

ACTING USED AS A TOOL FOR TRAINING MANAGERS

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Abstract

In business schools in Western countries, acting is used as a tool for training managers. However, in the Eastern countries, including Romania, the concept is underdeveloped. In this scientific research, the opinion of both business professionals, i.e., managers with experience in this field, and students from the Faculty of Business and Tourism within The Bucharest University of Economic Studies on the usefulness of introducing acting courses to support the training of managers is investigated. The professionals interviewed believe that acting benefits a manager through the leadership and communication lessons it provides, helping them to manage situations by appealing to emotional memory, relating to their team members by using emotional intelligence, and sharing their vision by developing the qualities necessary for a leader. The students' perspective underscores the ideas expressed by practicing managers and demonstrates that management contains an artistic component to a significant degree and that acting as an art form is intertwined with management in beneficial ways. The overall conclusion of the study highlights students' confidence in the impact of acting on a manager's professional development. The percentage of students who would take acting courses if they were introduced in Romanian business schools is over 90% of all respondents. Thus, it can be stated that acting is a real tool for the development of a manager, which should be adopted and used by all Romanian business schools.

Keywords: Manager training, acting courses, Business schools, leadership, acting benefits

JEL Classification : I23, M12, M53, Z11

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1. Introduction

This scientific research aims to popularise the impact that acting has on a manager's personality. The two fields involved here, acting and management, seem at first glance to be opposite poles, but the labor market has become increasingly dynamic due to technological progress and the ever-changing needs of people, so that art and science are harmoniously interwoven. Nowadays, the manager uses not only knowledge but also talent and intuition to effectively achieve the goals of an organisation. The development of a manager is supported by acting courses that provide an opportunity to learn about leadership and acquire communication skills.

Numerous business schools in Western countries promote acting as a means of training managers (Steen, 2013), either through their own courses or by bringing in collaborative partners. In both cases, professional actors are brought in to cultivate the personalities of future business professionals and bring them to the stage. Unfortunately, the concept is still in the developmental stage in Eastern European countries, and this research aims to represent a means of convincing them of the benefits of acting in proper business management. This study is based on qualitative research, an interview which emphasises the arguments originally made in the bibliographical study, and on quantitative research, a survey addressed to Business students, to determine their confidence in the ability of acting to support professional development.

2. Literature Review

This section attempts to paint a comprehensive picture of the main benefits of action that could be applied to the personal development of managers and how leadership promotes good management

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through continuous improvement. In addition, the study attempts to highlight the theoretical background of personal qualities shaped by leadership and the role of action in managerial development and supports the research section with valuable insights and ideas.

2.1. Leadership Applied in Management

The terms "leadership" and "management" are often considered synonymous, but there is a clear distinction between them in that a leader may or may not be a manager, and a manager may or may not be a leader (Ward, 2020). While a manager has a well-defined role within an organisation and manages activities in a rational and controlled manner, a leader enjoys some independence in decision making (not fitting into a hierarchical arrangement) and has the freedom to innovate to inspire those who follow them (Ward, 2020). Both positions involve teamwork and aim to use resources efficiently to achieve goals, but leadership involves an expansion of management tasks, using personal qualities-inherent or cultivated-to enhance an organisation's performance.

In his work on leadership, Kruse (2013) states that "Leadership is a process of social influence, which maximises the efforts of others towards achieving a goal.". Thus, the leader transforms a vision into reality, gathering together people capable of integrating into a team (not subordinates), whom he or she motivates (does not force or order) to follow them in their venture and to make a consistent effort (not only organised) and born of its own initiative, to achieve that predetermined goal (not an aimless influence), (Kruse, 2013). The qualities of a leader are revealed both in the family or community to which he or she belongs and in the workplace. Thus, leadership is most frequently associated with the business field, where the leader guides people and has a positive impact on them. It requires personal qualities, such as empathy, to establish a genuine connection with team members (Morgan, 2020). The leader is also responsible for listening to and emotionally understanding their team members to create a cohesive work environment based on unity and mutual support.

A manager is trained to master the techniques and tools that help them coordinate a team, distribute tasks, monitor progress, and meet deadlines, but they often fail to capitalise on the human component. A higher level of management involves the inclusion of emotional intelligence among the manager's qualities (Stahl, 2018), which is found in the posture of a leader, going beyond the fundamental rigors of the job to understand each member of their team and help them in the development process. Leadership teaches a manager to get out of the observer position and actively participate in the activities carried out by his team because the manager's involvement increases the trust of the team members (Kruse, 2013).

At the same time, the manager with leadership qualities involves every member of the team in the process of collecting ideas and praises everyone's skills, encouraging their participation and building a friendly work environment. A team's progress is often tested by failure, and the manager's efforts to prevent and analyse risks must be supported by managing them when they cause damage that can have repercussions on team members. Through leadership, the manager acquires the ability to control panic and hide chaos (Ward, 2020), keep calm, and deal with risks. The most important aspect, however, is getting out of the comfort zone, which facilitates the manager to use the artistic component of leadership to promote innovative ideas and inspire his team members (Stahl, 2018).

2.2. Personal Qualities Shaped through Leadership

Becoming a better manager cannot be achieved by reading theoretical studies on leadership, but it also requires the assimilation of some personal qualities that characterise successful leaders. Honesty and integrity cannot be missing from this repertoire (Hasan, 2019), which are essential requirements in human interactions. The leader's ethical behaviour increases the confidence of their team members while highlighting the importance of assertiveness as a means of gaining the respect and trust from others. Leadership involves inspiring others, so it is vital that the leader embodies a role model, able to react calmly and rationally in critical situations, and constantly motivates their team in the face of challenges. As a role model, a leader also sets a concrete example for those he or she inspires, contributing with passion and commitment to every task (Stahl, 2018). Through their involvement, they earn respect and boosts the pace of work, leading to better team performance.

The human component is, most often, what a leader relies on, being a good communicator, who conveys messages effectively in an attempt to expose his vision as a whole. Thus, they guide the path toward achieving the goal and give team members a sense of being heard (Stahl, 2018), as communication is a two-way function. Like any manager, the leader is involved and responsible in decision-making (Hasan, 2019), having to weigh the options, consult people who are influenced by the decision made, and follow the decision made without remorse. The example of responsibility proposed by the leader must be transmitted to his team members, in order to become aware of the load of the tasks they have to fulfil. Of course, the human resource is subject to error, but the leader learns to draw the attention of others to the errors committed and to work together to correct them. This support from the leader is meant to occur under any circumstances, throughout the course toward goals' achievement, immediately after assignments are distributed and teammates' performance is assessed.

Also, leadership involves creativity and innovation (Hasan, 2019), the personal qualities that determine a person to become a leader and be followed by others. Thus, he or she steps out of the crowd through creative thinking and constant innovation, proposing new ideas that support the path to the end goal. However, the leader is distinguished not only by intellectual capacity but also by emotional intelligence and empathy (Morgan, 2020). They understand the problems of the people on the team and know that they understand their feelings, creating a connection on the emotional level that supports conflict management and control of emotions in decision making.

What facilitates genuine connection between people is evidenced by the humble character of the leader, who does not pursue his own promotion (Hasan, 2019), but engages in solving problems at the team level and does not aspire to personal recognition. Thus, the vision promoted by the leader is clarified within their team and contributes to the motivation of all members to follow the plan and strategies that he or she proposes. A successful manager is a leader mastering self-control, able to manage his emotions, empathetic in interpersonal relations, and a master of communication, seen as skills cultivated through art and especially acting classes, which put the business world on a stage (Steen, 2013).

2.3. The Role of Acting in Training Managers

Acting has a long history with many hidden and valuable stories, but what is important to remember and is often taught in introductory courses is the origin of the term. Dramaturgy finds its meaning in the word of Greek origin "*dran*", which means "*to do*" (Fouts, 2019). Thus, the condition of the actor is illustrated: an artist who takes on the face of a character to play a role and convey an emotional message to the audience. The actor's objective is clear from the moment he takes on a role: to deliver the message to the audience that becomes part of his vision. Similarly, the route is followed by a manager, who uses leadership and communication skills to empathise with his team members in order to move towards the set goal.

Acting classes are a means of personal development for anyone who wants to try their hand on stage, because effective communication and dealing with emotions are necessary even in daily life. In the business world, however, these skills are most important, and a successful manager uses talent and intuition more than technical tools to achieve their goals. Actors have the gift of bringing the characters they play to life and teaching managers to take on the role of leader (Steen, 2013) and keep it with responsibility and dedication. Nevertheless, acting is not about hiding behind a mask, but about creating a real connection to the character's experience, which offers the possibility of finding hidden inner parts.

The destiny of a manager does not overlap with that of the actor often seen as a comedian or drama genius, but shares in the professional development the learning of some common subjects, such as emotional intelligence (Moore and Garcia-Manjarres, 2016), which helps in making decisions and managing relationships. Although management and acting are seen as totally different fields, they follow a common path to fulfil desires. An actor begins by identifying the goal of his role, then tries to find the obstacles in his way, and choose the best solutions to overcome them, and the manager similarly follows these steps. But, since the plan made by a manager is often tried by the unexpected, acting teaches him valuable lessons about improvising (Moore and Garcia-Manjarres, 2016): to adapt to any situation, to think quickly, and to use creative means in solving problems.

In addition, a manager is often put in the position of calling his team into the company conference room to present his ideas. Presentation is an essential part of communicating ideas, and acting plays a fundamental role in mastering voice and gesture. The manager turns the room he is in into a stage and sets his standards. The role played on the stage becomes a presentation, and the body language of the one who performs it takes on the meaning of choreography. A manager is supported in a presentation by the language, which must be clear and full of emotion (Steen, 2013), able to wrap ideas in a memorable story and leave the audience with a feeling associated with his vision.

However, it is not only words that weigh heavily in a presentation, but also their absence. Silence has the ability to emphasise ideas conveyed and create emotion and suspense (Fouts, 2019), and the actor is certainly best suited to teach managers the secrets of silence. The relationship between a manager and his team members is built not only on effective communication, previously illustrated by supporting acting, but also on the full emotional baggage that each member brings. Acting thus teaches the motivation towards a relationship based on sincerity and authenticity (Fouts, 2019), as the successful manager does not play a role, but adapts to being himself. Fitting in is often difficult because it involves breaking out of comfort zone, but acting helps even the most introverted people to fit into an environment where they don't feel fear and dare to continuously improve themselves.

Moreover, acting prompts managers to truly be leaders (Moore and Garcia-Manjarres, 2016), not just to use their skills. Leaders master emotional intelligence and know the art of negotiation. While managers often perceive negotiation as a battle with only one winner and focus on winning, acting broadens their horizons and guides their attention to the human component. Empathy is the key to success in a negotiation because once the manager resonates with the person sitting on the other side of the table, he or she is able to understand what really motivates them to participate in the negotiation and to see things through their eyes.

Negotiations can be associated with a theatrical act consisting of actors (the participants, i.e., the managers), a scenario (the goals a manager pursues in this endeavour), and an ending (the outcome of the discussions). Acting, then, helps relax and distract a manager from the outcome (Steen, 2013) to focus primarily on the experience and find the unknowns on an emotional level, which ultimately leads to better results. A manager progresses in their development when he or she gains confidence and inspires others by being persuasive, empathetic, and authentic, like a leader every cast member aspires to be in a theatrical performance.

3. Methodology

In order to substantiate the research topic and support the information previously extracted from the bibliographic study, qualitative research was conducted in the form of an interview, and quantitative research was conducted through a questionnaire, with the aim of identifying the students' perceptions regarding the link between acting and management, with the main objective of quantifying the impact of acting on the career they aspire to. The interview was conducted by two practicing managers and took place online through the Zoom platform with the option of recording.

The first objective of the qualitative research is to identify the perception of the actor-management relationship of a manager trained as an actor. She has 7 years of experience as a manager of an art school and has been working as an actor and acting teacher for 18 years. The respondent graduated from National University of Theatre and Film "I.L. Caragiale", praising herself with a bachelor's degree in acting and a master's degree in pedagogy. Currently, as part of her main occupation, she holds seminars on personality development through theatrical methods. The second objective of this research is to determine the perception of the relationship between acting and management by an executive who has no direct connection to acting. The interviewee is a graduate of veterinary medicine, but also has a master's degree in business administration (MBA), which led him to the business world, where he works as a manager in the field of commerce (retailer) with more than 10 years of experience. The third objective of this research is to determine the level of confidence of the two managers in the benefits of trading for business people.

The quantitative research was conducted in the form of a survey based on a questionnaire, in which 71 students of the Faculty of Business and Tourism of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies participated. The respondents were surveyed through an online form using Google Forms (Google Docs). The link associated with the questionnaire was published and distributed through the WhatsApp application on March 29, 2021, and the data collection was carried out until April 1, 2021, when 71 responses were registered. The first objective of this research is to determine the extent to which business students have been exposed to trading in personal development. The second objective of this research is to determine the degree of student confidence in the ability of acting to influence a leader's development. The third objective of this research is an attempt to estimate the percentage of students who would take acting courses if such courses were introduced in Romanian business schools.

4. Results

This section highlights the key points extracted from the interviews with the two business experts and the questionnaire addressed to business students. Both the qualitative and quantitative studies try to emphasise acting perceived as a tool to shape the personal development of managers. Thus, ideas of two specialists working in the business environment (one with acting diplomas and one without any specialised knowledge in this field) are used to draw conclusions in parallel with several opinions expressed by students that are going to probably follow a career in business and management.

4.1. Results of Qualitative Research

The first objective of this research is to identify the perception of the acting-management relationship of a manager trained as an actor. In order to quantify the impact of acting on managers' training, it is necessary to highlight the skills and qualities that acting develops on a personal level. Among the most important are memory, attention, concentration, and affective memory, "*skills that every human being is born with and that can be practiced through acting*". The human qualities that are noteworthy as a product of the acting exercise are self-confidence and the power of persuasion as the interviewed specialist emphasises their importance in business through a concrete example, pointing out a situation when managers "*want to sell a product or convince others of trusting an idea*".

The main benefit of acting in personal development on the technical side is the practice of diction, which helps to create a commanding posture and self-confidence. Making the transition from personal to professional development, acting is a complex tool in the development of a manager, supporting them in facing challenging situations and communicating with others. The situations in which a manager finds themselves can be anticipated and practiced through acting, "*playing several roles or studying several characters*", all of which result in improving the manager's performance, "*the manager gets to know very well people, life, situations and, thus, he or she does much better in managing a business or a department*".

Beyond communicating with his team members, with people in the organisation or with other partners, and managing situations, the successful manager learns through acting to build self-confidence, reflected both in discussions with others and as a factor in his own comfort, "*by having confidence in yourself, you present yourself in a certain way to others and you feel different about yourself*". Self-confidence is the first step to open communication and understanding those around you in order to solve problems, "*acting helps you to be more attentive to people*". In order to solve problems, a manager has to find solutions, and acting works with the manager's subconscious to find ingenious and out of patterns solutions, with the help of the spontaneity that is fostered by drama classes, a method explained by the interviewee, "*you don't follow a pattern, but you are much more spontaneous and apply exactly what you see at that moment*".

Adaptability is an indispensable quality for any manager to solve difficult situations and achieve goals, and the manager trained as an actor emphasises the importance of acting in the professional development of a manager with a personal remark: "*Acting taught me to be real (now, here and very much alive)*". Despite the qualities developed through acting, some people have the impression that acting is putting on a mask. In reality, it is an image of authenticity, because when the actor puts himself in a certain situation, he is also strengthened by his faith in that situation. The idea focuses on the persuasive power that a manager can exert by expressing his intentions clearly and authentically and

not deceive, *“It is like putting yourself in a hypothetical context and believing 100% in that situation, and if you are convinced of what you are doing, someone else will, in turn, believe in what you are transmitting.”*

This mask is, therefore, strictly limited to the moment when the actor plays his role, but does not follow the route he took to achieve truthfulness, an idea exemplified by the interviewee through a personal note, *“Through an acting exercise I immediately know what it's like to be in love because I do exercises, I put myself in the situation, I access the affective memory and I remember what it was like when I was in love, or maybe I'm already experiencing that feeling and I'm aware of it”*. What a manager can learn from an actor is how to play such a part, in which to exercise a power of persuasion, based on ideas he really thinks and feelings conveyed by real emotion, *“we as actors put ourselves in a situation very easily, we believe in it and that's the only way we convince others to believe as well”*.

The second objective of this research is to identify the perception of the acting-management relationship of a manager without direct ties to acting. In order to identify to what extent acting contributes to the development of a manager's qualities, it is necessary to initially highlight the main qualities of the person in charge of business administration. Beyond the logical-mathematical part that requires a higher level of intelligence and analytical power, a successful manager stands out for his vision, determination, perseverance, courage, and, above all, honesty, since *“if you want to look at a long-term plan, you can't avoid honesty”*.

The interviewee emphasises the vision as the defining difference between a manager who just completes tasks and one who builds projects with broader goals than profit. Material thinking is harmful to the manager to achieve the non-financial goals in the development of a business, such as the business image and reputation, *“Managing a business is not only about profit but putting into practice an idea that would be useful to people, to share a vision”*. This vision that the manager has and tries to convey to his team as a true leader is a form of art, which justifies the connection between management, a field classically known as science, and art, since a manager's actions must not only be focused on the result, but must also be effective and inspired, *“the management is, indeed, an art, because everything you build and do must be raised to the level of an art”*.

Through the connection between management and art, the successful manager defines himself as a leader, who does not dictate to employees what tasks to perform, but consults them about the difficulties they encounter and tries to increase productivity by appealing to the emotional component, *“managers must put into practice and communicate their business plan exactly as through a painting or other work of art”*. Thus, a manager uses emotional intelligence and a good understanding of people to produce and convey emotion in any form of communication, both through language and through the expressiveness of gestures, *“without expressing emotions you cannot convince anyone, you cannot bring motivation, you cannot convey to others the desire to be part of your projects, to fight side by side with you, to follow your vision sincerely”*.

Although the authentic expression of a leader's thoughts and emotions can be supported by acting, the interviewee believes that acting limits a manager's development only to the extent that they can relate the situations in which they find themselves or herself to some previous experiences, *“you can't convey everything, but only partially, that is, as much as you can take and pass on”*. However, acting plays an important role in a manager's communication with those involved in their business, and their performance is determined by the efforts of their co-workers. The manager with leadership qualities has the responsibility to ensure a beneficial work environment and to give confidence to his team members. Thus, the interviewed manager emphasised the benefit of acting in shaping this personal quality, *“acting helps a manager to transmit feelings to those interacting with them and to convey the mood that stands as a cornerstone for their business”*.

Also, from the position of a manager without acting training, the interviewee acknowledges the influence of acting on a manager's development, although he emphasises the limited possibilities of this art form to contribute decisively to the long-term professional development of a business professional, describing acting *“only as a tool to convey motivations or share visions that you have.”*

The third objective of this research is to estimate the degree of confidence of managers in the benefits of acting brought to business professionals. The perceptions of the actor-trained manager and the non-actor-trained manager share some common ground, highlighting the power of acting to instil leadership qualities in a manager, whereby he is able to use self-confidence to articulate his ideas, to inspire others with his vision, and to motivate his teammates towards achieving their goals. However, the differences of opinion are based on the idea of authenticity, as acting is sometimes associated with the distortion of reality. In order to lead the research on a common path that illustrates the nuances of the differences in vision, the interview also touched on a common topic experienced by any manager, negotiation, often associated with talent and intuition more than with science and calculations. Negotiation measures the power of persuasion, which is not created by deception, but by expressing thoughts and feelings in an authentic way that charms the interlocutor and makes him share the manager's vision.

On the one hand, the manager-actor claims that drama teaches a person involved in business administration how to present themselves in an authentic way in a negotiation, *“acting is very much based on what you feel and think, expressing your thoughts and emotions in the clearest way possible so that you make yourself understood exactly as you wish”*. On the other hand, the interviewed manager without acting experience is not adept at using acting tactics in a negotiation, as it *“contradicts honesty in business”*, by trying to create a false impression, which does not aim for a long-term gain for both parties involved. Even though he is aware that acting is not intended to deceive, he suggests that acting teaches a manager only *“to play a role to get the interlocutor to accept your ideas or offer”*, aiming only to achieve the end goal, but not the whole route.

Finally, the qualitative research focuses on the degree of trust in the acting courses integrated into the specialisation programs proposed by business schools. While the manager-actor sees this initiative as an opportunity for students to practice innate skills such as attention, concentration, and memory, to improve their diction and speak fluently and clearly, and to focus on communication and relationship, the manager without acting training questions the concealment of honesty through acting and relies on this art form only to better understand a manager's interlocutor, *“acting would only be useful to put me in the shoes of the other”*. Understanding people through emotional intelligence is closely related to mastering relationships and communication, topics that the manager-actor would propose to be studied in such a course, in which, as a possible teacher, she would address an exhortation to students: *“Be convinced of what you want to say and do, and that way you will also convince those around you of your intentions!”*.

4.2. Results of quantitative research

The first objective of this research is to determine to what extent business students have had contact with acting in personal development. To achieve this fundamental research objective, survey participants were asked if they had ever taken acting classes and if they had ever been inspired by an actor or an actor's role in their personal development.

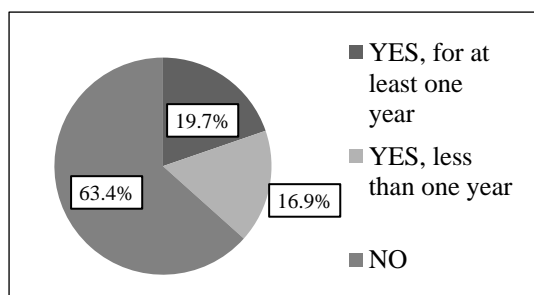


Fig. no. 1. Students' experience with acting by attending specialised classes

Source: obtained by processing the research result

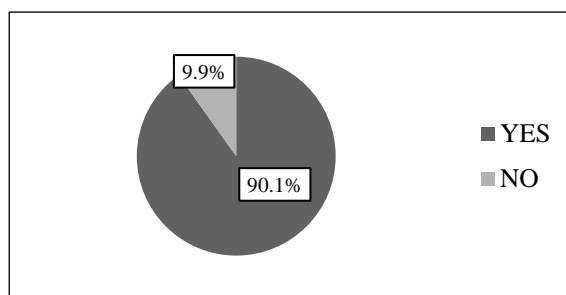


Fig. no. 2. The existence of an actor's inspiration in the personal development of students

Source: obtained by processing the research result

The results of the survey indicate that the majority of students who are planning to build a career in management (63.4%) have never attended acting courses. Out of the 71 respondents, only 26 had the opportunity to get to know acting in an organised setting, and 12 of them (16.9%) attended acting courses for less than a year, having superficial contact with this form of art. However, 14 respondents (19.7%), students of the Faculty of Business and Tourism, attended acting courses for at least one year, a significant period to lay the foundations of elementary knowledge in the theatrical field. So, it is estimated that one in five students who want to become a successful leader had access to the discovery of acting techniques to practise some skills and develop some personal qualities.

At the same time, approximately nine out of ten students participating in this research acknowledge the existence of an actor's inspiration or his role in their personal development. Of the total sample, 64 respondents (90.1%) are aware of the presence of a human model, which has influenced their character up to this point. Thus, the contact of business students with acting did not take place directly in most cases, but was mainly manifested through the existence of an actor or his role as a source of inspiration in their personal development.

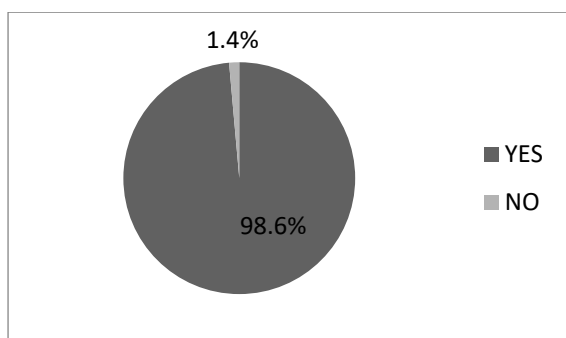


Fig. no. 3. The likelihood for a manager to learn from an actor
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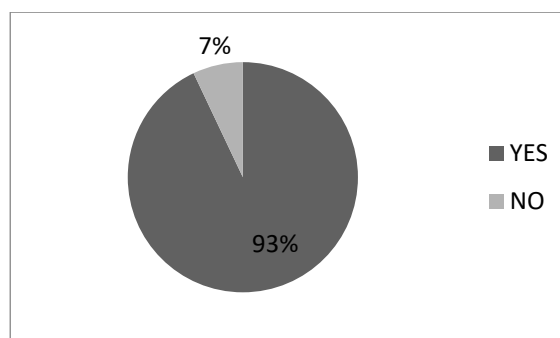


Fig. no. 4. The likelihood of the "acting" talent to help in a negotiation
Source: obtained by processing the research resul

The second objective of the research is to determine the degree of student confidence in the ability of acting to influence a manager's development. In order to delve deeper into the relationship between acting and management from the students' perspective, respondents were asked a question about the possibility of a manager learning from an actor, and another question about the ability of "acting" talent to bring advantage in a negotiation.

The answers of those surveyed indicate that the degree of confidence in an actor's ability to transmit information to a manager is high, with 70 of the 71 respondents having an affirmative answer to the question asked and accumulating a very high percentage (98.6%). One of the most important topics to touch on in the relationship between acting and management is negotiation, which 66 of the respondents (93%) see as an opportunity to practice acting techniques to achieve favourable results. Only 7% of the total sample shows distrust in the talent and intuition that could help a manager in a negotiation, opting for the scientific component of management, based on calculations and reasoning.

There is a perception that the talent of "acting" actually exposes falsehood, and the students who took part in the research had further to express an opinion regarding this fact, to decide if acting represents "putting on a mask". At the same time, beyond "putting on a mask" or not, acting does not mean only a role, but also techniques learned in the subconscious, and those surveyed had the opportunity to express their opinion on the likelihood of acting affecting the honesty of a manager.

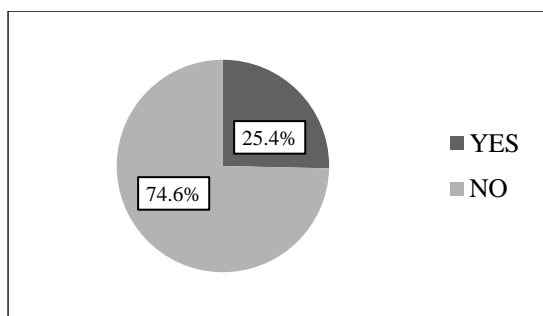


Fig. no. 5. Accepting that acting represents “putting on a mask”

Source: obtained by processing the research results

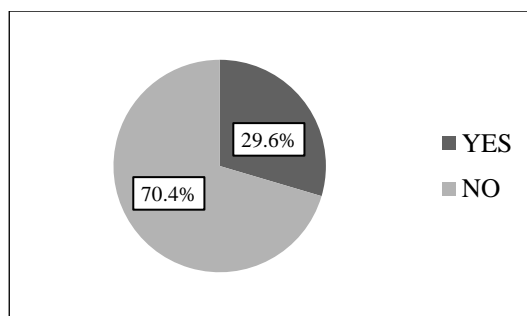


Fig. no. 6. Accepting that acting affects a manager's honesty

Source: obtained by processing the research results

74.6% of survey participants (53 out of 71 respondents) deny that acting represents “putting on a mask”, emphasising the concept of authenticity and self-discovery that a manager can tap into through acting. The majority of students in the total sample, approximately three out of four respondents, therefore believe that an actor can teach a manager how to adapt to situations and how to manage them by expressing ideas and emotions authentically without playing a previously learned role.

However, 21 of those interviewed (29.6%) think that acting affects the honesty of managers, since a manager trained as an actor would be prone to use acting techniques in communication, which would influence the relations with his team members or with business partners. However, most of the respondents do not agree with the existence of this negative influence of acting on the sincerity that a manager must show, with 50 students from the total of 71 in the sample (a proportion of 70.4%) being convinced by the fact that a manager's honesty is not affected by acting.

In order to lead the research towards the achievement of the proposed and previously mentioned objective, it is necessary to correlate management with art, as the modern manager uses more than reasoning and calculations. In order to identify this link between management and art, the questionnaire asked students to express their opinion on the extent to which the artistic component is used by a manager when it comes to finding solutions to different situations, achieving goals, and building relationships with those involved in the management of his organisation.

Table 1. The proportion of the artistic component in management

Options	Number of choices	Percentage
Not at all	4	5,6%
A little bit	3	4,2%
Somehow	33	46,5%
A lot	20	28,2%
Very much	11	15,5%

* based on the number of respondents (71)

Source: obtained by processing the research results

The data collected to identify the proportion of the artistic component in management, in the view of the surveyed students, underlines a rather wide variety of answers. Half of the respondents believe that management is at most “somehow” a form of art, and the other half of the students who participated in the survey believe that management is at least “somehow” a form of art. Also, most of the surveyed students (33 of the total 71 of the sample, representing a proportion of 46.5%) opted for the option “somehow”, outlining the influence of art in management to some extent

However, from the data distribution, there is a stronger tendency of respondents to choose a significant influence of the arts in management, indicating the confidence of students as future managers to include the artistic component with increased attention in their professional training. Acting as an art form is a tool that can influence a manager's development, and participants in this study were asked about the extent to which acting has this ability. Acting techniques can be taught to a manager through acting courses, and students were asked to what extent they believed that such acting techniques could influence a leader's development.

Table 2. The impact of acting courses in the development of a manager

Options	Number of choices	Percentage
Not at all	3	4,2%
A little bit	10	14,1%
Somehow	25	35,2%
A lot	24	33,8%
Very much	9	12,7%

Source: obtained by processing the research results

*based on the number of respondents (71)

Most of the respondents voted for the option “somehow”, and the option “a lot” was preferred almost to the same extent as the previously mentioned one. Therefore, the Business students who took part in the research believe, in proportion to 69% (49 out of the total of 71 included in the sample), that the impact of an acting course in the development of a manager weights between “somehow” and “a lot”, emphasising the hypothesis that acting, as an art form, finds an important place in management. Therefore, the degree of the questioned students' confidence in the existence of a relationship between acting and management is high and serves the proposal of some of the Western Business schools to direct their students to acting courses.

The third objective of the research is an attempt to estimate the share of students who would take acting courses if they were introduced to business schools in Romania. The tendency to introduce acting courses in business schools has become familiar in many Western countries, with the United States of America initiating this concept, and the United Kingdom even representing a promoter of this phenomenon in Europe.

Unfortunately, business schools in Eastern Europe, including Romania, barely study the benefits that drama could bring to a manager, and the concept of promoting acting courses in their training programs is only in a preliminary stage of development. In order to provide an exhortation to Romanian Business schools to implement these acting strategies in management, the research is directed with two questions to identify to what extent the interviewees see the usefulness of acting courses for a business student and to determine their intention to follow such a course, assuming that acting would be introduced as a discipline in the program of the faculty which the respondents attend.

Table 3. Business schools that promote acting courses

Name of the school	Country of origin
MIT Sloan School of Management	United States of America
Stanford Graduate School of Business	United States of America
INSEAD	United Arab Emirates
Saïd Business School	United Kingdom
Durham University Business School	United Kingdom
IMD Business School	Switzerland

Source: (Steen, A., 2013)

More than half of the respondents (37 out of 71 in the sample, representing a percentage of 52.1%) believe that acting as a subject would be “somehow” useful to a business student. Only 2 of those surveyed (2.8%) do not see any sense for a student who aspires to become a successful manager to take acting courses at the faculty, and 5 students interviewed (7%) believe that the impact of an acting course on the professional development of a future manager is reduced, the effort of those who would enrol on such a course exceeding the benefits brought. However, the trend of the collected data indicates a significant impact of acting courses for a business student, because in the opinion of 17 respondents (23.9%), the drama would influence their professional development “a lot”, and in the opinion of 10 of those respondents (14.1%) even “very much”.

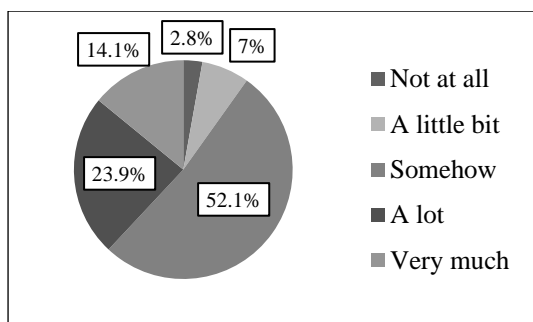


Fig. no. 7. The usefulness of acting courses for a business student

Source: obtained by processing the research results

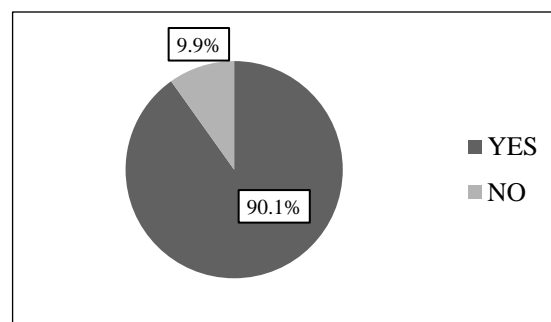


Fig. no. 8. Students' intention to take an acting course

Source: obtained by processing the research results

The high confidence of the students surveyed in the impact of acting courses on the development of a future manager is also reflected in the proportion of those who intend to enrol in an acting course if it were introduced as an elective. With a percentage of 90.1%, approximately 9 out of 10 of the students who took part in the questionnaire expressed, in this way, their intention to take part in acting courses for professional development and, at the same time, an impetus for business schools in Romania to implement this concept.

5. Future directions and limitations

This research comprises a limited number of respondents who were selected to participate in the study based on random sampling. In addition, the selected students are enrolled in the same university, so the geographical area covered allows valid conclusions only at the local level. Future studies could broaden the scope of this research by including more students in the sample, as well as students from more business schools in Romania. Future studies could also examine in detail the difficulties faced by students in the position of a future manager, including those that can be overcome through acting, in order to make the teaching system more efficient in acting courses that could be introduced in Romanian business schools.

Once this step is reached and the concept is put into practice, even in a trial version, subsequent research has the possibility to statistically track the percentage of students who believed in the impact of acting on the development of a manager and decided to follow an acting course at the Business school they are enrolled on. Feedback from the students is also useful for future studies, as it is possible to measure the performances achieved after the completion of such a course and a comparison can be made both between the performance indicators between the past and the present, as well as a parallel with the way of conducting acting courses from Business schools in other states.

6. Conclusions

This scientific research aimed to popularise the impact that acting has on the personal and professional development of a manager. From the bibliographic study, it appears that acting is a tool used to teach a manager about leadership and how to develop communication skills, necessary for coordinating their team and relating to its members. Through qualitative research, i.e., an interview conducted by a manager with acting training and a manager without acting training, it highlights the leadership quality that the modern manager must almost necessarily have in order to successfully achieve goals, but questions a manager's honesty in the context in which he or she would use acting techniques to negotiate or communicate with business partners.

However, through quantitative research, a survey addressed to students from the Faculty of Business and Tourism, within the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, this concept is refuted. Thus, most of the respondents considered that a manager maintains their honesty, even if he or she follows an acting course. The perception of business students outlines acting as a significant influencing factor in the development of a manager, as they also believe that the modern manager uses art to a considerable extent to accompany science and reasoning.

It is gratifying that those surveyed see acting courses as highly useful for Business students in terms of their professional training, and more than that, more than 90% of students in the total sample expressed their intention to enrol on such a course. This study is, therefore, an exhortation for Business schools in Romania to adapt to this universal trend of proposing acting as a means of development for a manager, but also a starting point for in-depth research on students' perception of this phenomenon.

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