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Epidemiological studies show that the prevalence of mental disorders is extremely high across the globe (World Health Organization, 2011). Moreover, and what is perhaps more concerning is the fact that, despite numerous existing evidence-based treatments for various mental disorders, more than half of those in need of specialized mental health services don't access it and/or do not have access to these treatments (Alonso et al., 2004c; Kohn, Saxena, Levav, & Saraceno, 2004; Wang et al., 2005). Thus, developing and disseminating accessible evidence-based protocols for various clinical conditions are key goals in mental health. This effort would nicely complement the efforts of the American Psychological Association (see Division 12's List of evidence-based treatments), National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (see NICE's Guidelines) and Cochrane Reviews (see Cochrane analyses of various clinical protocols) that identified evidence-based treatments for various clinical conditions, based on rigorous literature analyses. However, once identified, one needs a detailed published clinical protocol to deliver those treatments in research, clinical practice, and/or training (see David & Montgomery, 2011). Please submit your proposal to Series Editor Daniel David: daniel.david@ubbcluj.ro.

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The Future of Leadership – An Explorative Study into Tomorrow's Leadership Challenges

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The future of leadership depends on connecting people in different ways, in order to expand the collective area of thought and action.
(Daniela Eberhardt)

My Personal Motivation and Thank You

To work with people, to lead them and the fortunes of an organization is versatile, enriching and at times demanding. Almost 30 years ago, at the beginning of my professional life, I was given the opportunity to provide in a team with leadership experts leadership trainings. Very soon my own expertise was enhanced by leadership consulting, applied leadership research, the conceptional design and implementation of management systems and processes and the education of students. In all of those years, I was able to experience in various leadership roles the day-to-day business of leadership and how to lead change processes. As is always the way with intensive experience and research: the more thoroughly you consider a topic, the more questions will arise. The realization of "Think Thank: The Future of Leadership" was a matter close to my heart. The exchange with experienced leadership experts from different industries and disciplines gave me the opportunity to reflect on the issue of "The Future of Leadership" and to gather new insights. The collected findings are summarized in a systematic way and made available to readers.

A warm thank you goes to all people who supported me and us in this work on the future of leadership. To be able to take time out from everyday life and to reflect with thought leaders, professionals and experts on the future of leadership is a privilege. This unique chance was given to me during a sabbatical, which I was able to take as the Director of Institute of Applied Sciences at Zürich University of Applied Sciences during the summer of 2013. I would like to thank Christoph Steinebach, the Director of the Department of Applied Psychology, for making this time out and sabbatical stay in San Francisco and surrounding, and consequently this explorative study on the future of leadership possible.

A special thank you goes to all interview partners, which provided their fascinating perspectives on this topic:

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The Future of Leadership: Summary

How will future social, economic and corporate trends affect leaders? What do leaders need to successfully shape the future? What will strengthen leaders in their position? These questions were presented to 20 leadership experts, senior consultants, outstanding academic leadership experts, senior and top managers in an explorative interview study. The interviewees were selected from a part of the world where innovation is business as usual: San Francisco Bay Area and Silicon Valley. On the basis of the following five future megatrends, the study strived to define future leadership developments: Individualization, Transition to Flexibility, Demography, Rapid Social and Economic Changes, Social Responsibility and Sustainability.

The interview analyses include questions which stimulate the reflection about upcoming leadership challenges and future work spaces. Addressed leadership challenges include, for instance, operating in increasingly complex and flexible organizational models and working methods. Further identified leadership challenges in the interviews include working in environments which will be transformed by technological developments and an increasingly diverse workforce, which will require, more than ever, the productive cooperation between generations, sexes and cultures.

The Individualization Megatrend

According to the interviewed experts, the trend individualization suggests that future leaders will have employees who hold highly individualized ideas and wishes and who can act flexibly in different roles. Sometimes employees will work together with colleagues, then with partners, then with business rivals. Workers are aware of their professional abilities and what to expect from modern working settings – and put forward respective demands. Thus, it will become increasingly important to adopt a flexible leadership style in order to build relationships and, more than ever, to balance diverging interests. Or, to quote Carole Robin, who is responsible for

leadership training at the MBA program at Stanford University: "Leadership is going to become more and more about being good at influencing others."

The Transition to Flexibility Megatrend

The interviewed experts believe that employees gather their information from various sources, practice extensive networking and hold a number of more or less reliable friendships. For leadership, transition to flexibility describes the provision of orientation in rapidly changing structures. The complexity and amount of data has to be disassembled into useful units. Virtual and face-to-face communications have to be adjusted accordingly. The key aspect will no longer be to provide employees with information, but to provide focus within the complexity of given information and options. Jeffrey Pfeffer, professor of organizational behavior at Stanford University, states: "So it's become a difference in degree rather than kind, but the leaders still need to keep people focused on what they need to be doing, and the people need to keep themselves focused of what they need to be doing."

The Demography Megatrend: The Aspect of Age

For leadership this trend means, in the opinion of experts, to convey important information according to the preferences and strengths of various age groups through online channels (for the "digital natives") and in direct conversations. It is equally important to create awareness for the specific characteristics of different age groups, to allow for positive encounters and forms of cooperation between generations, for example in mixed-age teams. Lifelong learning, knowledge transfer and mutual mentoring between generations represent additional opportunities of bringing different age groups together.

The Demography Megatrend: The Aspect of Gender

For the future of leadership, the interviewed experts recommend adding the topic of gender equality to leaders' agenda. To build a gender-sensitive culture, provide networks and mentor schemes, pay attention to a balanced workforce via human resource strategies and proceed in a gender-neutral manner in talent management. For the trend demography, Ravi, co-founder of The Hive, describes this issue in a nutshell: "If you are not taking the best elements and best resources that are available you are hurting your own ability to run a great organization. You're limiting yourself. And so that is kind of a mistaken notion that homogeneity can kind of help reduce friction and that's good, but that's not really the case if you want a high performing organization."

The Rapid Social and Economic Changes Megatrend

Regarding this trend and future leadership, the experts recommend a promotion of cultural diversity, personal development of one's own way of thinking and expanding one's horizon. It is about connecting people with different cultural backgrounds to build and lead intercultural teams, and to quickly adapt one's personal leadership style in light of rapid economic, national and political changes. Ed Chaffin, founder of Uncommon Leadership Institute, summarizes the issue as follows: "We have become interconnected across cultures, across economies and the leaders, who doesn't understand the different motivations of people from different cultures is not going to survive, and will not be the leaders who develop the next generation of leaders."

The Social Responsibility and Sustainability Megatrend

Leadership experts demand a balance between profit and responsibility in leadership practices, that all employees act as role models and stand up for sustainable practices. It is about dedication to sustainable leadership, a sharpening of one's own perception of sustainable management and the establishment of feedback loops including a communication of managerial consequences. In order to initiate change and awareness processes Ed Schein recommends to proceed top down: "Top-down always is the only way you can begin a cultural change."

Main Conclusions for the Future of Leadership

The leaders of the future will not only need to be more proactive than ever but also have to respond to a variety of short-term requirements. Various technical and social skills such as communication via social media and new forms of transparency, networking, communication and coordination are classified as central leadership skills. Altered environments such as the digital transformation, demographic trends and the global nature of business require, and enable, new forms of cooperation between people with widely varying backgrounds, linked by new forms of communication worldwide. The expectations and opportunities will become more diverse as the pace of action and availability of possible courses of action will continuously increase. Organizations, groups and individuals have not increased their repertoire of actions to the same extent as these diverse claims have evolved: We all hold a certain (limited) repertoire of action that has always assisted us and that we reactivate for the accomplishment of new tasks. It remains questionable, however, whether our long-established behavioral and perception patterns, alongside increasing work pressure and even faster changing work environment, are enough to cope with future challenges.

We do not only witness growing corporate challenges such as rapid innovation cycles, technological development, global orientation of companies and new ways of working. The individual claims of corporate actors are becoming more diverse and more individualized and are increasingly claimed by employees. The implications for leaders relate to the growing complexity in leadership and a challenge to align these individual claims to the needs of the organization. In order to cope with the corresponding intensification of leadership dilemma, resilient leaders are in demand. These leaders know what they stand for, stand up for the concerns of the organization and the people and have access to sufficient personal resources.

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