

# The Bridge

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Klaudia graduated from the PF UKF in Nitra and in 2009 she founded a private language school the Bridge - English Language Centre. The Bridge is now the only internationally recognized and EAQUALS accredited language school in Slovakia. She is a founding member of both the Slovak Association of Language School and the Slovak Chamber of English Language Teachers. Klaudia established and runs projects such as Eltforum.sk - an annual international conference for teachers of English and the Bridge re-boot camp for teachers - a unique summer school with a holistic approach to learning and teacher wellbeing. Her passion and professional interest is in effective learning strategies and the impact of language training on work performance.

### WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING CHANGE CURRENTLY INFLUENCING YOUR SECTOR?

The business world has been discussing the shift from manager to coach for some time now, and a similar and even more significant change is happening in education. Instead of the traditional teacher who stands at the front of the classroom as the sole expert, we now require coaches/facilitators who guide and facilitate the learning process towards desired outcomes. As a result, we have an increasing need for teachers who can effectively motivate and guide their students towards achieving their full potential as well as the development of autonomous and self-motivated learners.

It is important to acknowledge that students now have access to an abundance of knowledge that surpasses any one teacher's capacity. This is a major change in schools and the biggest shift since their inception. Fields like psychology, sociology, and neuroscience can help us navigate this shift and shape the future of education. We need to listen and adapt. The ever-changing world demands that we react and adapt quickly in order to thrive in the 21st century economy. Lifelong learning and cognitive fitness are not just buzzwords, but essential concept for our workforce and economy to keep moving forward. Just as we keep physically fit to move without pain or discomfort, we need to be cognitively fit to adapt and change without stress or decreased performance.

### WHAT SECTORS HAVE THE BIGGEST POTENTIAL TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE SLOVAK ECONOMY?

As we focus on the need for lifelong learning and cognitive fitness to keep our economy thriving, it's clear that education is the key. The current gap between our educational system and the demands of our economy has become too large to ignore. To bridge this gap, we need to attract the best people to the field of education, with teams of professionals who have the experience and skills to innovate.

Teachers are the backbone of our education system, and we must prioritize their needs and well-being. It's well-established in psychology that role models are crucial to effective education and training. Therefore, schools must have well-functioning HR departments and experienced HR professionals to build effective teams and implement change.

As a small country with limited potential for industrial or agricultural significance, Slovakia's economic future lies in our education system. To make innovation happen and provide a solid foundation for

growth, we must keep our brain trust at home. If we fail to invest in education, we will fail to grow and thrive as a nation.

### WHAT SHOULD BE THE GOALS FOR THE SLOVAK ECONOMY OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS?

In order to equip our workforce with the necessary cognitive skills to navigate the fast-changing and demanding business world, it is crucial to support and demand quality in adult education businesses. We can achieve this by setting clear standards to maintain desired quality. We need to get the wheels in motion.

In general I believe we need to nurture knowledge-based ventures, promote growth in the IT industry, encourage sports and the arts, develop sustainable tourism, and prioritise the development of green solutions in each of these fields. This will not only benefit our economy but also ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.

### WHAT DO YOU APPRECIATE MOST ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF AMCHAM?

Definitely valuable networking opportunities that not only allow me to meet new people but also help me foster existing relationships. The range and diversity of topics covered by AmCham and the knowledge base it provides are of great significance. In today's fast-paced world, where life seems to be moving at a galloping pace, it is more important than ever to have the chance to connect with people, engage in meaningful conversations, and learn from each other.

### WHAT MOTIVATES YOU IN WORK?

Owning my own school provides me with a unique opportunity to experiment and try out new teaching approaches. It's my playground, where I can explore innovative methods and push the boundaries of traditional education. One of my most rewarding challenges has been establishing an effective and functioning teacher training program. Education is my passion, and in the 21st century, which is dominated by information and technology, it's crucial to have teachers who can navigate the major changes in society and guide our children and us through the muddy waters of a rapidly changing world

Over the past decade, we have successfully implemented a system that works well, but we know that in order to keep pace with the changing times, we must continuously update and improve our approach. My dream is that one day our teacher training methods will be adopted by others, leaving a dent on the educational landscape.

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