

## **Innovation in Process and Management in Bulgaria: the Case of telerik**

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We are sitting in a bright and airy conference room in a new building in a growing part of Sofia, Bulgaria, awaiting the arrival of the two Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the Bulgarian software company, telerik (spelled with a small “t”). The route to the conference room lies through the reception area where one wall is completely covered with awards for everything from product quality and excellence in service to being a top employer in the region, and through clean and light hallways, past large, open, work areas where pairs of individuals consult around computers. At the end of the route is the long modern conference room lit on two sides by walls of windows and opening to a full balcony overlooking the city. The chairs and other furniture are in the telerik colors of black and bright spring green, and the table is laid with cups, coffee, bottled water, dried fruits and nuts, all set for an official meeting in one of the world’s top three .NET component development corporations.

One of the co-CEOs, Svetozar Georgiev, enters, wearing shorts and a colorful short-sleeve shirt, and sits at the side of the table. The other, Vassil Terziev, also in shorts but with a bright t-shirt, hobbles into the meeting; he sports a large black brace on his left ankle, and begins animatedly recounting the morning practice of the company five-a-side football team and his resulting injury. Terziev, who prefers the informal use of his first name, also settles in on the side of the table away from the accoutrements of a formal meeting.

Vassil plays in telerik’s football team with other employees in the “IT Football League” in Sofia. The company rents an indoor football field so the team can play weekly games of five-a-side football, in friendly competitions with other company teams, including one from the British Council. Sports and physical activity at telerik is not limited to football because of its CEO; the company also supports volleyball and basketball teams and provides free memberships to clubs for other fitness activities, including swimming and tennis.

The sports focus, the informal dress, the friendliness of the senior management, and the new and spacious physical environment are all part of the telerik culture. It is what they do and how they do. Both action and achievement are part of the telerik culture. Work is serious here, but work is also fun.

telerik is young in its history and has a workforce dominated by employees in their 20s and 30s. Everything from the creative titles used within the company (e.g., Human

Capital Manager, Evangelist) to the office appearance to the expansive employee benefits are befitting a company with innovative products for Microsoft's .NET technologies such as ASP.NET AJAX, WPF, and Silverlight.

## **Who They Are: The History of Telerik**

In 2002, four young friends (Vassil Terziev, Svetozar Georgiev, Boyko Iaramov and Hristo Kosev), not long out of university and with an interest in computers, decided to leave their current jobs and pool their savings to set up their own software development business in Sofia. This was the start of Telerik – a name derived from an ancient Bulgarian ruler, Khan Telerig, with a twist on the end spelling. As Hristo, the only technically-minded person among the four, had already developed a User Interface (UI) control in his spare time for the newly-introduced Microsoft ASP.NET framework, they decided that the focus for Telerik would be the development of rich, customizable controls for ASP.NET – controls that could be sold to customers who were developing their own ASP.NET applications but did not have the time or expertise to develop their own controls.

The four started with their own PCs, and worked from a rented room in an old office building. The initial control was an instant success with their customers, and, buoyed up by this, the four decided in the same year to hire their first employee. During 2003, the existing controls were significantly improved and more controls were added to the suite, and the workforce increased to 12.

Telerik started to become a factor in the ASP.NET market for UI controls in 2004, with even more controls being developed. The company received a number of industry awards for its products, and accordingly raised the workforce to 29. By 2005, Telerik had become a recognized leader in web development controls for ASP.NET. More awards followed, and Telerik became a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, a fantastic accolade in itself. As well as more new controls, the Sitefinity content management system for websites was launched. To keep up with customer demand, the workforce was stepped up to number 47.

In 2006, more awards and recognition were won. Telerik started presenting its products at industry conferences and gatherings, and even organized a conference in Sofia for .NET developers – a yearly event which has continued since. Controls for ASP.NET AJAX were introduced. Following its philosophy of continuous product improvement and development, the workforce climbed to 76. During this year, a major step forward for the company was the opening of a Telerik office in Boston, (U.S.A.) for sales and customer support for the North American market. At the same time, the company adopted agile development and its components, changing the overall corporate culture.

2007 was a big year for telerik. It was named number one employer in Bulgaria for small and medium-sized companies by Hewitt Associates. As in the previous years, other awards also came in. And product evolution continued with the release of a control suite for the newly-released Silverlight technology. By now, the workforce numbered 125. In 2007, the company moved in to a brand new office building in Sofia – telerik’s corporate headquarters.

In October of 2007, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu ranked telerik as third place in its “Rising Star” Technology Fast 50 program for the 50 fastest growing technology companies in Central and Eastern Europe. This award, which includes fast growing companies in technology, media and telecommunication, ranks companies based upon the percentage revenue growth over the previous three years. Rising Star winners, including telerik, automatically enter Deloitte’s EMEA Technology Fast 500, which ranks the 500 fastest growing technology companies in Europe, Middle East and Africa. The ranking is based on the financial percentage growth over the course of five years.

For the year 2008, telerik also received other awards, including being named the number three Best Employer in Central and Eastern Europe for Small and Medium Scale Companies by Hewitt Associates. Clearly, the company founded by these four young people was growing in many aspects and being recognized within the industry and within the larger business environment for its achievements and future.

If 2007 was a big year for telerik, then 2008 was remarkable. It introduced three new product lines: WPF, Silverlight and .NET ORM. telerik received an infusion of capital from Summit Partners, a private equity and venture capital firm, which would be used to fund both organic growth and acquisitions. Part of this investment was used to acquire the German firm Vanatec, the ORM product line and open its Munich, Germany office. The workforce had now grown to 180.

telerik continues to produce high quality products and to manage its company in ways that gain attention and respect. Today in 2009, those four young friends are still with the company and compose the top management team at telerik. Vassil and Svetozar are co-CEOs; Boyko is Chief Information Officer (CIO); and, Hristo is Chief Technology Officer (CTO). The total workforce presently numbers over 200. The home office of telerik is in Sofia, Bulgaria, where most of the employees work. The U. S. office of approximately 10 is integrated with the Bulgaria sales team, while the Munich office of four is fully integrated with the .NET ORM team in Bulgaria. The company also employs a small number of telecommuters from Russia and other countries who participate in synchronized sprints with the Bulgarian team. telerik also employs other individuals in the United States, who are known as company Evangelists (a term taken from Microsoft). These technical employees are employed to “create a buzz” about telerik products through webinars, conference presentations, interaction with user groups, and other activities and venues that facilitate interest in, and enthusiasm about, telerik.

telerik is a recognized, world-wide leading vendor of ASP.NET AJAX, Silverlight, WinForms and WPF controls and components, as well as .NET Reporting, .NET ORM and .NET CMS solutions. Its controls portfolio alone now numbers over 160 products. Thousands of organizations in more than 70 countries use telerik's products including Fortune 2000 companies such as Vodafone, Citigroup, Kodak, and Nike, as well as some of the world's leading educational and non-profit organizations including NASA, the World Bank, and Harvard University.

## What they do: telerik Products and Technologies

telerik has focused on, and built up its expertise and outstanding reputation, by developing graphical UI "controls" such as customizable calendars, charts, media players, etc. for the Microsoft .NET Framework. UI controls are screen user interface artifacts that allow a user some degree of interaction with an application. For example, the Google web page has a textbox control to allow users to enter search words, and a button control to allow users to activate the search. More complex and sophisticated applications need more complex and sophisticated controls. This is exactly what telerik provides.

For example, the first figure, Exhibit 1, illustrates a chart control.

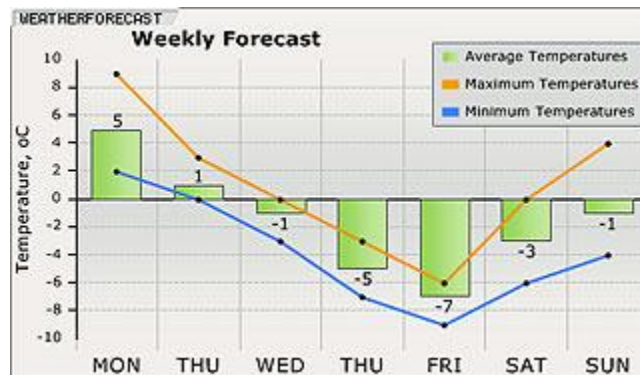


Exhibit 1. Chart Control by telerik

Exhibit 2 is a composite built from grid, chart, gauge and tree view controls.



Exhibit 2. Sales Dashboard by telerik

telerik has now developed a wide range of such software products that can be used by its customers to help them build both standalone PC desktop and web applications that are run using the latest Microsoft technologies. Some of these products are even richer and more powerful than similar ones offered by Microsoft, or are not offered at all by Microsoft.

These technologies are based upon Microsoft's .NET Framework, which allows programmers to develop standalone Windows applications and, in particular, web applications, using languages such as C++, C#, and Visual Basic. Such applications are characterized by pages (or screens) composed of controls, similar to a Windows user interface.

Briefly, the associated ASP.NET technologies that telerik has developed controls for are:

- Windows Forms - the original, basic graphical user interface for Windows standalone and web applications.
- ASP.NET AJAX – a group of interrelated web development technologies (but primarily based on JavaScript and XML) for web browsers that allows the asynchronous exchange of web page content between a web server and a browser – for any web page, only page



content that needs to be updated is uploaded to the browser from the server, not the whole page content.

- Windows Presentation Foundation (WPF) - a graphical subsystem used for the development of rich, next-generation user interfaces for the desktop, supporting applications that require features such as 2D and 3D graphics, vector graphics, animation, audio and video.
- Silverlight - a programmable web browser plug-in that allows the development of so-called Rich Internet Applications (RIA): web pages characterized by features such as animation, vector graphics, audio and video. It is a web-based subset of WPF.

telerik customers may quickly develop their own ASP.NET applications by using telerik products in their own software using a development methodology known as Rapid Application Development (RAD). This is underlined by the name with which telerik markets its controls: “RadControls.” telerik’s controls are customizable, off-the-shelf components that may be easily and rapidly integrated into the customer’s application, thus saving the customer time and effort in developing the controls himself, and thereby boosting his productivity.

telerik has started to diversify and expand its product range portfolio away from its “bread and butter” .NET UI controls, but still basing these parallel products suites on the .NET Framework. For example, it has developed Sitefinity, a web content management system that allows customers to substantially reduce the amount of time required to produce and manage large websites, portals, and intranets. Another example is .NET ORM, a software tool that allows customers’ applications to map traditional relational database contents to the modern object-oriented form, and vice versa.

telerik continues to develop new products through its innovative team process and intends to remain in the top providers of .NET products worldwide. There are numerous samples of customer applications on telerik’s web site – [www.telerik.com](http://www.telerik.com).

## **Where they Work: The Physical Environment**

The physical location of telerik, which houses approximately 180 in-country employees, is a lot like the company - new, young, growing and exciting. On top of a modern glass six-story building in southeast Sofia, one finds the new home of telerik. The name of the company sits atop the one wing of the building, visible from the main road. There are no signs inside the building, but one finds the entrance to telerik by going to the fourth floor, the only one accessible without an identification card. For visitors, this path leads to the reception area, whereas employees can disembark on any floor and might be heading to the kitchen to get a beer for lunch, to the playroom to play a game of ping-pong, to the “quiet room” for a quick nap or for a quiet chat with a friend, or to office manager’s team area to visit the telerik library.

Work at Telerik is done by teams in large, open rooms, with modern white modular desks with Telerik green accents. In the center of most rooms, one finds a hive of four linked desks and pairs of partnered desks around the edges of the team room. People are always moving in Telerik and although people are assigned to teams for certain lengths of time, they move from place to place. Team members sit with each other to discuss project aspects, or wander in and out, getting food or drink, visiting with other teams.

Each of the four founders of the company, who are also the top executives, has a desk within team areas in the company. There are no “executive suites” or senior management offices - they work among the teams. This does not mean they are doing the work with the teams; rather, they are “living” with the teams and helping establish a culture of availability, transparency, and involvement. They see this as part of modeling behavior. These senior managers rotate from team to team, moving each six to nine months. This allows them to know immediately and intimately what is happening in the teams and to be a true part of the working culture at Telerik.

### **How they Work: Developing Software at Telerik**

Work at Telerik is done in teams, from the top level of senior management to the first level employees. While the senior managers work among actual project teams, they do communicate with each other almost constantly through instant messaging, and often review each other’s e-mails. They walk around, they talk, they question, they prod, and they facilitate. This way, senior management knows what is happening and can directly impact the products and services, and, most importantly, help build the culture. They are not involved directly in day-to-day operational decision-making, but are actively engaged in assisting teams and individuals in specific tasks, such as assessing competitive stands and advising on industry trends. While they do set the overall business strategy, the role of middle managers is critical at Telerik. These 15 team leaders and unit managers are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the company and for ensuring the effective operation of the teams.

The software developers at Telerik are organized into one (or more) product teams, with each team charged with developing products for a particular Microsoft technology. So, one team is assigned to develop controls for ASP.NET AJAX; another team assigned for WPF controls, another to Sitefinity development; and so. In this way, each team builds up expertise in developing products for one particular Microsoft technology.

Telerik has evolved an innovative approach to software development. Typically, there are 7-10 people in a team (but sometimes there are more), and each team is responsible for developing, shipping and supporting its products. Teams, in this way, develop “ownership” of their products. In order to support this approach, each team has a mix of people with different expertise in every area of software development such as analysis, design and programming. Each team has a team leader (usually the most senior technical person), and a separate unit manager who functions as a project manager, ensuring that

the product schedule is adhered to. Unit managers are also responsible for cross-team communication with non-technical teams such as marketing, sales, etc. The team leader is responsible for the performance of the whole team and represents it in front of senior management. He is also the person who is responsible for team organization, work assignments, disciplinary, or policy matters, and is also responsible for the career growth of the people in his team. All members of a team sit and work in an open-plan office, thus allowing quick verbal communication between the members. This also builds up a feeling of camaraderie and team spirit. The teams have lots of autonomy and decision-making power. This helps shape the team into one supportive unit.

The software development teams use a selection of techniques derived from the two main methodologies of agile development known as Extreme Programming and Scrum Development. Every morning, the developers in each team stand around in a circle for about 15 minutes – the so-called “scrum” – and each tells the rest of the team what he did yesterday in terms of product development, what he hopes to do today, and tells of any problems encountered. Software is often developed using Pair Programming – two developers sit at the same PC, with one typing in program code, while the other comments and offers advice and suggestions. Closely associated with the development of the software is Test-Driven Development – every few lines of code are thoroughly tested to be functionally correct before the developers move on.

Depending on the complexity, a new product, say a UI control, may be developed by a single member of a team, or by the whole team. The product’s full functionality is developed in an incremental, iterative manner. The prior analysis of the product’s required functionality will have revealed a list of features that the product must have or support. Each software increment to the product comprises one or more of these features. At telerik, an increment typically will be developed over a 7- to 14-day time period – the so-called “sprint”. This form of development continues in an iterative manner until the full functionality of the product is achieved. If the developers are not sure about a particular feature, they may implement a “spike” – a rough-and-ready prototype that allows them to learn more about the feature and how it may be correctly developed.

This development of the product may take three to nine months, according to its complexity. As well as new product development, the teams are responsible for fixing “bugs” in existing products and extending them with new features, as well as customer support.

The product teams keep in very close contact with the customers, either via phone, email, blogs, surveys, polls, and support feedback. In this way, telerik not only finds out about problems with its software, but also, through this very open dialogue, has a better feel for what the customers want in terms of improvements to existing products and requirements for new products.

Most product lines have three release dates per year – one during each of the first three quarters of the year. The actual release dates are determined by senior management in



conjunction with the team leaders, based on the teams' work load and other factors such as national holidays, staff holidays, etc.

When a new product idea or area is identified, a new team may be created to develop this new product. Currently, Telerik has approximately 15 teams, all working on a variety of different projects, and all using each others' products as appropriate. From past experience, the CEOs estimate that it takes approximately six months to get a team to productivity, 12 months to get a product to market, and 18 months for a product to get traction. This is the planning cycle for Telerik. There are no five year plans - only project plans.

In addition to the product teams, Telerik also has other teams responsible for sales, marketing, graphic design, etc. These teams ensure that the software products are ready for the market and their release is backed up by advertising campaigns, sales support, etc. Telerik also has two further teams who are concerned with the company's infrastructure – a web team responsible for the development and maintenance of Telerik's large, diverse website, and an administration team looking after the proper functioning of office facilities, networks and computers.

Customers regularly submit e-mail "support tickets," which are questions about products or problems encountered while using them. Team members review their team in-box daily and respond to these tickets quickly. Resulting fixes are distributed to all customers on a daily or weekly basis.

Communication is seen as critical in Telerik and all employees are expected to be communicating with other employees, professional peers, customers, user groups, distributors, bloggers, and anyone else who might have information related to Telerik products and processes. Regularly employees tweet and blog, and continuously mine for company- and product-related data. The company blog is quite well populated and on 3 February, 2009, one of the CEOs, Vassil Terziev, announced an upcoming product release by challenging individuals through a blog to guess the new product by answering a riddle. The individual who answered the riddle, and thus identified the product, would win a highly-prized, limited-edition Telerik t-shirt. Telerik uses this method which they call "viral marketing" to bond their customers and "friends" to the company, while creating excitement about the product releases. Not to miss out on the more traditional methods for working with customers and interested parties, the company also holds an annual conference in Sofia for .NET developers, called DevReach.

Each quarter, team leaders attend a company-wide leadership meeting where all projects are openly discussed and analyzed. These are not meetings for the timid or defensive. The expectation is that all 25-30 people attending the meeting, which includes the company's senior management, will be active, critical, open, and receptive. Defensiveness is not allowed and all questions and ideas are expected and open. A leader who cannot take criticism, and who cannot respond well to new ideas, will not survive in this environment.

## Human Resource Management at telerik: Human Capital

Human resource functions at telerik are managed by the Human Capital Manager, Hristo Georgiev. Although initially reluctant to separate human capital functions (their term) from other activities at telerik, the CEOs finally were persuaded by an internship proposal by Hristo, while he was still at university, to expand professional activities in this area. Hristo “lives” in the marketing team, and works directly with Vassil to find the best and most capable people to become employees at telerik. telerik has a very stable workforce, with only a five to six percent employee turnover which generally occurs only in the first four to six months of employment.

Job openings are posted on the company blogs and web pages, on industry blogs, and on news groups, as well as social networking websites such as Twitter and Facebook. It is not unusual for users of telerik products to apply for positions with the company. Exhibit 3 shows a recent recruitment posting on the telerik Careers webpage. To further identify talent, strong relationships have been developed with certain universities, including the American University in Bulgaria, where three of the founders graduated.

**The Opportunity**

You are ambitious. You are motivated. You have ideals. You want to work on cutting edge projects. You prefer the we to the I. You are not afraid of change. You are not afraid of challenges. You have a true passion for what you do. You have dreams and you want to make them a reality. You hate mediocrity. You love Dilbert but you hate working in Dilbert's company.

You've always wanted to work in a great company. A company without politics. A company with a streamlined process. A place where people are just as smart as you. A place where everyone's relaxed. A place without a strict dress code. A place with nice people. A place where people care about their work and about customers. A company where you can give life to your ideas and make an impact. A place where you're happy to spend a great deal of your day. A place where you are happy to learn and to teach. A company where you are valued. A company where you feel you belong.

18 May 2009 [www.telerik.com/company/careers.aspx](http://www.telerik.com/company/careers.aspx)

Exhibit 3. Job Posting

Potential employees are interviewed by a team of three to four current employees who question candidates, basically focusing on “fit” with the company’s culture. The team decision on hiring must be unanimous or hiring does not occur, a decision procedure that is quite unusual in Central and Eastern Europe.

Orientation at telerik is a long-term process. Newly-hired employees are assigned coaches, mentors, and leaders, in addition to working with Hristo in Human Capital. The coach, the “domain specialist,” helps the individual with technical content, while the mentor, a more senior person, assists the new employee in cultural assimilation. Along

with the team leader, the employee's functional manager working with him regularly on task assignments, these individuals help the new employee to become a productive employee at telerik as quickly as possible. To further facilitate the development of strong leadership within telerik and to ensure organizational learning, career ladders with detailed job descriptions for all position categories were developed. Included in these documents are requirements that senior individuals spend time with more junior employees to help with development, including "open hours."

Although the company demands hard and competent work from its employees, it pays very well and provides a supportive environment. The pay is higher than the country and region for the software development industry, and is becoming comparable to salaries in Western Europe. Their performance management system includes quarterly reviews, with the possibility of raises and bonuses at each point, and stock options for individuals who are fully integrated (longer term) employees. Each employee receives an end-of-the-year bonus called "the 13<sup>th</sup> month salary." The company provides employee a benefits package that is generous and broad, including education, fitness, social, and health programs. This package includes flexible working hours, complete medical, life and injury coverage, and a voluntary pension insurance, in addition to the required government programs. They also fully fund professional development activities, including team building, training and certification courses. One of the newest benefits provided is a company-wide Personal Assistant to provide concierge services for employees. This includes assisting employees with activities that might take time away from work, such as purchasing tickets for sporting events or concerts, having automobiles repairs, and running other errands.

### **Why they do it: telerik's philosophy**

telerik describes itself in its materials and talks openly about "The telerik Difference". This description of its values and operating ideals is written for customers, but is also a true statement of the expectations it has for its employees. A copy of these values is included in Appendix A.

telerik's materials include its often-repeated mission of "deliver more than expected". This mission goes not just for the products and services, but goes for the company and each of its employees. The company is committed to delivering the best it can to each and every employee and expects the same of the employees.

"Fit" is critical at telerik, where the organization functions much like a family. There is a belief that knowledge spreads best in a family-based environment and that families have the best social networks, with built-in responsibility and accountability, along with commitment.

As with any family, trust is key in this company and it is built through open and on-going communication, through transparency in actions, and through accessibility to all members of the organization. Vassil and Svetozar agree that their job is to align people with

priorities, stating that they do this by surrounding their employees with other talented and ambitious people, all of whom want to work and achieve. Svetozar says that he has tried to build a culture that is where he and his friends want to work - a group of committed people who want to work together and who like what they do.

Unlike in other companies where failure is tantamount to career suicide, at telerik people are expected, and even encouraged, to fail. Their culture, like culture in many businesses, has been built on trial-and-error, and Vassil believes that work must allow for “controlled failure.” He likens it to a child learning about getting a burned hand from a hot stove: he does it once and will not do it again. The same holds true in telerik: failure is expected and acceptable, as long as it does not occur in the same way again. Making the same mistake over and over, according to Svetozar, is “just stupid.”

And, stupidity is not tolerated in telerik. What is the definition of stupid at this company? Stupid is repeating a mistake multiple times; stupid is ignoring customers’ feedback; stupid is not listening to a fellow employee; stupid is treating other people disrespectfully; stupid is not learning from other people; stupid is having a big ego and using it in the workplace; and, above all, stupid is being unfair - unfair to customers, employees, or others. You cannot be stupid and work at telerik. That would, of course, be stupid.

So, how does one succeed at telerik? In the words of the co-CEOs, one must work hard, be a good person, treat others with respect, be reasonable, and be sensible. In the words used in some popular management literature, one must do what one learned in kindergarten: be a good person.

Communication is an organizational mandate for everyone at telerik, but this does not mean that one can say and do anything. The “mortal sin” at telerik is attacking and making things personal. The employee who communicates by attacking a person will be taken aside and coached, with a focus on identifying his own deficiencies and developing better communication skills. “Naming and blaming” is not acceptable as a method of explanation, rather individuals publicly must take responsibility for their actions, with rationality and analysis.

This does not mean people at telerik are not emotional. In fact, they have lots of initiative, they are outspoken, they are aggressive, and they may even be seen as fanatical. Candor is appreciated and debate is encouraged. The family of telerik is not a silent and reserved family, but rather is one that values vocal, energetic and frequent communication. It is a loud and boisterous family.

### **The future for telerik**

As telerik continues its development of new products for Microsoft platforms, and as it continues to expand into new markets, it must be prepared to face the challenges of growth and increasing competition. The acquisition and retention of talent is key in any

knowledge-based organization, but particularly at an organization like telerik that relies heavily upon its employees for product identification and development. Software development companies have been hit hard by competition. With the entry of Bulgaria into the European Union, and the resulting availability of new markets of employment for its citizens, the “brain drain” from Bulgaria into other European countries can potentially cause problems for telerik.

Teamwork has been an important success factor at telerik, and research indicates that the development and management of teamwork, as a basic organizational process, becomes increasing complex as organizations grow in size. telerik implemented agile development in 2006, and its scrum processes in 2007, in response to rapid growth to facilitate coordination and communication in planning. It also implemented a process of commitment to tasks through “commitment sheets.” If telerik’s growth from four employees to over 200 worldwide in the past seven years continues into the future, the senior management will face challenges in managing the team processes that have been so successful for product development and customer service.

At telerik, culture is critical. In fact, one can argue that “the telerik difference” is the culture of the organization. As the company grows in size and in number of locations, it will be critical for the company to understand the implications of this growth on the culture, and to take the necessary steps to ensure the survival and integrity of the organizational culture.

## Conclusion

Other software companies such as Google and Microsoft are noted for their open cultures and inviting physical setting, and it would not be surprising to find this type of work ethic in Silicon Valley, California. However, telerik is in the Balkans, in Eastern Europe, a region more accustomed to structured and closed companies, foreboding environments, and autocratic and remote management.

So, how does telerik emphasize an employee-centered and idea-friendly environment in a region that is not used to such things? How do the company, its leaders and employees bring revolution in business in the Balkans?

telerik succeeds each and every day and develops world-class products by:

1. practicing good management through delegation and modeling;
2. designing effective organizational structure in the form of teams;
3. the extensive use of organizational tools for communication and development;
4. listening to both customers and employees;
5. having good personal skills, with an emphasis on minimizing egos;
6. building a strong family climate;
7. integrating values; and,
8. not being stupid.



The message at telerik is consistent and loud. Not only do the senior managers “walk the talk,” they ARE the talk. And they expect every single person at telerik to do the same. They have high expectations and employees deliver.

The founders have established a company that provides an environment they like, and they bring people together who also like the company and its environment. To them, the equation is very simple. Good business is not sophisticated and it is not difficult. In fact, the two CEOs are perplexed when asked, “Why are you so successful?” They answer that management is common sense, and at telerik, you do the right things the right way. What could be simpler than that? Anything else would be stupid.

## **Appendix A: the telerik Values**

### **The telerik Difference**

With so many great choices out there, you inevitably ask yourself – “Why should I choose telerik? What makes them different? What makes them better?” It’s a difficult question and it’s hard to be impartial when you have to evaluate yourself, however, we’ve listed 10 things that we believe set us apart from others:

#### **Respect**

We listen to our customers. We take into account your needs and work on things that deliver value for you. We consider our customers as friends and we treat them like friends - with respect, honesty, understanding and genuine desire to help. And not with “let’s agree to respect each other’s views, no matter how wrong yours may be”.

#### **Dedication**

We don’t let customers down and you can rely on us. We understand that by selecting a third-party component for your projects, you are taking a risk as you are using someone else’s code. We hope that serious issues will never arise, but should they arise, we will be there for you.

#### **Precision**

"Ultimate customer service" is our Holy Grail. We offer developer tools and we know how important it is to get top-quality responses from knowledgeable people. Support inquiries at telerik are handled by experienced developers, including all of the people that built the products you are using, and they can answer your questions with precision and help you overcome the issues you face.

#### **Innovation**

We innovate and don’t imitate. By selecting telerik, you select a company with a proven track record of innovation and you will always be ready for the next technology wave. Regardless of whether it is WPF, Silverlight, ASP.NET MVC, or something else, we will be ready with tools to facilitate your development. And we will have unique capabilities that will set us, and your applications, apart from others.

#### **Leadership**

For us being #2 is good but simply not good enough and we'll never be content if we can't offer you the absolutely best products on the market – products with unmatched performance, features, customizability, and reliability that will make you a hero in your daily job. That is our “best of breed” strategy – we work hard to deliver market leaders and not just quantity.

## **Speed**

We offer the most aggressive product development cycle. With every telerik release you will see new products, new features, new demos and constant improvement across all product lines.

## **Quality**

To make a great developer product takes not just features but stability. We've got great developers who can do miracles and deliver great software, but we have a strong QA team as well. We are relentless about quality and we test everything we ship. And we test it hard.

## **Involvement**

Our products are used by tens of thousands of customers worldwide. By choosing telerik, you will join a strong community that can help you just as well as the telerik team.

## **NO nonsense**

We offer hassle-free licensing - per developer, with royalty free distribution and full source code. As a telerik customer, you can be confident that your application will NEVER blow-up because of a license key error as we don't believe in activations. We want to keep things simple and stay focused on delivering solid software rather than solid licensing.

## **Care**

We keep customers happy even if we have to go the extra mile. If you are not sure about this, you can see what customers are saying. Why not be the next to join the ranks of happy telerik customers?

<http://www.telerik.com/company/about/difference.aspx>