

The Koproski Lecture in Polish Business and Economy



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in Polish Business and Economy**

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THE NEW MANAGER IN POLAND

Professor Zofia Krokosz-Krynke



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The Koproski Lecture is Polish Business and Economy

Koproski Family Foundation

The Koproski family members have been active in the Polish American Community for many years. The family came to the United States from Poland around 1895 and in 1903 Alexander J. Koproski, son of Julius and Victoria Markiewicz Koproski was born. Al Sr. was one of the first Polish American policemen in the City of Stamford. He and his wife, Gladys Kryger Koproski had two children, Joan and Alexander. Alexander R. Koproski met and married Patricia Velliquette Koproski and they have been in the real estate business for 40 years.

In 1989 Al and Pat were an integral part of the founding of the American Center of Polish Culture in Washington, D.C. They currently serve as Directors, Treasurer and Fund Raisers for the only Polish American organization in our nation's Capital. The Center owns the building, which houses in headquarters, which is located at 2025 "O" Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036-5913.

The Koproskis are members of many Polish American organizations and promote the positive ideals of Polonia. To help promote and preserve Polish Culture they formed the Koproski Family Foundation in 1992. They encourage other individuals to establish non-profit foundations to promote Polonia.

The Koproski Family Foundation has endowed an lecture on Poland's economy and on Polish business as part of the activities of the Endowed Chair of Polish and Polish American Studies at Central Connecticut State University. Mr. Koproski also serves on the University's Polish Studies Advisory Committee.

Professor Zofia Krokosz-Krynke is Assistant Professor at the Institute for Production Engineering and Management at the Technical University of Wrocław, Wrocław, Poland. She is also Director of the Institute for Business Studies at the University's Center for Continuing Education, a program initiated by CCSU with a grant from the US Agency for International Development a decade ago. She received an MSc in Mechanical Engineering (1973) and a PhD in Production Management (1982) from the Wrocław Technical University. Professor Krokosz-Krynke participated in the CCSU – Wrocław Technical University Institute for Business Studies (1992) and received an MBA in International Business (1996) from Central Connecticut State University. She has taught course in international finance, production management,

production scheduling processes, accounting for engineers, business strategy, and financial analysis.

Professor Krokosz-Krynke run training programs for ROKITA S.A. (Chemical Factory) in Brzeg, RUDNA Mining Company in Polkowice, "PROSPER" Bank in Wrocław, the Swedish – Polish concern "ALFA – LAVAL", and Polish Cable Television (with CCSU faculty Judith Walo and Walter Parker). She has contributed chapters on various aspects of business management to joint publications and made numerous conference presentations.

The Polish Studies Program is pleased to publish Professor Krokosz-Krynke's lecture for the permanent record. Our sincere appreciation is extended to Mr. and Mrs. Al and Pat Koproski for making the Koproski Lecture in Polish Business and Economy possible. Our hope is that the dissemination of the Koproski Lecture will promote great awareness of Polish public policy issues and discussions.

Stanislaus A. Blejwas
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THE NEW MANAGER IN POLAND

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The Koproski Lecture in Polish Business and Economy
Central Connecticut State University
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The New Manager in Poland

The transformations begun by the Solidarity movement in the 1980s and the fall of communism led to changes in the attitudes of people in managerial positions. In the initial period of the transformations Poland was virtually inundated with managers from other countries. They came to Poland in the early 1990s when international corporations were hurriedly opening their branches and representative offices. They were moving to Poland, because at that time local managers who had experience lacked the required qualifications and young managers who had appropriate qualifications lacked experience. In 1999, according to a report drawn up by Hay Management, only about 25% of the managers of the major enterprises operating in Poland were foreigners. Ten years ago the Marriott hotel had over 100 foreign managers. Intensive in-hotel training all over the world has reduced that number to six, including four members of the Warsaw establishment's management. The Polish branches of international corporations either themselves train people who then replace the expatriates or turn to head-hunters for assistance. During the last decade foreign companies have come to believe in Polish managers and increasingly put their trust in them. The larger participation of local managers in company management has enabled market expansion, as companies needed to know the Polish customer's idiosyncrasies. Analysts predict that the replacement of expatriates with equally well or even better trained Polish specialists will intensify. This is, in short, the situation in the branches and representative offices of foreign companies and international corporations. And how is it in Polish companies?

In the year 2000 52 companies listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange replaced their management board presidents. Changes took place in small as well as big companies. Both "domestic" and "imported" presidents were removed. Nearly every fourth company was affected. Both young (32-year-old Zbigniew Nasiłowski of Animex) and older people were recalled; some of the latter retired due to an advanced age (Witold Zaraska, 63, of Exbud; Grzegorz Tuderek, 62, of Beton Stal; Karol Heinrich, 63, of Mostostal Warszawa). This was caused partly by a natural generation replacement process as younger players replace old managers rooted in the former socialist economy. In the near future the process will come to an end. Managers are valued increasingly for their qualifications and managerial skills, qualities rather unknown to the old guard. Most of the former top managers had a background in engineering, not in management. Their success consisted in steering their companies through the transformations and floating them on the stock exchange. Of much help were their extensive contacts in their respective industries. However, this was too little to successfully deal with the competition in a market economy.

Where do the present-day Polish managers come from?

The present-day Polish managers are partly a continuation of the previous (i.e. communist) managerial staff. Former company directors, usually after supplementing their education, still occupy some top managerial positions. Another, quite a large group of managers have their origin in the entrepreneurial circles that very early set up their own enterprises. Such people began their business careers in small-scale undertakings (sometimes they were not-always-legal import operations of goods from Western or Southern European countries, later India or Thailand, that were sold in marketplaces, often from a camp bed), and then expanded into other areas (e.g. construction of rental apartment or private houses). Members of this group have a brilliant intuition, extraordinary imagination and above all the courage to make decisions.

The third group is composed of young people who have acquired their education and experience already in the free-market economy. These include today's thirty- and forty-year-olds that at the very beginning of the transformations chose to concentrate on gaining knowledge in companies operating at home and abroad.

A separate group are those who returned to Poland from abroad. Although this group is small, due to its characteristics it warrants a mention. It consists of relatively young people who were born in Poland and, as children, immigrated to the United States together with their parents. There they graduated from various universities, and in the early 1990s returned to their home country. This group includes Robert Koński of Hartford (today he manages Horton, a recruitment agency), Piotr Rymarzewski from Philadelphia (president of the management board of KP Konsorcjum, the company managing the National Investment Funds), Tomasz Magda (a Columbia University graduate today co-operating with Koński), Michał Cader (who read political science at the University of Connecticut today is a Societe Generale director), and Tomasz Chenczke (a University of Michigan graduate and today owner of E-farm.pl, a company implementing various internet projects).¹

1. This information comes from the weekly *POLITYKA* issue 52, 23 December 2000.

Manager's age

Polish managers are becoming younger. What took others years, they often acquired after two months. They began their careers at a time when experience and a university title were not as important as creativity, enthusiasm and passion. Joanna Kostyda gives examples of young people who entered the job market in the early 1990s.² Kinga Lewandowska, the deputy general director and a member of the management board of the advertising agency McCann Communications started her career in 1993 just after graduation from the Warsaw School of Economics. According to her, at that time every university graduate who knew English could easily find a job. No professional experience was required, as nobody in Poland had experience in advertising. Andrzej Dąbrowski, who is responsible for the finances of Philip Morris and whose first job was with Coopers & Lybrand, shares this opinion. In the 1990s there were many more job offers addressed to young people than suitable candidates and enthusiasm was valued higher than experience notes Dorota Zawadzka, the head of the public relations department of Wizja TV (university education, internship and work in France).³

The age structure of all Polish managers is reflected in the age structure of the members of the Business Center Club (BCC), the largest Polish business club. Currently around 3% of all members are people under thirty and 35% of them are in the 31-40 age bracket. "There comes an era of high-flyers; people educated at good schools, who spent several years in the US, Germany, the UK or other western country, who know foreign languages and western ways of company and human resources management, who crave for success", says BCC President Jaremi Mordasewicz.⁴

Education

Young people who were beginning their careers in the early 1990s regarded their work more as an adventure than a duty. That is why many of them, in their pursuit of success, forgot about education, family or social life. Very often a disadvantage of a brilliant career at young age is the fact that a person's further education is limited to practice, which may lead to superficiality or stagnation. However, contrary to

2. Kostyda J. (1999), "Those Magnificent Thirty-Year-Olds", *WPROST*, 10 January 1999, pp. 54-56.

3. After *WPROST*, 10 January 1999.

4. After *WPROST*, 28 March 1999.

the widespread opinion most stars of that initial period completed a university course and know how to combine their professional life with personal happiness.

What should the profile of the modern manager be? Polish companies' expectations in this respect do not differ much from the requirements of international corporations. The relatively universal standard formulated by B. Nogalski and J. Śniadecki⁵ covers three basic dimensions: interdisciplinary knowledge, professional skills and designated personal traits. Interdisciplinary knowledge comprises issues relating to technology and production, economics, law, organization, management, sociology, psychology, business history and ethics. Professional skills mean professionalism in leadership, teamwork organisation, motivation and the shaping of human relationships. The personal traits desired in a manager are: general intellectual prowess, the need to achieve, be accepted and develop oneself, emotional maturity, the self-assessment ability, assertiveness, the ability to concentrate, negotiation skills. Prof. Nosal represents a slightly different approach.⁶ In his opinion managers resemble acrobats who balance on the borderline between two worlds thanks to their mind and strong will. The first of the worlds is constituted by material, human, financial and technical resources, which determine the ability to act. The other are states of mind encompassing formulated objectives, arrangements in the form of decisions made and strategies adopted, general organizational knowledge, intuition, familiarization and assessment rules, and the manager's personal experience. The mind lets the manager have an insight into hidden structures and relationships; the will gives him perseverance and consistency.

The world of business has created the need for a particular manager profile. Employers have become more demanding. In a situation where the job market experiences an oversupply of specialists (especially in marketing, management, finance, banking and social sciences) employers no longer want a candidate who only knows foreign languages, is computer literate and has school knowledge. Such skills and abilities were sufficient ten years ago. Nowadays employers seek people with wide horizons, who have authentic passions outside their job, can listen, but are still independent in their judgement. That is why, claims Marcin Klimkowski,⁷ employers at university job fairs seek leaders active in student bodies as well as volunteers. Also people whose skills go beyond what they learnt at school and who study several things at the same time are considered potentially good future employees.

5. Nogalski B., Śniadecki J., (1998), *The Shaping of Managerial Skills*, Bydgoszcz, TNOIK.

6. Nosal Cz. S., (1993), *The Manager's Mind*, Wrocław, "Przecinek".

7. Klimkowski M., (2000), "Battue", *WPROST*, 29 October 2000.

The end of the era of “boys who after college dived into the world of big business”, as one of the Polish weeklies put it scornfully,⁸ is nigh. There comes a wave of young, educated and open people who are very likely to change the way in which Polish business operates. The young Polish businessmen and managers who have already managed to succeed must now catch up quickly. Perhaps this is what makes them more open and entrepreneurial than their foreign colleagues. They are also not afraid of new challenges and that makes them strong. It may be assumed that the conditions in which they were raised and in which they were starting their business careers had a positive influence on the development of their second world (as defined by Nosal), a world including intuition.

Creativity and the ability to find gaps in one’s knowledge and fill them in as fast as possible have become the basis for success in business. One of the ways to supplement one’s knowledge is the acquisition of an MBA diploma, which today is the best guarantee of success. It is immaterial to an MBA diploma holder whether he works in Australia, Singapore or Great Britain, as the basic management and finance principles are everywhere very similar. MBAs not only have a profound knowledge in the field of management and know English perfectly, but are also ready to change their residence frequently. Globalization, complex technologies and constant changes in economic structures increase the demand for managers who understand the processes and are able to affect them, says Professor Piotr Jędrzejowicz, director of the MBA program of the Gdańsk Manager Training Foundation.⁹ About 10%-15% of people starting an MBA course belong to the super league, i.e. they head company divisions or even branches. Such people improve their qualifications constantly to strengthen their position. According to Aldona Andrzejczak,¹⁰ MBA programs offer something that cannot be found in traditional post-graduate courses – they combine and structure various areas of knowledge, management, sociology and psychology.

The need to develop oneself and learn continuously is stressed by Erik Cornuel, President of the European Foundation for Management Development: “We are experiencing a huge demand for business education. We live at a time when one has to be versatile and flexible as well as to react fast to what is happening around”.¹¹

8. WPROST, 28 March 1999.

9. After: Szozkiewicz A., (2000), “Supergoods”, *WPROST*, 15 October 2000.

10. Ms Aldona Andrzejczak is the manager of the MBA Programme at the Great Poland School of Business in Poznań.

11. An interview with Erik Cornuel, “Managers of Speed”, *WPROST*, 22 October 2000.

First-rate managers are increasingly interested in perfecting their so-called soft skills, useful both at work and in personal life, consisting in being open and able to understand their environment. They are investing in public relations, contact networks and skills development. Managers cannot manage anything if they are unable to manage their own knowledge, i.e. to bring it up to date. The perfect leader of tomorrow must be open to knowledge and transfer it to his employees. Not only does he have to be a “cyborg”, who knows the management principles inside out, but also a humanist. Acquisition of knowledge is a necessity, not a luxury. A diploma, even from a most elitist educational establishment, if not backed up with additional skills and abilities, means next to nothing. Knowledge accumulated at university should only form a basis for further development and improvement. A breakthrough has come about in perceiving the way in which managers should be trained. Poles have already embraced the concept of life-long learning, which is reflected in shortened education courses, the shift of the acquisition of formal qualifications to professional life, the interchange of periods of study and work, the common use of open, customized distance learning programs. The new business reality has turned the manager into an “architect of his own fortunes” and has forced him to take on the responsibility for the choice of the training methods most useful to him.¹²

Polish manager’s mobility

Polish society is increasingly flexible. In order to land a job people are ready to do more and more, even to move to another town, which until recently was very rare. For the first time in eleven years Poles’ mobility has increased. According to the forthcoming *Demographic Yearbook 2000*, nearly half a million people changed their residence during the last year. The main reason for that movement was work – economic migration. “The most important thing to me is an interesting job, the place of residence is a secondary issue,” says Magdalena Kurek of Pricewaterhouse Coopers, who moved to Kraków from native Bytom.¹³ Well-educated people are most likely to move. An exceptionally mobile group is those in top positions – managers, general directors. To them a job that satisfies their ambition is much more important than the place they live in.

12. Osterczuk-Kozińska A. M., Koziński J., “The Manager As the Architect of His Own Fortunes”, *NOWE ŻYCIE GOSPODARCZE*, 48, 2000.

13. Koziński W., Szarlik A., “In Search of a Living”, *WPROST*, 1 October 2000.

Personnel consultants confirm that it is much easier today to persuade a manager to leave a large city or the capital than it was several years ago. Those who go away, however, must realize that the decision may affect their future career. People who emigrate become "specialists from Podunk". Jacek Brzeski believes that those who decided not to leave the capital spread this unfavourable opinion although they were approached with similar offers.¹⁴ It is true that Poland has an increasing number of directors for hire, who come to companies for a couple of years and do what they are expected to do by the shareholders. Eric Cornuel of European Foundation for Management Development describes the attempts at persuading managers to be willing to change their jobs in this way: "We try to convince our managers, in line with the American way of thinking, that a company is not a ghetto, from which they cannot escape".¹⁵ Andrzej Kublik, President of the Management Board of Autonika Holding in Rzeszów, thinks that a manager must be a nomad.

Polish managers in international companies

The best European schools of management, such as the British LBS (London Business School) and the French INSEAD report that at least half of their graduates employed in Europe work outside their home country. The contemporary manager should be able to lead a team composed of members of various nationalities and understand the different habits and preferences of European consumers. Poles who do not want to end their professional careers at Kwidzyń, Toruń, Szczecin or Rzeszów also appreciate this. Polish specialists are more and more frequently employed by international corporations in managerial positions abroad, e.g. during the last three years Ericsson Polska has "exported" several dozen managers-engineers who have proved themselves in various parts of the world.¹⁶

Poles' promotion in foreign corporations became noticeable already in the mid-1990s. Statistical data from May 2000 shows that the presidents of the management boards in 21 Poland-based insurance companies were Polish.¹⁷ Why are Poles given top managerial positions? Poles are cheaper. In the case of Polish employees there are no costs relating to relocation, renting a house or children's education. Lower functions (the head of a local branch) mean lower pay; a Pole who replaced a German earns eight times less than his predecessor.

14. Brzeski J., "Nomads of Business", *WPROST*, 7 January 2001.

15. *WPROST*, 22 October 2000.

16. *WPROST*, 21 January 2001.

17. *BUSINESSMAN*, May 2000.

Another example of the positive image that Polish managers have managed to build up on the international job market is the choice of Poles to manage the Fujitsu Siemens Computers head office for Central and Eastern Europe. Dariusz Fabiszewski took the position of the head of the division, Renata Sikora-Kuklewicz is responsible for marketing and Piotr Karasek for finance. The presence of Polish managers at the top of such a company is undoubtedly something to be proud of.¹⁸

What are managers afraid of?

"I'm afraid of routine, of becoming a clerk. But also of falling into workaholism" is how Paweł Wojciechowski, President of PTE Allianz Polska, expressed his fears. According to Krzysztof Obłój of the International Management Centre, managers are frightened of recession and instability. Very often managers are not aware of their own fears; by becoming successful they lose the right to be afraid. They repeat to themselves Harry Truman's motto: "Every decision I've ever made was right".

The ability to make decisions is one of the key skills to which personnel consultants seeking candidates for managerial positions pay attention. Polish managers are not frightened of making decisions, but rather of taking responsibility for them. According to Ken Finnerman of Arthur Hunt (human resources consulting), the problem originates in the organizational structure of Polish companies, in which there are no clearly defined job responsibilities.

Polish managers are afraid of young, better-educated, more dynamic people. This fear is a fear of losing power, of not being promoted or not getting an increase in pay while somebody else is promoted or gets a rise. This fear is the reason for managers' unwillingness to set up task groups to deal with a particular issue, as it may turn out that the official head is forced into the role of a subordinate.

Such fears are also shared by Polish yuppies who find increasingly that their younger competitors come hot on their heels.¹⁹ Today's twenty-year-olds, however, are different. They distance themselves from the world, their work and career. They do not fight for their views, they do not push their ideas so hard. They work long hours, but not with passion, rather because this is necessary. Anyway, it is their older colleagues who discovered the world, they are only copying some set patterns.

18. *BUSINESSMAN MAGAZINE*, January 2000.

19. This is discussed by Joanna Kostyła in "Those Magnificent Thirty-Year-Olds", *WPROST*, 10 January 1999.

This is a generation of conformist technocrats, who perceive a professional success as finding a place in some structure; not thanks to their personal traits, however, but as a result of being in the right place at the right time and with appropriate trump cards. Thirty-year-olds' careers were shaped by opportunities, theirs are shaped by competition. Twenty-year-olds do not seem to believe that the time of brilliant careers is coming to an end. Graduates from foreign universities or specialist courses, equipped with extensive knowledge of business issues, are convinced of dazzling prospects opening up before them. They have ambitions and demanding requirements, they want to be noticed and to be successful, and go out of their way to be original. However, they lack the enthusiasm, devotion and involvement that used to characterize today's yuppies. Splendid careers are nowadays few and far between as experience is more difficult to acquire. Young people are no longer entrusted with responsible jobs. They are always watched carefully. Such a situation arouses fear but also motivates them to develop further.

Polish manager's weaknesses

The weaknesses of Polish managers in state-owned enterprises result from the process applied to select them; usually a person was offered an important position if he enjoyed the backing of a political party or trade union, irrespective of whether he had appropriate knowledge and qualifications. As such an employee had to show loyalty to the people who promoted him, he neglected the company. As a rule, he did not study or develop and, entangled in political games, was not aware of the company's market environment.

A very different danger, albeit as serious as in state-owned enterprises, looms in private companies: their development is hindered by managers who once were behind their success. Such people started their careers in small enterprises; by meticulously supervising and controlling each stage of product development and production they made their companies prosper. Today they want to copy that proven method, overlooking the fact that their companies have grown to a size making such an approach unfeasible. Unwilling to release even a tiny portion of their power, they create decision bottlenecks and paralyse their enterprises. They are managers, not leaders. Their companies or units may be called "one-actor theatres".

Poles are unable to make strategic decisions, they lack creativity and, frequently, ability to communicate with their subordinates.²⁰

20: Hadaj M., Leśniewski B., "Personality Race", *WPROST*, 21 January 2001.

Polish managers do not know how to admit a mistake. Instead of appreciating that everybody can make a mistake, they like to make somebody else responsible for it (success has always many fathers, a failure only one). They put the blame for failures on everybody around them, hardly ever on themselves. Only several, perhaps a dozen percent of them think differently; they are young, well-off, open, and often go abroad. The findings of surveys prepared in Poland according to American standards show that nearly all Poles have fallen into depression, that they have manic-depressive-and-obsessive personalities.²¹ Respondents from other countries usually feel “better than average”, Poles “worse than average”. Employers look for young people, uncontaminated by the culture of complaint.

Only now is Poland experiencing a change in the plebeian-lordly relations at work. The superior in the presence of his subordinate and the clerk in the presence of his customer must still keep a haughty face, and a subordinate or customer may not smile first, as this would erode the superior’s or clerk’s authority.

Young people, brought up in the culture of humility, understood as the need to play down their achievements, find self-presentation difficult. They do not know how to talk about themselves positively.

Poles’ most serious problems are their continuous attempts to evade responsibility for their decisions and their lack of ambition when setting goals. They have grown used to being told what to do. Their passivity is instilled in them in their homes and then strengthened at school and at work. They stay in big companies, because this is what their families and lenders want.²²

Polish managers lack specialist knowledge and therefore high-level expatriates still have exclusivity in the field of state-of-the-art technologies. For instance, Poland has many experienced accountants but they are familiar only with the Polish accounting standards. Some young people are familiar with international standards but they in turn lack sufficient experience.

Another characteristic of managers, especially those who own their enterprises, is their unwillingness to delegate even a tiniest portion of their power. This is a source of problems, especially when the time

21. Mistewicz E., Świdarska M., “To Complain or to Live”, *WPROST*, 24 December 2000.

22. Klimkowski M., Mistewicz E., “Great Escapes”, *WPROST*, 26 November 2000.

comes to give the company management over to a successor. The first problem is: who should succeed the manager – his child or a hired manager? Another one is: when should the power be given over? How is it in Poland? For obvious reasons, most businessmen choose their offspring as their successors, appreciating that they must acquire appropriate education. Usually the following procedure is adopted: speedy education, not absorbing much time or attention,²³ and then return home. Adoption of this approach guarantees that the company will be given over to a person interested only in survival. As a result, this may be the beginning of the company's demise. A different picture is painted by Krzysztof Pawłowski.²⁴ Nearly half of the graduates of his school are said to end up in Warsaw, often with international giants. After a couple of years they often return to their towns, having acquired experience and knowledge that they then contribute to their family enterprises.

Polish managers display a Sarmatian type of conceit and arrogance – their Western counterparts have spelling guides in their offices, in Poland this happens only occasionally. Polish managers easily turn into workaholics, as they want to do everything themselves, risking their health and private life. They are conceited and the distrust they once felt towards their superiors is today directed at their subordinates.

The differences between Polish and Western managers do not consist only in the inability to cope with stress, but also in the lack of business culture. When copying the Anglo-American model of the businessman they do it superficially (they go to business lunches, play tennis or squash, are not shy of roller-skating). Very few of them are aware that the essence of entrepreneurship is business ethics.

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23. Most popular are extra-mural three-year licentiate courses. It is graduates from such courses that make up the majority of students of private universities, which offer opportunities to study management, finance or banking. In the academic year 1999/2000 various business-related courses were attended by 22,000 people, of which 10,000 were students of private universities, in the Lower Silesia alone.
 24. Krzysztof Pawłowski is the rector of the High School of Business – National Luis University in Nowy Sycz.

Business ethics

Many of Polish managers and businessmen do not notice or do not want to notice the issue of ethics. Conferences dealing with business ethics held in Poland (e.g. the National Business Ethics Conference organized by the Scientific Praxeology Association and the Entrepreneurship Educational Foundation) generated only slight interest. Professor Wojciech Gasparski estimates that not more than 100 Polish companies have their own ethical codes. In his opinion the company's ethics should be based on its leaders' virtues and its top manager has the decisive influence on its shape.²⁵

Manager's ethics is one of the topics discussed at the Institute of Business Studies.²⁶ Because of the rather restricted timetable, the issue is only touched upon. However, it is impossible to overlook it completely. The form of the meetings has been adapted to suit the general methods used to teach students at the IBS; the situations presented and the need to choose from among a number of pre-determined solutions are to provoke discussion among students (course participants receive descriptions of three situations and for each of them have to select one out of four suggested reactions).²⁷

Students first choose their preferred option individually. Then, working in fives or sixes, they try to pick one universally acceptable solution. Observations made during the exercise are, surprisingly, always the same; groups start their discussions from proposing other ways of dealing with the situation described. Only when the group is reminded of what it is to do does it concentrate on the task in hand. Reaching an agreement is very difficult and not always successful.

In the initial editions of the IBS Program (1991) most of the choices made showed that the only thing people were interested in was immediate profit. Later preferences started to change and more and more

25. On the basis of an interview for *BUSINESSMAN*, March 2000.

26. The IBS programme was developed by School of Business, Central Connecticut State University in early 90's and since that time it has been offered sixteen times at Wrocław University of Technology. At the early stages the programme was financially supported by the Polish community in Connecticut and US Agency for International Development.

27. The situations come from "New Venture Creation. Entrepreneurship in the 1990s" by Jeffrey A. Timmons, which was one of the handbooks used during the first four English-language editions of IBS Programme.

course participants began to view business activity from a different perspective: a company should concentrate on its long-term success, not on immediate profits, as “an enterprise may be successful in the long run only if it behaves fair.” As Tadeusz Borkowski explains: “Communist times and the period of transition to the free market economy may not have been conducive to long-term planning. Private initiative was always endangered under communist rule, and in the transitional period the situation is uncertain and unstable; the regulations change too often. Thus instability and lack of law and order do not favour ethics in business; on the contrary, they may become an easy justification for immoral acts. The more stable a given period of time is for business activity, the more sensitive and angry people are at the lack of ethical behaviour”.²⁸

How future managers perceived ethics was an issue researched by Helena Gulda among students of the Management and Economics Department of Gdańsk Technical University in the years 1993-99.²⁹ As the manager’s most important features the respondents chose: intelligence, creativity, responsibility, entrepreneurship, communicative skills. Rather lowly rated were: conscientiousness, cleverness, courage and justice. Very interesting, from the ethical point of view, were the answers to the question “how can one get rich quickly?” The answers arranged from the most frequent are: (1) landing a high public job, (2) carrying on business activity taking advantage of gaps in the law, (3) having contacts and connections, (4) having high professional qualifications, own initiative, ingenuity, and (5) honest work, savings, having a family abroad.

Women as managers

The times seem favourable to businesswomen. In recent years the so-called soft management, consisting in partner relationships, friendly atmosphere, the boss’s human face or Christmas presents for employees’ children, has become very popular. It is claimed that women are usually more emotionally intelligent and have more empathy. Is it right then to talk about a male and female style of management, regarding soft management as women’s domain? Businesswomen believe that such a classification of company management approaches is an oversimplification and

28. Borkowski T., “Businessman’s ethics” [in:] *Strategies in Business* ed. by K. Sedlak, Wydawnictwo Profesjonalnej Szkoły Biznesu, Kraków 1993, p. 171.

29. Gulda H., “Paradygmat etyki menedżerskiej w opinii studentów Politechniki Gdańskiej” [Paradigm of Manager’s Ethics in the Opinion of Students of Gdańsk Technical University] [in:] *Etyka zawodowa w biznesie* [Professional Ethics in Business]. *Scientific brochures of the High School of Banking and Finance in Bielsko-Biała*. Vol. 3, year 1999, No. 1, pp. 157-162.

a stereotype. Management style is the resultant of personality and qualifications. Aneta Różyło of Nicholson International thinks that women are very communicative and value teamwork much more than men. In her opinion the female management style is characterized by close relationships with subordinates or even involvement in their personal affairs.³⁰ Other people claim that women are unable and unwilling to rule with a strong hand and they owe their successes, apart from their inborn intuition, to innocent tricks. It is a common opinion that women concentrate on their tasks more and that they are more to the point, decisive and effective in business. Female professionalism does not convince everybody, however, and quite often company bosses looking for potential employees among university business graduates stress that they want males.

Another aspect of women's activity in business is the industries they are present in. People commonly believe that "female" business areas are clothing, cosmetics or catering. In Poland, however, women successfully manage enterprises in such fields as building construction, road transport, economic consulting or banking.³¹ In this last area it is enough to mention the presidents of the three biggest banks in Poland: Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz (the National Bank of Poland), Henryka Pieronkiewicz (PKO BP SA) and Maria Wiśniewska (Pekao SA).

The growing role of women in Polish business is attested by the "Businesswoman of 2000" competition, based on the American event and organized in Poland for the first time.³² Women achieve success in business. Does it mean that their management style is better than the typically male style? In order to be successful the modern manager has to have features characteristic of both sexes. Stereotypes indicate that women are more emotional and caring, both at work and in personal life, whereas men are focused on action and like competition. According to one theory, the differences are determined biologically; men's brains are different from women's. According to the social conditioning theory, however, the differences result from culture – each sex has its roles to play and most individuals adapt to the expectations.³³ The biggest chance

30. An interview for *BUSINESSMAN*, August 2000.

31. In the UK or Germany these industries are dominated by men.

32. The competition was organized by the Avon company. The first Polish edition of the competition was won by Małgorzata Puchalska, a graduate from the IBS Programme.

33. Hofstede uses four features to describe and measure culture: power/distance, uncertainty/avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/femininity. The features characterize the behaviour of not only individuals but also the whole of society (Hofstede G., *Culture and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, London, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1991).

of success has a person combining male and female elements – he or she has more options to choose from. A manager running a company in a manner which is too “male” risks rejection by his/her employees; he/she must not forget to motivate and inspire his/her subordinates by showing that he/she genuinely trusts them. A good manager should combine in himself/herself about a dozen male and female features. Psychological research conducted in the 1980s revealed that it is more difficult to persuade a man to act in a typically female way than a woman to behave like a man. Is this the reason why at a time when the leader model is changing (soft skills preferable) women are more predisposed to achieve success?

Survey published by *The Wall Street Journal Europe*³⁴ shows that Polish women’s status as managers is better than in other European countries. Women executives were asked for their opinions in the following issues:

1. You enjoy your job
2. You have a job that offers additional training
3. You are treated fairly in terms of advancement
4. You are eligible for bonuses
5. Your job is flexible in letting meet your family’s needs
6. You are paid fairly for the work you perform
7. You have prestigious title
8. You are eligible for stock options or stock grants
9. Your company offers childcare benefits

Results (see graph Fig. 1a) show that the Polish women executives opinions are above the total for the six European countries.

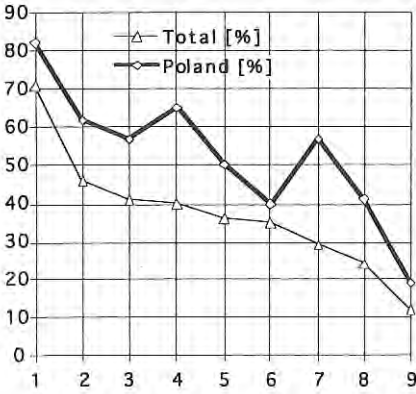
The second part of the survey concerns discrimination and the way it is perceived by women executives. Questions were stated as follows:

Have you ever felt because you are a woman?

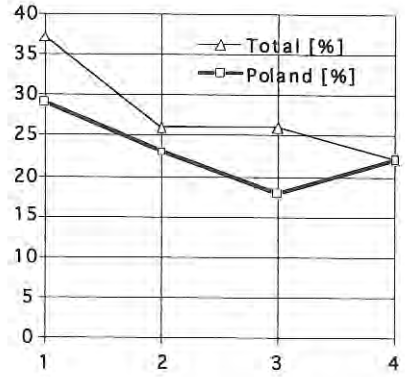
1. Underpaid
2. Passed over for promotion
3. Asked to do menial, demeaning tasks not appropriate to your position
4. Treated unfairly on benefits or special incentives.

34. The survey has been done in 6 countries (Germany, France, Britain, Italy, Sweden, and Poland) and 1 114 women executives responded. *THE WALL STREET JOURNAL EUROPE*, Special Edition „Women in Business”, March 1, 2001

Taking into account the results of the first part it is not surprising that the result of the second part is also very positive for Polish women executives; compared to the total a smaller portion of Polish women perceive being discriminated (see graph Fig.1b).



a) women's opinions



b) perceived discrimination

Fig. 1. Results of the survey

Source: *The Wall Street Journal Europe, Special Edition Women in Business, March 1, 2001*

The manager in the face of changes

The new-generation managers do not intend to change the whole of Europe. The promotion of changes is rather a by-product of their behaviour, of the fact that their willingness to take a job at any place where a vacancy crops up introduces a healthy uncertainty into the set ways of economic activity. The lack of affection for any one country and company-employer is a result of the fact that supranational managers see themselves as free people for hire, who change positions in the normal course of events in search of new experiences and in order to enrich their professional background. "For the first time in Europe we have a group of people who aim to obtain managerial positions outside their home country and to acquire the ability to operate in various places and professional situations," says Maury Peiperl, a London Business School professor.³⁵

When trying to predict how companies will be run in future, everybody looks at the USA. It is there that a management revolution was going on throughout the 20th century, a revolution that about a dozen

35. *BUSINESS WEEK*, January 2001.

years ago accelerated impressively. It is there that the demise of hierarchical organizations and typical managers responsible simply for the operation of their department has been predicted. Such people are to be replaced by flexible team leaders. In business personality, potential, individuality and contacts will be important. Stereotypical thinking will become more dangerous than ever. A thorough assessment of a given person's genuine abilities, including their psychological profile, will become a norm. The boss will support their subordinates emotionally. Psychologists will teach him how and how much to talk with his employees, to listen to what they want to tell him, to motivate them in line with their personalities and current needs. And also how to stop manipulating people using a stick and carrot approach, as it simply does not work where people are supposed to be creative and committed. Managers of the 21st century must already start becoming used to the fact that they will also have to be humble: their subordinates will be telling them what they should change in themselves so that they do not interfere with their work.³⁶

Are Polish managers ready to enter the 21st century? Not all, although a large group of them are. If the development of their skills, abilities and personality is consistent with the directions laid out by the world trends they will have a chance to take top positions in the managerial hierarchy. There are favourable conditions to this happening: the opening of Polish borders and the opportunities to study abroad and to train with leading corporations. Most important is that the old value system is being transformed, the ballast of communism is being dropped, and the awareness that freedom is the ability to make decisions and to bear responsibility for them, both as a person and a member of a society, is growing. Hopefully the speed of these transformations will be at least as fast in the future as it has been so far and that Poland will not need another 40 years to make the sort of change that Moses effected among his people when he lead them to the Promised Land.

36 Hendler A., "The Death of Managers", *BUSINESSMAN*, January 2001.

Polish Studies at Central Connecticut State University

The Polish Studies Program at Central Connecticut State University is a unique endeavour. It contributes to the diversity and strength of Central as a University, and is the only active program of its kind in New England with roots both on the campus and in the community. The Program, inaugurated in January 1974, seeks to preserve and to stimulate awareness of Poland's history and contributions to European and world civilizations. The Program's core is courses in history, politics, culture, literature, language, and on the Polish American ethnic community. The Polish Heritage Collection in the University Library, numbering over 18,000 catalogued books and periodicals, supplements the course offerings. The Connecticut Polish American Archives is a research depository for the public, scholars and students of the Polish community in America. It is supported in part by the Alex M. Rudewicz Endowment.

The Program sponsors lectures, cultural events, exhibits, recitals and concerts, and literary evenings. Activities include the Fiedorczyk Lecture in Polish American Studies, the Milewski Lecture in Polish Studies, the Godlewski Evening of Polish Culture, the Koproski Lecture on Polish Economy and Business, the Nowakowski Conversations about Poland, and the Alex and Regina Rudewicz Polish Music Series. The Martin & Sophie Grzyb Prize for Excellence in Polish Studies is awarded in recognition of student achievement and The Polish Invitational Golf Committee and Mr. Alex Federowicz have endowed scholarships for students born in Poland. Endowments by Monsignor John P. Wodarski and Mr. Henry A. Gajda underwrite publications of the Polish Studies Program.

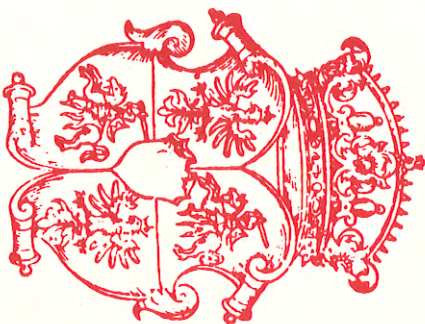
The Copernican Polish Heritage Endowment, which is located in the CCSU Foundation, Inc., supports all aspects of Polish Studies at the University. Donors are commemorated on the plaque in the University Library. Individuals, families, businesses, and organizations are listed in the following categories: Founders (\$1,000), Benefactors (\$500), Friends (\$250), and Patrons (\$100). A person, family, business, or organization may wish to endow (\$10,000) a special lecture, a named scholarship, a book and publishing fund, a fund for exchange professors from Poland, a student exchange, or some other activity. These donations are commemorated with individual bronze plaques that are also in the University Library.

On October 29, 1997 the generosity of Connecticut's Polish Americans and their friends and a matching grant of \$600,000 from the State of Connecticut permitted the inauguration of the Chair in Polish and Polish American Studies. A major donation is sought to name the Chair. For further information contact Professor Stanislaus A. Blejwas, the Co-ordinator of Polish Studies [(860) 832-2814] or Mr. Nick Pettinico, the Vice-President for University Advancement [(860) 832-1765], Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT 06050-4010.

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