

THE IMPACT OF LEADER'S TEMPERAMENT ON WORK ABSENCE

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Abstract

The aim of the paper is to show how the temperament of leaders has an effect on temporary absence from work in public administration and may potentially be one of the causes of temporary absence from work. Research on Slovenian public administration was conducted in February 2015 and involved 3,220 respondents. A quantitative research method (survey) was used to collect the data which were then analyzed with the SPSS statistical program and Microsoft Excel.

The results of the research reveal that leaders' temperaments have a statistically significant effect on temporary absence from work in public administration. The effect is evident both in the number of days as well as in the number of occurrences of absence from work. The survey results show that public administration is dominated by leaders with choleric (45%) and phlegmatic temperaments (41%). Employees with a leader with a melancholic temperament were absent from work the most (11.7 days), followed by those working under a sanguine leader (10.6 days); the greatest frequency of absence were reported for employees with a sanguine leader (1.9 times), and the fewest for those with a melancholic leader (1.5 times).

Keywords: temporary absence from work, personal traits, temperament, leader, public administration.

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1. Introduction

Employees may be absent from work due to leave, training, business trips, tardiness, illness, injury, to care for family members, etc. Reasons for absenteeism differ (Johns, 1997; Evans and Palmer, 2000; Ones, Viswesvaran and Schmidt, 2003; Allebeck and Mastekaasa, 2004), and the time component (duration) extends from the shortest possible absence (tardiness, time for lunch) to the maximum possible absence (extended sick leave or disability). It is therefore necessary to be aware that when talking about absence from work, reasons for absence may differ, and that with this in mind, an appropriate definition of absence from work should be used. In cases where employees are absent from work due to personal illness or injury or to care for family members, their absence is treated as temporary from the temporal point of view, and the term temporary absence from work is used. Other terms for temporary absence from work can also be found in the literature, such as medical absenteeism, absenteeism, temporary inability to attend work, etc. Cascio (2003) claims that absenteeism means the inability of a worker to stay at work as planned, regardless of the reason. Løkke, Eskildsen and Jensen (2007) explain absenteeism as the lack of the physical presence of an employee at a certain location and at a time when social expectations towards the employee exist, namely that the employee will appear at the expected location and within the agreed-upon time.

Using data¹ from the National Institute for Public Health (hereinafter NIPH) the research found that the share of temporary absence from work in Slovenia declined from 4.18% in 2009 to 4.08% in 2013 (and that it continues to decline (see Table 1). The share for 2012 is an exception; however, looking at the number of calendar days lost it seems that even in 2012 fewer calendar days were lost due to temporary absence from work compared to previous years (NIPH, undated).

Statistics for Slovenian public administration reveal the following shares of calendar days lost due to temporary absence from work: 6.8% in 2013, 8.5% in 2012 and 4.2% in 2009 (Table 1). Comparing the NIPH² statistics on temporary absence from

1 After reviewing the statistics, we found that data from the NIPH and from the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia (hereinafter HIIS) were not the same.

2 NIPH captures statistics on temporary absence from work in public administration from the records of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter SURS). In order to correctly interpret the data for public administration, the field of public administration needed to be specified. According to the SURS classification, public administration includes activities which public administration typically deals with. Legal or institutional status is not by itself a determining factor for classification. The field of public administration includes units that are part of local, regional and national administrations that enable the community to function correctly. Public administration includes general public administration activities, health care management, education, cultural services and other social services; it excludes compulsory social security, managing economic sectors with the aim of achieving enhanced efficiency, foreign affairs, defense, justice, activities for public order and safety and civil defense and disaster relief (a more detailed presentation of the activities can be found in the annex to the article).

work from throughout Slovenia with the statistics for public administration, the share of days lost due to absence in the public sector can be seen to be higher and to have effectively grown³ from 2009 to 2013. The data for public administration confirms that a larger number of calendar days are lost in this sector due to temporary absence. This finding is not surprising, since in all other countries figures for temporary absence from work are higher for the public sector (public administration) than for the private sector.

Table 1: Lost calendar days due to health absenteeism in Slovenia and public administration

Year	Number of calendar days lost in Slovenia	Percentage of calendar days lost in Slovenia (%)	Number of calendar days lost in public administration	Percentage of calendar days lost in public administration (%)
2009	13,325,384	4.18	825,786	4.2
2010	12,808,242	4.09	874,405	4.5
2011	12,539,064	4.05	1,210,853	4.0
2012	12,354,286	4.23	1,580,814	8.5
2013	11,880,378	4.08	1,248,895	6.8

Source: NIPH (undated) and SURS (undated)

In our opinion the reasons behind the higher rate of temporary absence from work in Slovenian public administration are multifaceted; Løkke, Eskildsen and Jensen (2007), Allebeck and Mastekaasa (2004), Evans and Palmer (2000) (among others) share the same opinion. At the same time, we feel that the most influential factors behind temporary absence from work are of an ‘informal’ nature and as such are often ‘hidden’. These factors include inadequate psychosocial working conditions (bad relations among co-workers or with executives), the approach of a public administration organization’s management, management’s behavior towards employees and in some cases poor physical working conditions (Rajbhandarya and Basu, 2010; Robertson and Flint-Taylor, 2009; Bourbonnais *et al.*, 2005; Allebeck and Mastekaasa, 2004; Lowe, Schellenberg and Shannon, 2003; Kivimäki *et al.*, 2000).

The present article has the following objectives:

- To discuss/analyze leaders’ temperaments impact on temporary absence of public employees; and
- To analyze the complex relationship between the extent (number of days/number of occurrences) of temporary employees’ absence and leaders’ temperaments in Slovenian public administration.

The main purpose of the paper is to show the impact of leaders’ temperaments on temporary absence from work in public administration and to use the survey results to argue the importance of leaders’ temperaments in the context of reducing temporary absence from work in public administration.

³ The largest number of calendar days lost per employee in public administration was noted in 2012 (30.9 calendar days), and the fewest calendar days were lost in 2011 (14.7 calendar days).

2. Methods

The study, which culled data from Slovenian public administration in February 2015, examined whether a leader’s temperament affects temporary absence from work. Due to the high degree of temporary absence from work in public administration, there was an assumption that specific reasons linked to leadership exist in this particular working environment which contribute to the high share of absence. Proceeding from this assumption, the research focused on leaders, specifically on their temperament, as the researchers felt it would make sense to seek the causes for temporary absence from work in leaders’ attitudes.

The study was based on Ekstrand’s (2015) view that an individual has one dominant temperament and one sub-temperament. Both temperaments were deduced from an analysis of the survey responses. The respondents gave answers on a scale of one to five to express the extent to which their leaders displayed the listed personality traits; the latter were defined as pairs of oppositions, with each pole falling within one of the temperament categories. Table 2 shows the personality traits used to define each temperament category.

Table 2: Description of temperament categories

Temperament	Description of temperament categories
Sanguine (SA)	unreliability, carelessness, indecisiveness, disorganization, openness, liveliness, eloquence, curiosity, joy, companionship
Choleric (CH)	restlessness, impatience, rudeness (in the sense of arrogance), impulsiveness, openness, diligence, bravery, curiosity, determination, organization, excitement, pro-activeness
Phlegmatic (PH)	passivity, lack of curiosity (in)decisiveness, apathy, procrastination, reliability, diligence, calmness, impatience, courtesy, composure, sobriety
Melancholic (ME)	depression, fear, silence, thoughtfulness, sadness, reticence, organization, sobriety

Source: adapted from Ekstrand (2015)

Some personality traits fit the characteristics of more than one type of temperament⁴ (Table 2), and this also had to be taken into account in the research (for example, openness can be characteristic of both sanguine and choleric temperaments).

⁴ In the paper the goal was to determine a dominant temperament and a sub-temperament using two aspects: a basic and a supplementary aspect. With the basic aspect, the dominant basic temperament is that temperament whose personal traits describe, on average and to the greatest possible extent, an individual; sub-temperament is defined as that temperament which describes an individual to the greatest possible extent immediately after the dominant temperament. In cases where a dominant temperament or sub-temperament could not be determined, the supplementary aspect was introduced to obtain additional information for determining the temperament that, on average and to the greatest extent, describes the individual. The supplementary aspect therefore functions as a supplement to the basic aspect, because it involves specific operations that are only used when the basic operations cannot adequately determine a temperament.

2.1. Instrument

As part of the research and data analysis, quantitative research and methods were used to obtain reliable and verifiable results or findings. Data for the study were collected with a web questionnaire created using the *Ika* online tool. Firstly, all highest representatives of public institutions (ministers, mayors, etc.) in Slovenia were contacted via e-mail (and telephone) and a Web questionnaire was then sent to highest representatives who then sent it to their employees. The empirical data were statistically processed using the SPSS software tool and Microsoft Excel. The questionnaire was structured into three sets of questions:

- Six short open- and close-ended questions about the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents: such as the organization where they are employed, their area of work, gender, year of birth (age), level of education and length of service at the current organization;
- Questions about temporary absence from work. This set contains seven short open- and close-ended questions intended to assess the occurrence of temporary absence from work in the past 12 months, reasons for absence and the frequency of temporary absence from work in the past 12 months measured as the number of days and number of occurrences (how many times) of absence; and
- A set of questions that includes eighteen pairs of personality traits, each pair consisting of two opposite poles of traits. Survey respondents assessed, on a scale of one to five, the extent to which each trait describes their own personality and their leader's personality. The pairs of personality traits⁵ were listed in random order. When forming the pairs of personality traits attributed to the four types of temperaments, theoretical knowledge about temperament from a number of different experts was consulted (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1985; Littauer and Littauer, 1999; and Ekstrand, 2015).

2.2. Research target group

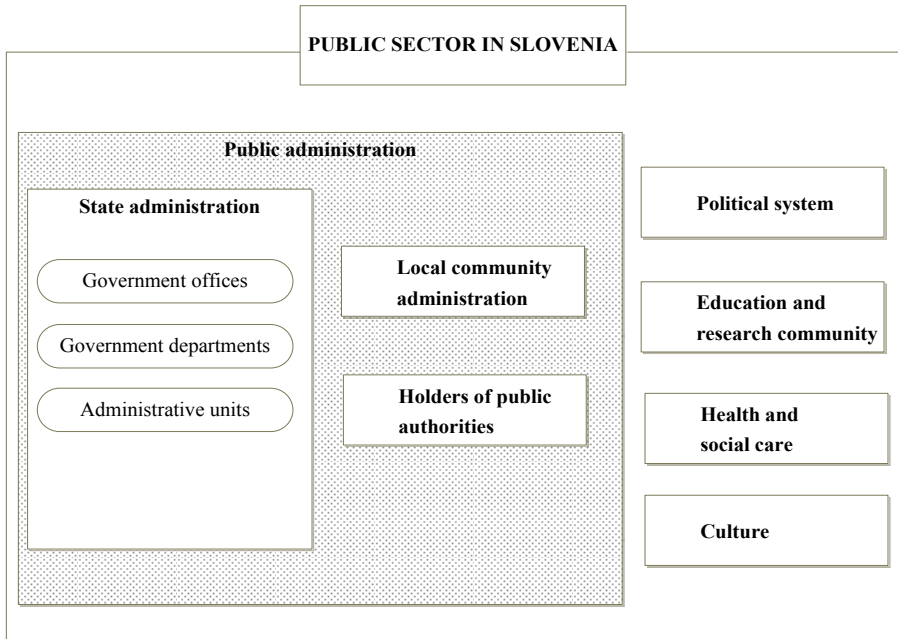
In the framework of this paper, public administration is understood as all those organizations that are part of the decision-making process on public issues or which participate in the management of public affairs. Public administration therefore encompasses state administration (government offices, government departments, and administrative units), local community administration and holders of public⁶ authorities. Employees throughout public administration were the target group of the survey (i.e., all public sector institutions, including government offices, local communities

5 A set of personality traits was prepared on the basis of the descriptions of temperament categories developed by Eysenck and Eysenck (1985), Littauer and Littauer (1999) and Ekstrand (2015).

6 Holders of public authorities are physical and legal persons and others who belong to public administration – public agencies, public funds, some public institutions (the Pension and Disability Insurance Institute of Slovenia, the Employment Service of Slovenia, centers for social work, etc.) and chambers with compulsory membership (Tičar and Rakar, 2011).

and holders of public authorities). Only full-time employed public employees (civil servants) from public administration (see gray shaded cell in Table 3) were included in the survey.

Table 3: Public sector in Slovenia



Source: Setnikar Cankar *et al.* (2008)

The study included 3,042 respondents; the sample captured 3,042 employees in public administration, which represents 8.1% of the total population employed in public administration. Table 4 shows the distribution of employees by the type of organization and type of employees. In Table 4 leaders with more or less than 30 employees are heads of the departments and heads of sectors at the ministries (director of directorate). Highest public leaders are heads of administrative units in Slovenia, directors of agencies, directors of government services, director of the Employment Service of Slovenia, etc.

Broken down by type of public administration organization, 69.4% of those included in the sample were employed in state administration, 11.3% were employed in local government and 19.3% were holders of public authorities. The latter are physical and legal persons and others who were authorized by public entity to perform state or local community administration tasks. The most represented area of work or type of employees in the survey were officials⁷ (58.9%); they also made up the largest share of respondents from state administration (60.5%).

⁷ Here the term officials designates those officials who do not perform management tasks and/or who are not in leadership positions.

Table 4: Distribution of employees by the type of organization and type of employees

Type of public administration organization	Professional technical staff	Professional technical staff (leaders)	Public officials	Leaders with less than 30 employees	Leaders with more than 30 employees	Highest public leaders	Others	TOTAL
State administration	522	26	1,278	45	200	37	3	2,111
	24.7%	1.2 %	60.5%	2.1%	9.5%	1.8%	0.1%	69.4%
Local administration	114	6	174	2	40	7	0	343
	33.2%	1.7%	50.7%	0.6%	11.7%	2.0%	0.0%	11.3%
Holders of public authorities	177	17	341	7	38	7	1	588
	30.1%	2.9%	58.0%	1.2%	6.5%	1.2%	0.2%	19.3%
TOTAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	813 (26.7%)	49 (1.6%)	1,793 (58.9%)	54 (1.8%)	278 (9.1%)	51 (1.7%)	4 (0.1%)	3,042

Source: Own calculations

The next most-represented area of work was professional-technical staff (26.7%), who account for the highest share in local government (33.2%) and the lowest share in state administration (24.7%). Slightly fewer than one tenth (9.1%) of those surveyed were officials in leadership positions at organizational units with up to 30 direct subordinates. Other areas of work in the overall sample structure have shares of less than 2%. More than three-quarters of the respondents were female (76.1%) and less than a quarter were male (23.9%). Most respondents in the sample were between 35 and 44 years of age (36.9%) and between 45 and 54 years of age (34.7%). Only civil servants were included in our research.

3. Results

The survey conducted as part of the research shows that the respondents predominantly identified their immediate superiors in public administration with personality traits that are typical of choleric and phlegmatic temperaments. Table 5 reveals the noticeable presence of leaders with temperaments described as choleric (45%) and phlegmatic (41%), while temperaments that could be described as sanguine (7%) and melancholic (8%) are less prevalent among leaders. Choleric (35%) and phlegmatic (29%) temperaments were also prevalent among sub-temperaments. The most common combination was a dominant choleric temperament with a phlegmatic sub-temperament.

Taking into account an analysis of the survey results (Table 6) and temporary absence from work in the past 12 months as the number of days of temporary absence from work, it is possible to conclude that employee absenteeism differs depending on the leader's temperament, and that these differences are statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 14$; $p < 0.01$). The survey results show that from those employees who were temporarily

Table 5: Leaders' dominant temperaments and sub-temperaments

	DOMINANT TEMPERAMENT		SUB-TEMPERAMENTS							
			Sanguine		Choleric		Phlegmatic		Melancholic	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Sanguine	168	7%			82	48.8%	79	47.0%	7	4.2%
Choleric	1093	45%	337	30.8%			650	59.5%	106	9.7%
Phlegmatic	1003	41%	191	19.0%	577	57.5%			235	23.4%
Melancholic	192	8%	8	4.2%	54	28.1%	130	67.7%		
TOTAL	2456		536	21.8%	713	29.0%	859	35.0%	348	14.2%

Source: Own calculations

absent from work the most have leaders with melancholic (11.7 days) and sanguine temperaments (10.6 days). Employees whose leaders have a choleric (8.4 days) or phlegmatic (8.5 days) temperament were temporarily absent the least. Statistically significant differences appear for temporary absence due to personal illness or injury ($\chi^2 = 19.03$; $p < 0.01$), mental pressure and stress in the work environment ($\chi^2 = 13.72$; $p < 0.01$) and other causes ($\chi^2 = 15.16$; $p < 0.01$).

Table 6: Average number of days absent and the results of a Kruskal-Wallis test for leaders' temperaments and specific reasons for temporary absence (descriptive statistics)

		N	AS	SD	Kruskal-Wallis test		
					χ^2	df	p
Care for or illness of dependent family member	SA	86	3.94	9.06	3.17	3	0.367
	CH	658	2.88	6.85			
	PH	585	2.96	6.49			
	ME	87	2.52	4.56			
Personal illness or injury (at or outside work)	SA	132	9.38	20.61	19.03	3	0.000
	CH	900	7.07	18.12			
	PH	804	7.58	18.46			
	ME	164	11.60	30.21			
Mental pressure and stress in the workplace	SA	56	0.96	2.24	13.72	3	0.003
	CH	454	1.54	10.44			
	PH	399	0.94	4.66			
	ME	65	1.69	5.23			
Other causes of absenteeism not linked to illness, injury or pressure	SA	56	2.73	11.47	15.16	3	0.002
	CH	448	0.51	3.19			
	PH	386	0.63	4.40			
	ME	58	0.09	0.34			
TOTAL	SA	168	10.62	21.53	14.00	3	0.003
	CH	1091	8.42	19.90			
	PH	997	8.47	18.06			
	ME	192	11.65	28.31			

Notes: N - number of responses; AS - arithmetic mean; SD - standard deviation; df - degrees of freedom; p - level of statistical significance; SA - sanguine; CH - choleric; PH - phlegmatic; ME - melancholic.

Source: Own calculations

Employees with leaders with a melancholic temperament were temporarily absent from work due to personal illness or injury the most (Table 6, 11.6 days), while those with choleric managers were temporarily absent for these reasons the least (7.1 days). Employees whose superiors had melancholic (1.7 days) and choleric (1.5 days) temperaments recorded the longest temporary absence from work due to mental pressure and stress in the workplace, while those whose leaders have a sanguine (1 day) or phlegmatic temperament (0.9 days) were absent the least for these reasons. Other causes not related to illness, injury or pressure/stress accounted for the longest temporary absence among employees whose managers have a sanguine temperament (2.7 days); other employees were absent much less often due to other reasons.

Employees whose leaders were described as sanguine (Tables 6 and Annex A) were temporarily absent from work for significantly longer periods of time than employees whose leaders have a choleric or phlegmatic temperament, both in total days of temporary absence and absence due to personal illness or injury and other causes. Employees with sanguine leaders were temporarily absent due to mental pressure and stress in the workplace significantly less than those with choleric leaders, but significantly more than those whose leaders have a phlegmatic temperament.

No statistically significant differences in temporary absence from work were found between employees with phlegmatic and employees with choleric leaders. Similarly, the difference between employees under managers with sanguine and those under managers with melancholic temperaments was not found to be statistically significant.

Employees whose leaders could be described as melancholic (see Annex A) were temporarily absent from work longer than those with choleric or phlegmatic leaders, and this difference was found to be present and statistically significant in total temporary absence from work as well as in absence due to personal illness or injury and mental pressure and stress in the workplace.

As the survey results (Table 7) show, in the past 12 months leaders' temperaments also had a statistically significant impact on temporary absence from work measured as the number of occurrences of temporary absence from work ($\chi^2 = 10.51$; $p < 0.05$). The most instances of temporary absence from work were found with respect to employees whose managers have a sanguine temperament (1.9 times), and the fewest for employees whose managers have a melancholic, phlegmatic or choleric temperament (1.5 times).

The number of occurrences of temporary absence from work due to the illness or to care for a dependent family member is roughly the same across temperaments (Table 7); in this case, temperament cannot be said to significantly affect temporary absence. Statistically significant differences between different temperaments were however noted for occurrences of temporary absence due to personal illness or injury ($\chi^2 = 18.59$; $p < 0.01$), mental pressure and stress in the work environment ($\chi^2 = 14.67$; $p < 0.01$) and other causes ($\chi^2 = 14.62$; $p < 0.01$).

Table 7: Average number of occurrences of temporary absence and the results of a Kruskal-Wallis test for leaders' temperaments and reasons for temporary absence

		N	AS	SD	Kruskal-Wallis test		
					χ^2	df	p
Care for or illness of dependent family member	SA	85	1.40	2.33	3.71	3	0.294
	CH	658	1.06	2.06			
	PH	581	1.06	2.33			
	ME	87	1.06	1.73			
Personal illness or injury (at or outside work)	SA	130	1.25	1.38	18.59	3	0.000
	CH	896	0.86	1.19			
	PH	800	0.98	1.54			
	ME	161	1.09	1.11			
Mental pressure and stress in the workplace	SA	56	0.30	0.71	14.67	3	0.002
	CH	454	0.12	0.80			
	PH	398	0.15	0.65			
	ME	65	0.25	0.64			
Other causes of absenteeism not linked to illness, injury or pressure	SA	56	0.27	0.67	14.62	3	0.002
	CH	447	0.12	0.74			
	PH	387	0.13	0.76			
	ME	58	0.22	0.88			
TOTAL	SA	168	1.86	2.69	10.51	3	0.015
	CH	1091	1.45	2.35			
	PH	997	1.52	2.51			
	ME	192	1.54	1.84			

Notes: N - number of responses; AS - arithmetic mean; SD - standard deviation; df - degrees of freedom; p - level of statistical significance; SA - sanguine; CH - choleric; PH - phlegmatic; ME - melancholic.

Source: Own calculations

Employees whose managers have a sanguine temperament had the highest number of occurrences of absence due to personal illness or injury (1.3 times), while employees whose leaders have a choleric temperament had the fewest (0.9 times). Employees whose leaders have a melancholic or sanguine temperament (0.3 times) had the highest number of occurrences of absence due to exposure to mental pressure and stress in the workplace, while employees working under phlegmatic (0.2 times) or choleric (0.1 times) leaders had the fewest occurrences of temporary absence due to this reason.

Employees whose managers have a sanguine (0.3 times) or melancholic temperament (0.2 times) recorded the largest number of occurrences of temporary absence due to other causes not related to illness, injury and pressure; other employees were absent for other reasons to a lesser extent (0.1 times).

In the past 12 months, employees whose leaders are described as sanguine (Annex B) had significantly more occurrences of temporary absence from work than employees whose leaders are choleric or phlegmatic; this is true for both total occurrences of temporary absence and absence due to personal illness or injuries, mental pressure and stress in the work environment and other causes. Employees whose leaders are

melancholic had more occurrences of temporary absence than those whose leaders are choleric or phlegmatic; the difference was statistically significant for absence due to personal illness or injury and mental pressure and stress in the work environment. The number of total occurrences of temporary absence for this group was also found to be significantly higher than for employees with choleric leaders.

No statistically significant differences in the number of occurrences of temporary absence from work were noted in a comparison of employees with phlegmatic (Annex B) and employees with choleric leaders. Similarly, statistically significant differences in occurrences of temporary absence were not found between employees with a sanguine and employees with a melancholic leader.

As such, our key research findings are the following:

- The leaders' temperaments mostly associated with temporary absence from work are melancholic and sanguine;
- Employees with a leader with a melancholic temperament were absent from work the most, followed by those working under a sanguine leader;
- Empirical results demonstrate that leaders with a choleric temperament create a welcoming working environment, because under their leadership employees are the least absent from work due to illness or injury. On the other hand, under choleric leadership employees are quite absent due to mental pressure and stress in the workplace; and
- Leadership temperament mostly associated with absence due to illness, mental pressure and stress is melancholic.

4. Discussion

The aim of the study was to determine whether leaders' temperaments impact the temporary absence of employees from work in public administration. The results showed that employees (respondents) felt that public administration is dominated by leaders with choleric and phlegmatic temperaments. A leader's temperament was found to be an influential factor in the temporary absence of employees from work, with the only exception being temporary absence due to the illness of, or care for a dependent family member. On average, employees whose leaders were described as melancholic were absent from work the longest, while employees whose leaders are sanguine had the most instances of absence. Employees whose leaders are choleric or phlegmatic were temporarily absent from work the least.

These results can be interpreted to mean that those employees who are temporarily absent from work in public administration longer and more often are those whose leaders have, on the one hand, traits such as (1) pessimism, depression, sadness, fear, poor ability to work under pressure or to do things perfectly or thoroughly, and, on the other, features such as (2) unreliability, frequent disorganization and a nonchalant attitude towards work, flexibility and the constant search for social contact or entertainment.

Another aspect can also be reasonably interpreted in this context, namely that those employees whose leaders have features such as good organization, responsibility,

commitment, unwillingness to leave things to chance, care for or control of work situations, calmness, reliability, consistency, delegation of tasks and perseverance are less absent (in terms of both length of absence and number of occurrences) and that the difference is statistically significant. These observations make it possible to identify two groups of employees who are absent from work the most:

- those working in circumstances where their leaders are non-optimistic, depressed, withdrawn, unable to work under pressure and often overly focused on perfection and/or prefer to work alone; and
- those working in situations where they do not perceive (sense) that work is adequately organized and where things are left to chance and leaders are unreliable, absent-minded, prone to put off tasks and always in search of relaxation, flexibility and/or entertainment.

In line with the results presented here, policy makers will need to decide what measures to put in place to effectively reduce absenteeism. Results indicate the need of preliminary verification of temperament and personal characteristics of the applicant before being appointed for position, because this is beneficial from several aspects. The results of our survey show only one aspect of how temperament of leaders has an effect on temporary absence from work.

The research method developed here may be used by public practitioners for preliminary testing of leaders, which may offer additional information about leaders before hiring. The obtained results may present a basis for discussion between leader and future employee and may help to choose the right employee for the work team with the aim to decrease temporary work absence and improve work relationships. At the same time, it seems important that psychological testing (temperament, cognitive ability, emotional functioning, etc.) should be standardized for all leader positions.

We believe that by changing or improving the attitude of management towards employees and creating a safe public administration working environment designed to provide adequate challenges, the rate of temporary employee absence can be reduced. In this context, it would be wise to devote attention to the individual treatment of employees. Positive psychology encourages us to think and act in the direction of identifying all those positive elements in a public administration working environment which cause employees with leaders with choleric and phlegmatic traits to miss fewer days of work and miss work less frequently. Another challenge involves finding a way to further enhance those elements which lead employees with particular types of temperaments to be more consistently present in the workplace (the aspect of presentism).

5. Conclusion

Temporary absence from work spans a broad field of interpretation and understanding, not least of all because, as a phenomenon, it can be difficult to get a handle on as the factors that cause the temporary absence of employees from work are in fact manifold.

On the basis of the results of our research, we found that a leader's temperament can also affect the temporary absence of employees in public administration and can therefore be classified as an influential underlying factor in the temporary absence of employees from work. This finding suggests that it makes sense to pay attention to the personality traits of leaders.

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Annexes

Annex A: A series of post-hoc tests (Mann-Whitney U test) with pairs of leaders' temperaments and the average number of days absent

SA - CH		SA - PH		SA - ME		CH - PH		CH - ME		PH - ME	
U	p	U	p	U	p	U	p	U	p	U	p
Personal illness or injury (at or outside work)											
49,630	0.001	45,669	0.007	10,656	0.814	352,969	0.358	62,285	0.001	57,326	0.006
Mental pressure and stress in the workplace (including pressure/stress due to leaders' behavior)											
11,333	0.004	10,111	0.022	1,816	0.972	89,341	0.446	13,256	0.005	11,812	0.022
Other causes of absenteeism not linked to illness, injury or pressure											
10,970	0.000	9,417	0.000	1,429	0.053	86,114	0.792	12,829	0.695	11,001	0.581
TOTAL											
80,201	0.006	75,616	0.036	16,053	0.938	527,626	0.216	91,573	0.004	86,454	0.027

Notes: U – value of the Mann-Whitney test; p – statistical significance; SA – sanguine; CH - choleric; PH - phlegmatic; ME – melancholic.

Source: Own calculations

Annex B: A series of post-hoc tests (Mann-Whitney U test) with pairs of temperaments and the average number of occurrences of temporary absence

SA - CH		SA - PH		SA - ME		CH - PH		CH - ME		PH - ME	
U	p	U	p	U	p	U	P	U	p	U	p
Personal illness or injury (at or outside work)											
487,00	0,001	44,659	0.006	10,179	0.674	351,245	0.444	61,427	0.001	56,271	0.007
Mental pressure and stress in the workplace (including pressure/stress due to leaders' behavior)											
11,251	0.003	10,020	0.014	1,790	0.810	89,208	0.477	13,243	0.004	11,789	0.021
Other causes of absenteeism not linked to illness, injury or pressure											
10,944	0.000	9,480	0.001	1,462	0.106	86,471	0.986	12,711	0.536	11,012	0.555
TOTAL											
81,398	0.013	76,212	0.050	15,888	0.800	531,093	0.326	93,953	0.016	87,964	0.062

Notes: U - value of the Mann-Whitney test; p - statistical significance; SA - sanguine; CH - choleric; PH - phlegmatic; ME – melancholic.

Source: Own calculations