

Objective of the project and reasons for choosing the research topic

It is commonly assumed that company's **competitive advantage** is shaped by development of relationship based strategy and implementation of business model aimed at creation and use of **relationship assets**.

However according to series of research that have been conducted for almost 15 years, **up to 70% of companies assess their relationship management programs as a failure**. Achievement of main research goals should enable precise delimitation of truly relationship oriented entities from those who adopt this approach only superficially being in fact still transactional oriented. Establishing the connection between relationship management maturity and achievement of competitive advantage should contribute to the development of theory of the company and will be of significance to several sub-disciplines of management

Research description

The research will be conducted in several steps. The initial stage comprise review of the latest subject literature, which will allow to improve and conduct empirical research. Scope of these studies will include theory of competitive advantage with emphasis laid on resource based view (RBV), as well as relationship approach in management especially the nature, creation and use of relationship assets. The empirical part of research consists of three steps:

- qualitative method – **preliminary model verification** upon interviews with postgradual and MBA students (up to 30 managers with. approx. 10-year professional experience),
- quantitative methods – the **Internet survey** based on min.0,5% - max.1% sample of country-wide, multi-criteria databases available in course the research **stratified** by: industry, number of employees and turnover; in case of non-response a **substitute sample** will be used as well as methods that **reduce bias** (e.g. post-stratification); the **mixed-mode** data collection will be applied that consist of CAWI-CATI.
- qualitative method – **case study** qualitative research with use of in-depth interview and source material analysis in the group of up to **20 firms** (due to team consulting experience links to several business partners have already been established).