotterdam has started up. With Jasper Ligtenberg, the new partner in Holland, who possesses youth, dynamism and six years of successful experience in the region, Dutch companies can now be supported in globalisation activities.

Not just news in the West: HILL has been present in the Macedonian market since the year 2000; last October the new company HILL International Skopje was founded. The goal is now to present the HILL services on the comparatively small Macedonian market (2.1 million population), and to offer companies professional support above all in the personnel search and selection process. Currently there is great demand above all for finance and sales managers

as well as IT experts.

The new partners especially appreciate that an own competence analysis procedure exists, which, through the availability in now 17 languages and the local norming for all HILL regions, guarantees an objective assessment of potential and thus position allocation. This achieves even more risk reduction for clients and grants them a competitive advantage.

### HILL Locations

**Europe** | Austria | Graz | Innsbruck | Klagenfurt | Linz | Salzburg | Vienna | hill@hill.co.at | **Bosnia-Herzegovina** | Sarajevo | hill.sa@bih.net.ba | **Bulgaria** | Sofia | hill@hill.bg, office@hill-c.com | **Croatia** | Zagreb | hill.international@hill-croatia.hr | **Czech Republic** | Prague | administration@hill-praha.cz | **France** | Paris | france@hill.co.at | **Hungary** | Budapest | Debrecen | Pécs | Szombathely | hill@hill.hu | **Latvia** | Riga | info@hill-international.lv | **Macedonia** | Skopje | hill.hill@mt.net.mk | **Netherlands** | Rotterdam | information@hill-international.info | **Poland** | Warsaw | hill@hill.com.pl | **Romania** | Bucharest | hill@hill.ro | **Russia** | Moscow | hill@hill-moscow.ru | **Serbia** | Belgrade | hill@hill.co.yu | **Slovakia** | Bratislava | hill@hill.sk | **Slovenia** | Ljubljana | hill.international@siol.net | **Switzerland** | Kloten/Zurich | office@hillinternational.com | **Turkey** | Ankara | Istanbul | Izmir | office@hill-turkiye.com | **Ukraine** | Kiev | office@hill.com.ua

**Asia** | **India** | New Delhi | india@hill.co.at | **Kazakhstan** | Almaty | office@hill.kz  
**America** | **USA** | New York | usa@hill.co.at

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