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MAGNANIMITY IN THE NEW LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

According to Alexandre Havard, leadership is composed of two main fronts that support the experience based on the formed character of the individual under his actions: magnanimity and humility. This paper aims to develop a study and formative reflection on one of these roots of True Leadership: Magnanimity. In addition, it seeks to answer whether current 21st century leadership, especially the Millennials, has in mind or aspires to day-to-day magnanimity, as well as to explain whether people are aware of or play the power of magnanimity in their leadership acts. It is hypothesized that the current Brazilian labor market does not act with due importance to magnanimity in its leaders. Thus, this work will address the definition of this virtue in the composition of leadership and its importance in daily life. To this end, we applied a questionnaire about the degree of knowledge of the concept of magnanimity by the leaders and companies in São Paulo, in order to observe the importance of this virtue in the context of the current Brazilian labor market. Allied to this, the methodology was based on articles and research sites on the subject.

Key-words: leadership; virtuous leader; magnanimity

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1. INTRODUCTION

Human beings have in their nature three qualities: temperament, character and personality. In general lines, the temperament is the immutable part of every human person. It shows a series of inherited predefined characteristics (LAHAYE, 2018) that permeate the individual's way of being. In others words, it defines behavior based on biological and conditioning characteristics that can be assumed as strengths or weaknesses (qualities and defects). This approach began with Hippocrates, approximately in 400 b.c. and, since then, it has evolved in dialogue with subjects about human psychology.

The character, on the other hand, is defined as an intrinsic truth of the human being resulting from the union between "reason, emotions and will" or also called "man's soul" (LAHAYE, 2018). That is, a mutable reality that can be shaped according to the individual's lived situations and believing truths. In addition, character can be defined as the combination of "virtue, freedom and growth" (HAVARD, 2018).

And the personality, different from temperament and character but correlated with them, involves a precedent characteristic that the individual establishes for him/herself: authenticity. The personality is basically a mirror of his/her character to the exterior, a "façade" for the practical life. Therefore, it is a whole set of strengths that are expressed to people and situations according to their level of character.

Regarding these definitions, Alexandre Havard (2016, p. 17) relates these constituent parts of the human being to leadership, especially at its core, highlighting how it reflects essentially to character. That is, the character, from its changing and evolving spectrum, allows the construction of a rational and mature human, who develops virtues. These virtues lead to a higher leadership position. In this way, it is possible to notice that leadership is something based on character and is included in several human realities.

As magnanimity is deeply related to virtues and human nature, and leaders who are virtuous tend to be more successful, this work focused on finding answers to questions that had the following approach:

- Nowadays, is there leadership based on magnanimity?
- Are people aware of the power of magnanimity and are they able to identify it in their leaders (or do they do so once they are leaders)?
- Nowadays, is it possible to have examples of magnanimity in leadership?

2. METHODOLOGY AND HYPOTHESIS

The weakness and lack of excellence of some current business leaders requires a detailed analysis of the basis of their leadership and whether they are aware of one of the virtues that can be a solid foundation for the development of leaders: magnanimity. When addressing this theme, Havard (2016) cites examples that relate today's executive leaders to their unique and profit-oriented goal, which contrast with stories of CEOs who leveraged their company with dissonant common sense ideas and, thus, raised a business structured to contribute to society and, as a result, motivated many employees to act in accordance with the leader's project.

Thus, the following hypothesis was assumed:

Employees from different areas of the Brazilian labor market do not know the true meaning of magnanimity in leadership since they do not often identify this characteristic in their direct superiors.

In order to understand how magnanimity is known today, this work used the quantitative/qualitative methodology developed from a questionnaire with 11 questions that analyzes

people's knowledge in relation to magnanimity at work and in their personal life. The questionnaire was divided into 2 stages to understand the importance and definition of magnanimity for leaders and employees. The data was gathered from August to September 2019. There was no selection or specific point for respondents.

In addition to that, the methodology used was based on articles related to the theme and research sites, with emphasis on the study of the following authors: Alexandre Havard, Tim Lahaye and Francisco Faus.

3. THE IMPORTANCE OF VIRTUES FOR LEADERSHIP

In the first pages of the book “Virtues and Leadership” by Alexandre Havard (2018, p. 15), the author highlights the importance of virtues to a good leader. Virtue is “a habit of mind, desire and heart, and [...] it allows to achieve excellence and personal effectiveness” (HAVARD, 2018, p. 15), meaning a life of constant well-doing and thriving for the fullness of being.

It is possible to perceive a certain influence on adult life, because virtue requires a "stable and objective" life. Faus (2017) notes the importance of a life based on positive characteristics as follows: *"Whoever does not fight, who is content with simple good will and improvisation, becomes straw dragged by the winds of desire, pleasure, caprice, selfishness or circumstances (...)"*. Therefore, virtues help people to be more efficient and overcome their daily challenges, driving them to their full potential (HAVARD, 2018).

Thus, the spirit of leadership and acts in search of greatness, in order to awaken the potential of leaders and provide services through inspiring teachings and practices. Therefore, a well-lived leadership is based on a magnanimity and humility.

4. STRUCTURE AND BASIS OF LEADERSHIP: THE ROOT OF MAGNANIMITY

The characteristics of a leader, mainly about the form of leadership in its essence, is provided through magnanimity and humility. The fundamental parts of a leader are the cardinal virtues (prudence, fortitude, self-control and justice).

Havard (2018) pointed out that prudence has the power to guide all other virtues, driven by a realistic view of the world. When these concepts are applied to leadership, they are connected to the search for human dignity and service. However, there has not always been an effective view (as defined today) of magnanimity. At first, magnanimity was seen as a virtue of hope. Magnanimity occurs in its noble characteristics of generosity and condescension.

Havard (2018) defines leadership as a view of valuing the man who, in its foundation, has *“the desire to be at the head of a full and intense life; humility, in turn, is the desire to love and sacrifice oneself for the other”*. The author points out that leadership is based on "self-knowledge", a life of personal fulfillment in living and loving what one does and what develops the other. Therefore, leadership is based on two main points: one that sets it as a virtue of action in accordance to what human beings accomplish in life, putting energy, enthusiasm, confidence and excellence in what they do. The other is magnanimity, which comes from the character, as a flourishing of personality and human development next to a diversified and broad view of the possibilities and extent of the human being.

Nowadays, the biggest examples of leadership are people who have accomplished great things in a company or have developed an innovative product never seen before. However, there are people that, with simple day-to-day attitudes, perform the same leadership in their context.

Unlike to what is disseminated as leadership today: having a more external than internal root, leadership generates results that not only make a good leader, asserting it as an *“act of dominating oneself and conquering autonomy and freedom”* (HAVARD, 2018, p. 22). It also has an equal

foundation in the development of others related to trust (seeing value in others based on the principle of dignity and total greatness).

Leadership cannot be defined as a privilege experienced by those who hold positions and power as partners in businesses and companies. Leadership is much more than an exclusive way of life. Leadership, in turn, consists of a “*way of being*” (HAVARD, 2018). In addition, leadership does not choose a position or supremacy in society. It can reach anyone, from a father or mother (born leaders of a family) to a CEO of a company.

Furthermore, magnanimity must always be accompanied by humility, through condescension or nobility, putting in perspective the dignity of the other and focusing on their development. Unfortunately, there are cases that personal greatness overcomes the tendency to virtue and the person becomes arrogant or selfish. In these cases, magnanimity is not acting and neither is leadership. An egoist leads for himself and does not look for the achievements that transcend the company regarding the employee’s development, for instance, or the real sense of team work or a cooperative organizational culture. Therefore, magnanimity cannot be sustained without humility. Havard (2018) points out that “*the man who is magnanimous and humble reveals his magnanimity when affirming his talents and abilities and when judging himself capable of great things, which he/she accomplishes with confidence*”.

5. CURRENT LEADERSHIP AND THE MILLENNIALS: WHERE TO FIND MAGNANIMITY IN THE BRAZILIAN LABOR MARKET?

Understanding the current leadership definition in the Brazilian labor market requires a more detailed analysis of the magnanimous leaders in order to try to understand what they do and how to achieve the established objectives and goals.

First and foremost, the main characteristic of a magnanimous leader is to focus on the established paths. As a profile highlighted by Harvard (2018) and reinforced by Grün (2015), the greatest tendency for magnanimity is observed on younger people, whose potential and confidence are correlated to the spare-time they have (they usually have more time to spend to reach their goals). However, being magnanimous is possible at any age.

5.1 Where to find magnanimity?

Magnanimity is found in aesthetics, art, nature. Grün (2015) treats the magnanimity of the present day in terms of “enjoying life” in his book called “Don’t waste your life!”¹, highlighting a bold and protagonist practice of this virtue. The author deals with the regrets of a pusillanimous life of young and elderly people precisely because of the lack of culminating points of magnanimity: greatness in setting goals and putting them into action, enthusiasm, self-confidence and courage. In other words, it can be pointed out that prudence, self-control and strength are lacking nowadays. Most of the cases show that the problem is not to establish great ideas or goals, but to employ them.

Therefore, a person who wants to grow in magnanimity is someone surrounded by choices that continually need assiduous commitment. The decisions should be prudent in view of something inspiring: the greatness of his/her mission (either at work or at home).

5.2 Millennials: where to find magnanimity in the Brazilian labor market?

Millennials (Generation Y) are the ones born between 80s and the beginning of the 2000s. This generation has a peculiar way of being and consuming, which accompany technological and internet

¹ GRÜN, Anselm. Do not waste your life!. Anselm Grün; translation by Markus Hediger. - Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 2015.

revolutions, so that their actions are increasingly connected to specific niches, such as sustainability, innovation and leadership. Therefore, the profile of today's young people regarding their personal improvement *“is related to the characteristics of this generation that is innovative, challenging, transforming and constantly seeking information and knowledge, looking for the development and / or improvement of your skills.”* (LATOSKI; MELLO, 2015).

According to the conception of AISEC, an international NGO founded in 1948 whose focus is to prepare leaders through ideals that mobilize society, a study by Latoski and Mello (2015), a major trend followed the generation of young Millennials: *“a social conscience, which positively impacts society in general. It would be a way to minimize ‘wars’ and also contribute to social development”*. Therefore, Millennials have a much more latent awareness and social responsibility at hand than the past generations. They also have a potential for leadership based on human characteristics. Even so, Grün has observed that this first phase of personality growth (the youngest phase), especially in the generation of young people in the 21st century, can also be structured by indecisions and false directions that impact the way they plan their careers or their future: *“(…) we are a generation of spectators (…)”* Pope Francis said in one of his pronouncements in 2013 that young people must have courage (boldness) and humility (be concerned for their dignity and that of the other) to be able to serve in each particular circumstance. And having this attitude, the path to magnanimity becomes closer for them.

As a hypothesis of this work, knowledge about magnanimity is still precarious, and people and companies often do not have a consolidated competence center that contributes to the development of magnanimous leaders. Not even leaders identify cases of magnanimity and, therefore, do not use it as an ally for excellence at work.

Another important point is the education and knowledge of the magnanimous leadership in schools or universities. The approach in these environments is still not firm, although there are institutions based on a new leadership based on virtues.

5.3 Bad roots for today's magnanimity

The first factor that prevent men/women to develop the virtue of magnanimity is a life of selfishness. Selfishness does not constitute self-care. It means a limitation that symbolizes tendentious narcissistic actions that are not open to the development of others. Grün (2015) comments: *“(…) Nowadays, we always want to know first what do we gain for something and we forget why we strive for, to whom or what we give ourselves to. This self-centeredness does not find meaning in our life.”*

It should be noted that vanity and narcissism lead to false greatness, since human beings “take refuge” in concepts of greatness - sometimes they end up “falling in love” with themselves. The journey towards a magnanimous life starts with small details and inspiring goals that always encompass a mission, and being a way of living, there will always be influential and influenced people on the route.

Furthermore, there are cases where there are high personal expectations that fail due to external circumstances that “block” people, thus removing their enthusiasm (GRÜN, 2015, p. 36). These problems are due to the setting of goals that are too high and due to the lack of acceptance of small setbacks.

In addition to that, there are leaders who lack authority and lead with power on a personal and professional level. This abuse of power devastate true leadership because it does not develop or teach. As Harvard (2015, p. 26) said, “the excellence of acting is only a consequence of excellence in being”. Moreover, the leader who uses power in leadership does not convey confidence. There is hardly any chance in developing a team without even showing confidence in this process.

Thus, there are no restrictions on the practice of leadership when someone wants to try to live its founding bases in any context. In general, a leader's true authority comes through his character, which can be undermined if he understands that this same authority comes only and solely from the responsibilities of his position.

6. RESULTS

Based on the questionnaire applied in August and September 2019, with 11 questions (objective and discursive) on leadership and magnanimity and a total of 67 responses aimed at people working in different segments and positions in the labor market, the main purpose was to understand the extent to which people recognize the true characteristics of a leader and whether they recognize the relevance that magnanimity has as a fundamental part of leadership.

First, there were no criteria for selecting respondents. Following Step 1 of the questionnaire focused on the profile of respondents, it was noted that a large part is a female audience (66%) in the 22 to 32 age group, especially with the largest number of respondents aged 27 years. Even so, it was possible to reach people with different ages, from 19 to 76 years old. The distribution of generations is shown in Table 1.

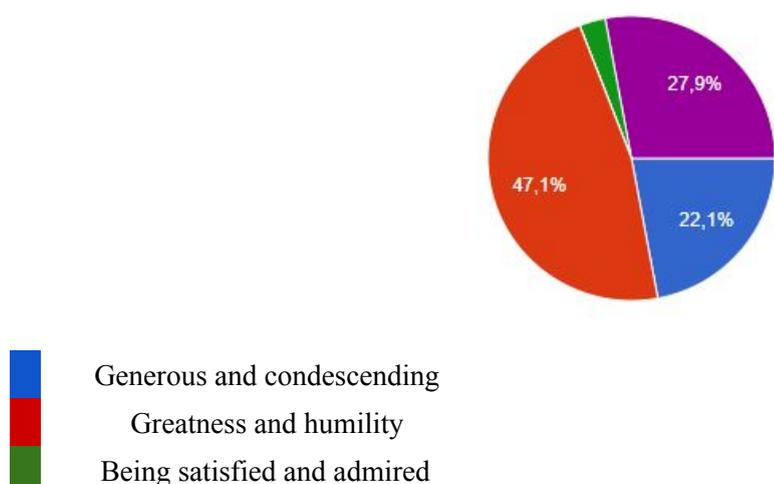
Table 1: Generation of the respondents

Generation	%
<i>Baby Boomer</i>	5,97%
<i>Generation X</i>	16,42%
<i>Millenials</i>	73,13%
<i>Generation Z</i>	4,48%

Of the 67 responses obtained, 21 were leaders - classified as manager, leader, coordinator or teacher, that is, on average, 31% of responses were from leaders and 69% from employees. It is possible to see the distribution of roles in Annex 2.

In Step 2, people were able to relate what they knew of magnanimity and whether they perceived it in their daily work. Regarding the definition of magnanimity, only 22.1% answered correctly (“in being generous and condescending”) according to Graph 1, with 78% divided between responses such as, “magnanimity is greatness and humility” (characteristics that leaders should have) or “be admired and be satisfied” or all the options available.

Graph 1 - Answers distribution regarding the definition of magnanimity.

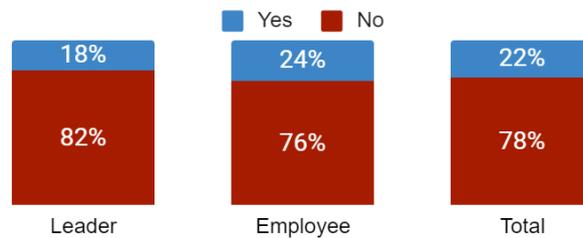




All the previous answers

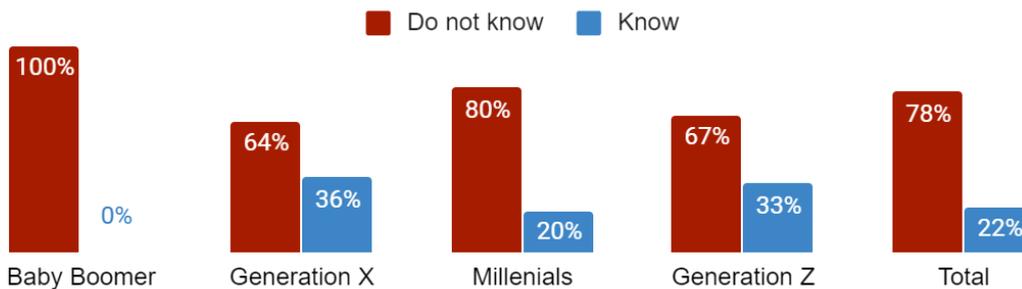
It was shown that 82% of leaders and 76% of employees do not know what magnanimity really means (Graph 2). This shows that people do not have a correct definition in mind or never have had this detailed teaching in the branch of leadership that would explain them how to develop this characteristic. A secondary hypothesis shows that most of the people who identify magnanimity as primordial can understand it in a way other than its true meaning.

Graph 2 - Distribution of respondents that knew what magnanimity was per type of responsibility in the company.

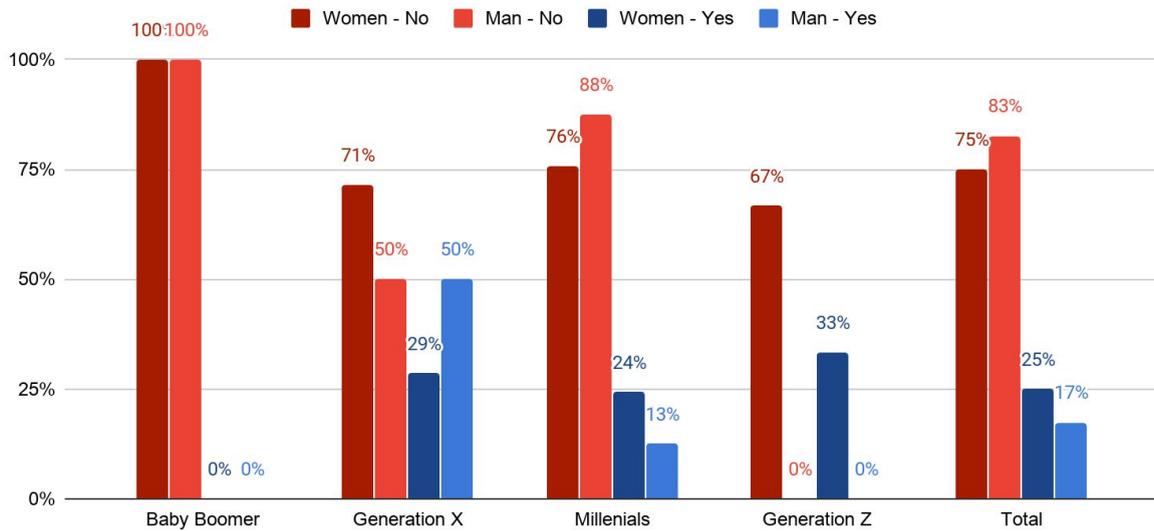


Graph 3 shows that the Millennials generation sees magnanimity among the main characteristics of a leader, while the other generations considered this virtue to be of little importance. Graph 4 shows that 50% of Generation X men know what magnanimity's definition is, while only 29% of the women knew. On the other hand, Millennial and Generation Z women have a better understanding of the virtue's definition if compared to men. In addition to that, in Graph 5 is possible to observe that most of those who see magnanimity as a great characteristic of the leader are led employees (69%) and not the leaders (45%), inferring that there is a question of recognition of the magnanimous acts, however not being cultivated by the leaders themselves above other characteristics. In general, 39.4% bet that the main characteristics of a leader is magnanimity, however the most important characteristics would be humility (48.5%), honesty (54.4%) and optimism (41.2%). This follows in line with the responses to what the employees admire in their current leader: patience, honesty and empathy. Thus, it was possible to realize that people do not have a sense of what magnanimity at work is, although they recognize that it can be something good and belong to a leader, reinforcing the hypothesis of this work.

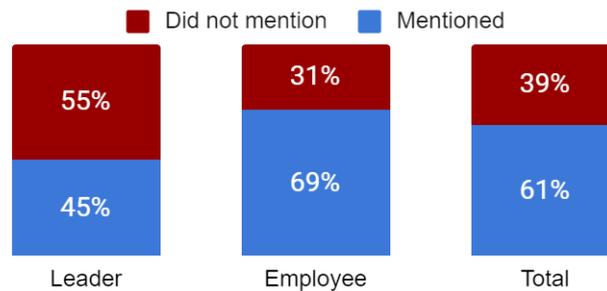
Graph 3 - Distribution of respondents per generation who knew the meaning of magnanimity.



Graph 4 - Distribution of respondents who knew the meaning of Magnanimity per sex and generation.



Graph 5 - Distribution of respondents who mentioned Magnanimity as an important virtue for leadership, divided by responsibility in the company.



7. CONCLUSION

As Harvard (2018) points out, “to do things is management; to make others grow is leadership.” In fact, a magnanimous leader follows this conviction with the confidence that he/she is making prudent decisions, managing the full sense of leadership and valuing every aspect of his/her business, thereby allowing his/her personal growth.

The results obtained through the questionnaire applied to 67 people show that the main hypothesis of this study was confirmed: workers from various areas of the Brazilian labor market do not know the definition of magnanimity in leadership, since they often do not identify this feature in their direct bosses, since more than 80% of respondents could not get the true definition of this virtue. However, it could be seen that some respondents saw magnanimity as important in their private life, but could not really understand the role of magnanimity in leadership and declared not to act in a magnanimous way on certain goals or ideals.

Even with changes coming with the arrival of the Millennials in the labor market, either in consumption or in the accompanying social and their innovative action, there was no greater dissemination of the definition of magnanimity. On the other hand, this generation appreciate magnanimity as an important factor in the leadership framework. In the same way, great references of leaders today refer to two factors: greatness in action and solutions to the common good (characteristics

of magnanimity). This would be a motivation for ideas and work in the labor market, especially with the development of new technologies.

Finally, “personal excellence is the ultimate goal of magnanimity”. Personal development is the focus of the magnanimous leader, who has in mind that greatness in himself and in others helps improve his/her business and plans. Therefore, this development encompasses not only professional growth but, above all, the adherence of virtues and the development of the character and personal excellence of all involved. As a result, magnanimity "defines a lifestyle centered on strengthening the human personality." Allied to this is Saint-Exupéri's 1959 phrase quoted by Grün (2015): “You can only live on what you transform”.

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9. ATTACHMENTS

9.1 Attachment 1 - The Magnanimous Leader

Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to collect data from leaders and followers about the impact of magnanimity on leadership and the work environment.

If you are interested in the subject or want to collaborate in other ways with the research, please send an email to:

suzanacbrito@outlook.com or behaddad14@yahoo.com.br

We thank you in advance for your participation.

STEP 1: a little about yourself.

- How old are you?
- What is your position currently?
- What is your company?
- What is the business segment of your company?
- What is your gender?

STEP 2: Leadership and Magnanimity in the Professional Field

(You as a leader, think of your role. You as an employee, think of your leader.)

- What is the definition of magnanimity?
 - Magnanimity is a characteristic of those who are generous and condescending.
 - Magnanimity is a virtue of greatness and humility.
 - Magnanimity is the quality of those who are simple and modest.
 - Magnanimity is to be satisfied and to be admired.
 - All previous answers
- What is the main characteristic that a good leader should have? (you can check more than one alternative)
 - Be humble
 - Honest
 - Have a sense of humor
 - Optimistic
 - Creative
 - Innovative
 - Disciplined
 - Magnanimous
- From 1 to 5, 1 being "not at all" and 5 "strongly agree", your leader (director, manager, supervisor or boss) proposes high ideas or goals to:
 - The future of the company
 - Employee development
 - The company's growth in its segment

- Do you think your leader looks at the small actions that can transform a business and the primary initiatives to develop something big?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Perhaps (use "others" to state your assessment of this)
- With just one word, say which characteristic or virtue do you most admire in your leader?
- Now name two (or more) leaders that you admire and say why.

9.2 Attachment 2 - Distribution of respondents regarding their role in companies.

Role	Quantaty	%
Manager	17	25,37%
Analyst	15	22,39%
Student	5	7,46%
Intern	5	7,46%
Professor	4	5,97%
Lawyer	4	5,97%
Doctor	3	4,48%
Engineer	3	4,48%
Architect	3	4,48%
Secretary	2	2,99%
Designer	2	2,99%
Retired	2	2,99%
Psychologist	1	1,49%
Photographer	1	1,49%
Total	67	100,00%