

# New Leadership: demanding, rewarding – inevitable

## A challenging journey

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### **The wake up call**

The signs that new, different, radically innovative approaches and a new understanding are needed in leadership, management, and organization are clear and obvious, and cannot be ignored by doing nothing. The keywords and topics are well known: the increasing dominance of new technologies/AI; fundamental changes in macroeconomic constellations, structures, and global power relations, which clearly make a new world order inevitable – but one that is still very uncertain and controversial; the increasing disregard for people in politics, society, and working life, accompanied by a loss of trust; the new purpose of the current generation, especially in the area of “life domain balance,” and more. Conclusion: if we want to keep what we love, we have to change everything.

### **Transformation**

In recent years, the understanding of leadership has essentially focused on inspiring and motivating others with one's own visions. The leader as a role model who has well-defined values and convictions and exemplifies them. This interpretation has led to the familiar structures and processes in working life – and has been highly successful for decades.

Today and in the future, everyone involved in a team or institution wants and needs to inspire, motivate, and take responsibility for successful collaboration—that's the big difference. In other words, according to the old terminology, top down and bottom up, i.e., the use of decentralized intelligence, i.e., the integration of AI as a real team member. Knowledge is accessible to all and everyone contributes their expertise. These requirements are still unfamiliar to many employees and employers. An additional important factor in this new interpretation of leadership is that companies of all kinds must pursue a common, well-known purpose that is lived by all in order to see and fulfill the meaning of their activities. Those who are not prepared to do so must leave the group.

### **New tasks and responsibilities**

This places significantly higher demands on everyone involved, whether in society or in working life. Systems are becoming more complex, rates of change more frequent and short-term, and with them an understanding of new leadership. The pressure on people to perform is constantly increasing. Efficiency and goals focused solely on quantity are no longer sufficient; they are necessary for measuring the financial success of a company or institution, but when viewed in the overall context of success, they clearly take a back seat. The word “exactly,” “what do you mean exactly,” is very common in everyday use today; on closer inspection, however, there is no such thing as “exactly,” or at least only in rare cases; not everything is measurable or provable.

No member of the team can claim to be “right” – it takes openness, respect for the opinions and interpretations of other members of the team, and mental strength to be able to face the fear of being the loser. Intellectual modesty is required. This is often very difficult for many of those involved due to their in-depth training in technical matters. Successful cooperation is based on mutual trust, a willingness to forgive, openness, resilience, and the courage to fail and learn from it—lifelong learning. Many people today have these necessary skills and insights, but many do not, or are not willing to use them in the team, which leads to individuals being overwhelmed. The exponential increase in burn-on and burn-out cases, mental illness—especially among young people—and the resulting hype surrounding coaching speak for themselves.

So are leadership and management outdated in today's working life? Certainly not. On the contrary, leadership is no longer the task and function of a few, as in the old leadership model, but of everyone.

### **Content of new Leadership**

A personal view of key components :

- Young people must be much better prepared for the workplace and their roles in society before they enter the workforce. Self-management, including personal responsibility, self-awareness, and self-development, must be learned and consistently applied by everyone involved. This is primarily the responsibility of parents, schools, and universities, but also of training managers in companies. Resilience at the individual and organizational level and its concrete application are concrete success factors. The old adage still applies, but has even greater significance in new leadership: those who cannot lead themselves cannot lead others.
- The indifference that is clearly prevalent in affluent societies, i.e., the trait of people who accept circumstances and events without judging them, or individuals who cultivate emotional detachment or disinterest. This topic needs to be given more attention. Living human closeness in daily operations, celebrating successes together, showing meaningful generosity, and, above all, addressing individuals' fears in a meaningful way are core elements of optimal collaboration and thus of new leadership.
- Self-organization is a key success factor for New Leadership; it represents the appropriate organizational model. It is well known, but still too rarely applied in practice. Science pays far too little attention to the topic and often fails to make important research results available in practice in a way that generates value.
- In New Leadership, the “functional team” is the fifth factor of production alongside labor, land, capital, and knowledge. (Geramanis, Selbstorganisation macht Sinn ; Versus 2025). Cooperation must be worthwhile; this requires coordination, every member of the team must know how to behave and everyone must know how the others behave.
- Leadership is more important than ever in New Leadership. In order to achieve economic success and thus survive, to know and meet the needs of customers, to ensure the shared purpose and thus enable all those involved to find meaning in their work, clear decision-making processes, transparency, rules of conduct for emergencies, and a willingness to talk to each other are needed, even when the atmosphere in day-to-day business is tense. A lack of leadership very often leads to bureaucracy, excessive regulations, and a loss of trust.

## **Conclusion**

New leadership is an absolute necessity in today's society and institutions; it is a must and not a question of whether or not. The content is complex and subject to ongoing change. There is hope that convincing results from various disciplines of scientific research will find their way into concrete application in practice much more effectively. The focus is on the demand: We must talk to each other, regardless of the political, ethical, moral, and cultural convictions of individuals.

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