This article has as start point the following question: “Why do we work?” Identifying at least three different answers, I consider that the attitude throughout work can be shaped based on these issue. At the first level, the value of work is based on the assumption that by work, the human being provides his living existence. On the second level, it is considered that the work supplies opportunities for self-expression, identity, drawing talent and enriching the personality. And on the last level, it is identified a new perspective upon work – as a reconciliation between private interest and public good. At each level, my aim is to present the status quo, but also the possible distresses when the value of work is bounded to one purpose, for example what happens if throughout our activity we are only absorbed to procure the supply basic needs or only to define our identity. If the attitude towards work specific for the first two levels is focused on "the desire to consumption", I consider that at the third level, the ethics governing employees shifted to “desire to production”. That means that workforce is not only interested in economic rewards nor the gratification of self fulfillment or professional accomplishment, - aspects relevant on what one can receive- but it is focused on how it can be help full for the organization or for society, being concern upon on what it can offer, making a reconciliation between private interest and public good.

Keywords: work ethics, attitudes throughout work, economical and social reward
JEL: J30, J41, J50,

Introduction
The first article was focused on presenting some ethical issues and problems which encounter the relation firm-employee. But taking knowledge about empirical evidences without seeking benchmarks for ideal conditions, or the desired ones, minimizes the objectives of this research. Therefore, my aim is to drift from the descriptive site to the normative and prescriptive one, from “how it is” to “how should it be” and "how to get there”. The presentation of the effects requires an approach to causes. In this respect, I intent to follow up mainly the anthropological and social side of work. This approach will conduct us to a better understanding and analysis of accurate determinations. Starting from the question: "why do we work?", the following responses can be considered relevant:

1. by work, the human being provides his living existence;
2. work supplies opportunities for self-expression, identity, drawing talent and enriching the personality;
3. one desire of human being is to find himself useful and needed in the society; this device can be accomplished by his work done with the aim to serve the other.

In order to analyze the dynamics of the work ethic in Romanian Companies, I will dispose the three answers mentioned above. On this sense, the terms used to illustrate different stages in the work ethic will be: work ethic on the first level (specific to the first response) work ethic on the second and third level. Throughout this demarcation of work ethic on three levels, I do not intend to relativize this concept. On the contrary, I consider that the intrinsic value of work remains the same on each level. This differentiation is based only on methodological reasons, in order to
apprehend more explicitly, how the workforce aligns with the value of work, when it is concentrated on one function of work.

**Level I – work as a resort for ensuring existence**

Based on historical landmarks, which was tangential debate on the first article, I notice that the work has been seen throughout time, as the main resort for ensuring existence. We can recognize that one of the specific purposes of work is to enable man to obtain his basic needs. In this sense, work is valued not for the virtue of work itself, but for what could be purchased with the wages that were provided. Thus work becomes a means to maintain a certain lifestyle. Numerous investigations (Marsh 2010:2, Lancaster, Stillman, 2003, Marston 2007) consider that in the early twentieth century, “doing good” was equated with working hard; happiness was the result of the hard day’s work. But nowadays, as Marsh (2010:2) noted: “doing good shifted away from the work being done and was measured by what could be purchased based on the market value of the job”.

Those persons, who limit the purpose of work to what they can obtain later, define their existence throughout what they have and not throughout what they are. If the material world, on which they anchor and which gives them an identity, is destroyed, life itself has no purpose. This way of life leads to what Bauman (1998) calls the “aesthetic consumption”. Thereby, we understand that the need to work harder, but not necessarily better, is aimed by the desire to have more. So what ought to be a "balanced life" - the division between work and personal life (Pahl 1995:16) - has become a life controlled by the desires and needs. Heschel (2001:193) argues in a convincing manner that "whoever decides to use the realities of life as means to satisfy his own desires that will soon give up his liberty, will decline to the status of a tool, acquiring more things will be enslaved of them".

The work ethic specific to this level can be resumed to what Fukuyama (1998:28) summarized in the following words: the general trend of the working population to wake up every morning and work long hours with physical or mental sacrifices". The underlying motive behind this trend is financial reward. The promise of a win increases the availability of work. We are entitled to take this approach as being rational, because nobody wants to work all life without avail. Therefore, the function of work ethic at this level is simply reduced to solving the money problem. In this situation, the activity of many employees is not supported by a conscientious behavior, but a social mimicry, having the ability to adapt to various situations to gain certain advantages. In these conditions, a person works especially when he is seen by others when he is monitored by a superior. When he knows that he is no longer supervised, his attitude is radically changed. In the community, he poses his commitment, but in privacy he gives evidence of superficiality, a lack of discipline shown by dispersion or disorganization time work schedule. He is oriented towards achieving immediate benefits, the degree of involvement and identification with the organization is very low, showing instability at work and limited loyalty. When problems occur, he considers himself a victim of circumstances, having no power to take responsibility. The restrain of work only to the function of purchasing the basic goods, can conduct to a lack of consideration for the work. This aspect leads to a reduction of involvement, lack of discipline, "money are put before professionalism and reward before the work" (Heintz 2005:18-19).

So far, there is one research about work ethic specific to Romanian conducted by Monica Heintz, based on study cases. The study confirms the presence of numerous cases in which labor practices are not necessarily the reflection of some intrinsic values of work, but the result of some external constraints. Similarly, my research confirmed that ethical issues related to work lie on the focus of employee upon immediate benefits and the desire to obtain a higher gain. I also argued that financial pressures, with the two extremes - the compulsion or desire to have more - have the highest impact to promote the implementation of unethical practices. In conclusion, we believe that the limiting approach to work only at this level, have a much higher willingness to do
"acceptable cheating" (Heintz 2005:72), as the main reason is to seek additional sources of income or the need to survive.

Revising some ethnographic sources to analyze how work is appreciated in our country, we concluded that its activity is often presented as being superficial and less profound, only to meet personal needs, some attributes specific for the work ethic at the first level. Our philosopher Emil Cioran (1996:32) considers that the laziness of the Romanian people is proverbial, and Nicolae Iorga (1998:502-503) analyzing some periods from our history appreciates that the Romanians had no interest to work harder, as it was necessary to survive because in this condition, from their work will benefit other occupying imperialists. Nistor Popescu (2003:88) synthesizing the negative features of the physiognomy of the Romanian people recalls: work jumps, split, passivity and tendency to start something hard and very easy to give up.

**Level II – work as a source for identity and self-expression**

The second level of work ethic, is based on the premise that the work is part of our identity "expresses and enriches the personality" (Somerville 1999:42) and illustrates a fundamental dimension of our humanity. Freud (apud. Somerville 1999:43) states that work is has the function to ensure a life balance: "Recognizing the importance of the work, we contribute more than any other technique of life, to closer links between reality and the individual, through work it is indeed in solitary attached to a part of reality: the human community." Similarly, the economist Ha Joan Chan (2011:106) believes that "we are the result of our work experience, so the place where we work and how we do it affects our identity."

Work enriches and develops self-esteem, giving dignity. Often we are used to identify ourselves by our profession when we say: I am a teacher, a doctor, an economist, etc. Those who barely manage to fit in work field are gripped by "a sense of failure" and the effects may alter the balance in society.

When a person identifies with the work he has done, his degree of involvement is much higher. I consider that work ethic at this level is based primarily on a good effort, supported by a disciplined and responsible behavior. A sign of good work is even offered by the positive way in which the employees talk about their activities. Various researches (Wüstner 2006:136-140) argue that job satisfaction is afforded by the balance between expected results and rewards received.

However there is a specific danger to those who try to make from their work the only way to succeed in life because they identify personal fulfillment with professional success. They seem to live only to work so all activities are subordinated to the construction and/or enhance a career. These issues are materialized in overtime hours at work, neglect of family duties and reducing order free time spent in recreational or social activities.

The research conduct by Eurofound (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions) presents the main changes over time, on working conditions. Even if the proportion of the workforce with over time activities (over 48 hours per week) in the EU27 fell from 15% in 2000 to 12% in 2010, these studies show that work intensity has increased with a negative impact on the health condition, and nearly a fifth of European workers have difficulty in obtaining a satisfactory balance between work and private life (Eurofound Report 2011:1-6).

Karoshi syndrome – which earmarked the situation when an employee dies because of the overtime work, mainly specific to Japanese-, is more pregnant in our work conditions. These problems are not restricted to managerial positions, but are specific to those who consider naturally to devote all the time, all efforts for their work, or “to hide anxiety in work" (Heintz 2005:10).

The priority given to personal fulfillment through work, as well as the race for maximum productivity, is an encouragement of competition in work. To obtain a position in the social hierarchy, others have to be overcome. This involves a competitive spirit, something often
considered favorable because it favors progress, avoiding hazards routine, laziness, work done improper, leading to increased effectiveness and productivity. But this "limitlessness of work" (Heintz 2005:7) becomes questionable whether the motive is the desire to dominate the others, to show superiority, and the bias to accumulate experience consists only in the desire to have more power.

Competition without reserve can lead to a situation in which the other colleagues are considered rivals, who must be defeated. Bell (1976:49) summarizes the situation by the following statement: "Behind the chiliasm of modern man is the megalomania of self-infinitisation. In consequence, the modern hubris is the refusal to accept limits, the insistence on continually reaching out". Although this description might be considered hard in words, we have to recognize that many of our motivations for a hard work are based on our comparison with the others. Similarly, Konrad Lorenz (2001:39) considers "man’s race against himself" one of the eight deadly sins of civilized humanity, conducting to "blinding greed for money" and "enervating haste." Analyzing the facts, we see that these two concepts are not foreign to current practices. Greed triumphs over prudence (Stiglitz 2010) and exhausting rush drives people to compete, generating the fear of being overtaken in the race, determining an excessive focus on immediate results, a short-term vision. But this fear, not only robs the human being of one of his essential quality - reflection - but it also leads to use various unethical practices. For example, we can mention the concernment of economic agents to sell a product less relevant in a given situation - when the client hasn’t all the relevant information – because in this way he will exceed his target, or will achieve a social or financial reward.

This dialectical approach about competition in the labor force leads us to conclude that its effects may be diametrically opposite, with positive or negative impact. Often, the assessment of a competitive environment is limited to favorable aspects, being ignore the negative one. This perspective: that the encouraging of a very strong competition can facilitate unethical practices is neglected by many managers. Lorenz (2001:39) sustains that “under the pressure of interhuman competition all that is good and useful for humanity as a whole as well as for the individual human being, has been completely set aside.”

Based on the presupposition that the large companies offer more opportunities for achieving the highest professional level, and therefore favorize a climate for a strong competition, my research looked for a correlation between strong competition and unethical practices. 850 managers from different companies in Romania were asked to select three causes for unethical practices from a list of eight causes. One of this was the “strong competition”. The table below summarizes the obtained results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Companies:</th>
<th>1-9 employees</th>
<th>10-49 employees</th>
<th>49-249 employees</th>
<th>Over 250 employees</th>
<th>Results from the sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relativ value for &quot;strong competition&quot; as the main cause for unethical behavior</td>
<td>9 %</td>
<td>11,5 %</td>
<td>15,3%</td>
<td>30,8 %</td>
<td>11,0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analyzing these results, it is obvious that managers who manage companies with a few employees, do not see the strong competition as a key factor of unethical practices. These issues are due to the fact that the desire for professional achievement is not so broad in these companies. It is important to mention that as far as the number of employees increases, the strong competition tends to be one of the main causes of unethical behavior, reaching from the last position, in fourth place. These results reinforce the above statements: that limiting the value of work to desire of self-assertion, can lead to negative consequences.

**Level III – work as a reconciliation between private interest and public good**

In order to illustrate how I understand the work ethic specific to the third level or how work should be subordinated to the goal of being useful to society, I will take as a starting point J.J.Rousseau's social contract theory undergone by the allegory of deer hunting. If a deer was to be taken, all hunters saw that, in order to succeed, they must abide faithfully by their post: but if a hare happened to come within the reach of any one of them, it is not to be doubted that he pursued it without scruple, and, having seized his prey, cared very little, if by so doing he caused his companions to miss theirs (Rousseau, 1973 86-7). The key feature in Rousseau’s example seems to be that the participants are not committed to each other in any way. Those who too readily chase a passing rabbit will find themselves not invited to future stag hunts. Hence those with the self-discipline to accept a short-term loss for the sake of a longer-term gain will be rewarded. If everyone went their separate ways, they would achieve modest benefits. However, with the continued co-operation of others, they can each do better. A surplus is possible, compared to independent action.

**Some attributes and conclusion upon the work ethics**

Taking in account the specific attributes to work ethics at each level, it is obvious that work ethics at the third level offers a greater consideration to the human being as a workforce. Some key-features of the work ethic at this level might be:

- Employee retains the freedom of conscience and their own reasoning, being accountable for the way in which this freedom to carry out his duties (Young 2009:187);
- The development of a psychological comfort is achieved through work discipline, responsibility, respect for work performed by others. Often the pursuit of debt is hindered by dependence on the results of work produced by another employee. Starting meetings tardily, the lack of punctuality, may lead to personal offending, while punctuality avoids loosing the time and energy resulting from expectations and the achievement of maximum efficiency.
- A proper time administration. More likely when we exercise our activities we are based on the concept of Benjamin Franklin that "time is money" as it is reflected in Max Weber's work (1998:45). The logic of capitalism leads to the conclusion that time is "expensive". In this way, time management is "a reflection of the desire for power: to possess metaphysical uncertainty, to master the own time and others' (Heintz 2005:137). These issues can lead to an intensification of the work, so far that the workforce is no long considered an aim but a mean for some targets, being affecting the principle of
human dignity. A proper time management is not limited to the situation of performing a task in a record time, but it is specific to a correct report on duties.

- The employment seeks to avoid any conduct or unproductive competence conflict between departments or within their relationships with managers. It is not denigrated the image of other colleagues, gossip is refused, maintaining loyalty to the absent ones;
- The workforce is truly concerned about the quality of products and services offered by the company, being not concern on immediate benefits;
- The employees are involved in various voluntary activities or community service. Recent research conduct by European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working (2011) shows that Romania has a relatively low level of volunteering along with Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Ireland, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. Only 10-19% of adults have attended a volunteer activity in 2010, while in countries like Austria, Netherlands, Sweden and the UK the rate goes up to 40%.
- Workforce demonstrates loyalty to the organization in which they operate. In times of economic difficulties, they remain committed to the company being aware of the social impact of its abolition. This kind of relationship is built on mutual commitment for both parties. A proper example in this sense is supplied by Malden Mills Company. In December 1995, the company was destroyed in a fire. After this event, the owner Aaron Feuerstein continued to pay his 3000 employees their full salary for the next six month while the factory was been repaired.

Work ethic at this level is not based on various psychological and social interventions. In this sense, the employee is not designed to work only under certain incentives but based on ethical commitment, endorsed by both sides. No part looks at its own advantages, but a reciprocal account, based on the win-win position; it is what in Levinas words means *concern for the Other*. A company which these specific attributes, succeed to induce loyalty to the employees on the basis of what it offers. Its declared values are sustained by facts and there is no discrepancy between them. Specific to this situation is the harvest principle: *one will reap what he is sowing*.

Finally, to synthesize the approach to the work on three levels, we present a well-known parable of three builders, who were making the same activity. Being asked one by one what they are doing, each gave a different answer, according to the perspective they had about the value of work. The first said that he is "carving in stone", the second one considered that he builds up and the third one said that he is "building a cathedral for the benefit of the people and to the glory of God."

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