

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

WWW.CIKD.CA

journal homepage: <https://www.ijol.cikd.ca>



Future of Work: New Work as a Saviour?

Matthias Achim Teichert^{1*}, Richard Pospisil², Daniel Patrick Brugger³, Marcus Lödige⁴

¹Fortschritt GmbH in Frankfurt am Main, Germany & Faculty of Business and Economics, Mendel University Brno

²Department of Economics and Managerial Studies, Faculty of Arts, Palacky University in Olomouc, Czech

³Fortschritt GmbH in Frankfurt am Main, Germany

⁴Fortschritt GmbH in Frankfurt am Main, Germany & German Sport University Cologne, Germany

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Future of work, Demands on leadership, Group comparisons, Organisational model, Principle of future of work

Received

07 October 2023

Received in revised form

11 November 2023

Accepted

17 November 2023

*Correspondence:

m_a_teichert@yahoo.de

The world of work is in a state of permanent change, which is currently taking place at great speed - not least due to the Corona pandemic. In addition, however, dynamics that existed even before the pandemic are having an impact on companies and are giving rise to a new understanding of work. The acute shortage of skilled workers and managers in many sectors means that many companies are unable to fill their vacancies with suitably qualified staff. In the competition for new staff, companies are increasingly confronted with Generation Z, whose expectations and wishes of a potential employer differ greatly from existing corporate cultures and values. In combination with other megatrends, such as connectivity (digitalisation), individualisation, and knowledge culture, the relevance of the future of work, i.e. the totality of modern and flexible forms of work and work organisation, is increasing massively. This study, therefore, addresses the following areas: Principle of the future of work, demands on leadership and organisational model, and group comparisons.

©CIKD Publishing

The world of work today is the product of permanent change that has always existed. However, the Corona pandemic and the changes in the framework conditions that accompanied it acted as an "accelerant" on this development. Many companies were literally forced "overnight" to

enable virtual working and home offices and to introduce digital collaboration tools in order to remain workable, a scenario that was considered impossible for many organisations until then. This flexibilisation of work location - and to some extent also working time - is often already referred to as New Work in the social discussion. However, the origin of the New Work idea goes back several decades. In 1980, the social philosopher and anthropologist Frithjof Bergmann defined the theory of the "transformation of work", which was intended to reverse the capitalist model of work (Bergmann, 2020). Instead of seeing work as a means to an end, people and their needs come to the fore. New Work does not refer to a specific work model but rather unites all initiatives and measures that serve to redesign working worlds in order to be prepared for the challenges of the future.

Parallel to the transformation of the world of work, Germany has been experiencing a dramatic increase in the shortage of skilled workers and managers in many sectors for years. Particularly in rural regions, small and medium-sized enterprises are affected by this development. Nationwide, the number of vacancies rose to a new high of a good 558,000 in March (Hickmann & Malin, 2022).

The competition for qualified managers is also increasingly shifting from Germany to other EU countries. The already existing shortage is further exacerbated by this "brain drain" (migration of (highly) qualified workers abroad) and poses existential challenges for medium-sized companies in particular. Almost two-thirds of companies with up to 500 employees can hardly find suitable experts on the domestic labour market, and the trend is rising (Mayer, 2021). Frequent reasons for migration are often better working or research conditions as well as higher remuneration. Historically, correlations between the departure of experts and managers and better working conditions (focus: implementation of New Work concepts) could also be proven.

In the competition for new staff, companies are increasingly confronted with Generations Y (1981 - 1995) and Z (1996 - 2010), whose expectations and wishes of a potential employer differ greatly from existing corporate cultures and values. At the same time, a large part of the workforce still comes from the baby boomer generation (1945 - 1960) as well as Generation X (1961 - 1980), which have significantly built up and shaped the existing corporate landscape. The challenge for companies is, therefore, to meet the needs of the "younger" generations (freedom & flexibility as well as security & stability) without losing sight of the "older" generations (Zienhofer, 2022)

For management, the influencing factors outlined above result in profound changes. The systems of the "old school of management" only function to a limited extent or no longer at all. In particular, the specific expectations of the different generations directed at the employer require a sensitive and empathetic approach to the respective needs. In combination with other selected megatrends (Zukunftsinstitut, 2022), the relevance of New Work (which is also a megatrend in itself) continues to increase in importance. The megatrend connectivity, for example, describes the most important basic pattern of social change in the 21st century. Network principles based on digital infrastructures as well as networked communication technologies are fundamentally changing the way we live, work and do business. Digital technologies are also creating and shaping new lifestyles, behaviour patterns, and business models, which must inevitably lead to implications for the world of work.

Parallel to the megatrend connectivity, cultural and social phenomena are reflected in the megatrend individualisation, which describes self-realisation and the unique shaping of personalities in more concrete terms. This personality development is intensively accompanied by an increase in personal freedom of choice and individual self-determination. The growing importance of individualisation has an impact on communal togetherness and is reflected in a new knowledge culture - also fuelled by the megatrend of connectivity. The creation, dissemination and access to knowledge is increasing rapidly, leading to globally rising levels of education. The knowledge culture megatrend is changing the way we look at the (working) world, the way we deal with information, and how companies (and their employees) can develop through targeted knowledge management. In this study on the future of work, we have addressed the most pressing questions about current challenges.

Background and Motivation for the Study

The research field of the future of work is multifaceted and provides valuable insights and impulses for social and economic development. The influencing factors presented in the introduction have noticeably increased the speed and dynamics of change in the world of work, as well as the degree of complexity. Companies and organisations that have sometimes "functioned" according to the same pattern for decades are reaching their limits in the face of current challenges and demands. The pressure to innovate and adapt is increasing and painfully reveals the fields of action that have been neglected so far. In addition to a lack of insight ("We've always done it this way!"), the change process is also slowed down by an acute lack of resources (time, personnel, budget, and know-how) and deficits in leadership.

From our daily consulting work and the intensive exchange with our clients - especially in the area of organisational development - we at #FORTSCHRITT have been able to directly observe the far-reaching changes of the last few months and the resulting requirements and challenges. The shortage of skilled workers and managers has emerged as a central challenge, which is particularly pronounced in rural areas and is massively slowing down the German economy. In our view, New Work can be part of the solution to overcome this sometimes existential shortage. In order to gain an insight into the general understanding of New Work or the modern world of work and to obtain valid statements on the topics that shape the current discourse, we have dealt in detail with the following research questions.

Research Questions

1. How is the term New Work understood/defined?
2. Which New Work measures/initiatives are already being used in the organisations surveyed?
3. What is the motivation/intention behind the use of the New Work measures employed?
4. To what extent are the five principles of the New Work Charter used?
5. What influence do the five principles have on the target figures (productivity, employer branding, employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and quality of the product/service)?
6. What obstacles and challenges arise in the course of implementing the five principles?
7. What are the requirements for leadership and organisational model?

Objectives

In a first step, the objective of this study is to record the existing state of knowledge on New Work in the German economy as well as to survey and classify the current use of New Work elements and the motivation behind them. Building on this, this study also aims to convey the insight that New Work is to be understood as an individual and quantifiable framework, which can have an influence on numerous company parameters such as Return On Investment (ROI) or productivity. Based on this insight, individual and company-specific fields of action can be derived, which this study would like to encourage to be implemented.

State of Research

Extensive research studies, such as the Workplace Employment Relations Series and the Work Life Balance Study (Hooker et al., 2007; Kersley et al., 2006; Nadeem & Metcalf, 2007), demonstrate noteworthy growth in the availability of flexible work arrangements. The concept of work is undergoing changes with the increasing digitization, globalization, and automation of work processes, which has led to a redefinition of the traditional understanding of work as distinct from leisure. While the term "work" should ideally be defined independently of societal circumstances in order to use it accurately, the concept of New Work is explicitly embedded in a social context (Hackl et al., 2017, p.3). The term New Work was coined based on an alternative to wage labor in the capitalist economic system developed by Frithjof Bergmann. According to Bergmann (2005, p.16), New Work aims to create an employment model in which individuals engage in one-third of traditional work, one-third of work they truly desire, and one-third of high-tech self-production.

Over the past few decades, several long-term trends have had an impact on the labor market. These include the fourth industrial revolution and digitalization; changes in the nature of work functions and a decrease in the proportion of routine tasks; demographic changes such as an increasing life expectancy and an aging population; and a shift of companies towards specialists with a broad range of developed skills. Other trends, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, also have implications and require new systems of work division and formats as well as an acceleration of automation (Pollack & Ufimtseva, 2020, p. 31). Given the necessity of lockdowns and social distancing, companies had to quickly implement hybrid work models in order to keep their operations running. It has been found that this type of work not only proves to be effective but also offers additional benefits such as increased employee satisfaction, productivity, and work-life balance (De Cieri & Sanders, 2022, p. 116f). The transition towards hybrid work models has been progressed slowly in recent years, particularly in Germany and Central Europe, but has been greatly accelerated by the pandemic. This has resulted in a rapid and pressured modification of the work situation (Hofmann et al., 2020, p. 6). At this point, there exists an irony of automation. While employees and employers increasingly demand autonomy and self-control, automated production processes reduce the need for intervention and, thus, the opportunities for independent action. This contradiction in the conditions of action is becoming increasingly evident (Bogedan & Hoffmann, 2015, p. 131).

The increasingly globalized, digitized, and individualized nature of work has made it more complex, volatile, and unpredictable in recent years. The transition to a service-based economy has propelled the advancement of digital work (Hartmann, 2016, p. 106), with the greatest economic potential now lying in the service sector rather than manufacturing. Therefore,

employees must be capable of regularly adjusting their skills and work processes to adapt to changing circumstances in order to remain employable (Zimmermann, 2013, p. 18). The organisational approach of "New Work" advocates for flexible working conditions such as flexible working hours, locations, and hierarchies in order to facilitate a better work-life balance. "New Work" refers to the emerging trend towards increased independence and flexibility in one's professional life. The rise of the gig economy supports this trend by enabling employees to take advantage of opportunities that are right for them. Implementing "New Work" provides employees with benefits such as increased freedom, flexibility, and autonomy (Groth et al., 2020, p. 193). In conclusion, considering the evidence surrounding organizational operations, the most persuasive contention supports the likelihood of a reduction in absenteeism, particularly in the remote work setting. Additionally, there is increasing backing for a beneficial impact on employee retention. However, the relationship between productivity and other financial indicators is not as evident, although recent studies propose a positive link between remote work and the flexibility of schedules (De Menezes et al., 2011, p.14).

Thanks to the progression of digitalization, many individuals have become more receptive to and willing to engage in remote work. The desire for work-life balance has also contributed to the adoption of telecommuting (Schwarzbauer & Wolf, 2020). In order to assess employee satisfaction, Kazekami (2020) conducted an online study utilizing the Japanese Panel Study of Employment Dynamics. The findings revealed that working from home has a positive impact on overall life satisfaction. However, it was also noted that there is an increased level of stress due to the overlap of work and other activities within the same space. Additionally, the presence of household chores serves as a disruptive factor, potentially leading to negative health consequences. Interestingly, despite these challenges, there is no decline in work productivity (Kazekami, 2020).

According to Kim and Chen (2020), organizations often rely on their existing capacities and work with systems that they are most comfortable with. This implies that municipal departments, which had developed previous practices, were able to utilize them (Kim & Chen 2020, p. 304). This influence of stakeholder usage prior to the pandemic strongly impacted post-pandemic performance management, suggesting that an established system of performance management enables the use of these tools during a crisis. These findings align with the expectations of institutional and path-dependent theories, which depict a more conservative view of organizations that rely on the interaction of nested rules, exclusive membership, and power arrangements (Pasha, 2022, p. 45f).

In their study, Popa et al. (2022) examined the relationship between initial confusion and measurable job performance. The initial results of their study demonstrated that the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on employees did not directly influence their mental and physical well-being. However, these same effects did lead to a decrease in overall job performance. It was discovered that stress factors played a mediating role between the pandemic's impacts and employees' psychological and physical well-being. In other words, the more threatened employees felt by the pandemic, their mental and physical well-being deteriorated. It is important to note that health-related stress factors did not mediate the relationship between the pandemic and job performance (Popa et al., 2022, p. 13). Therefore, MacDonald et al. (2022) propose a fundamentally agile performance management approach. According to this approach, the process of agile and continuous performance management begins with goal

setting. Line managers and employees must discuss and revise goals to adapt them to changing work priorities. Agile performance planning depends on establishing, agreeing upon, and communicating a set of short-term goals, criteria, and expectations that can be monitored more frequently and with greater relevance to an individual's work. In this way, employee behavior can be redefined in a timely manner to enhance performance. The framework advocates for agility as a key factor for organizations, teams, and individuals to quickly realign themselves towards more realistic, short-term goals, real-time feedback, and flexibility for performance improvement (MacDonald et al., 2022, p. 155).

However, the transition of the working world to new work also presents certain risks and challenges, as is often emphasized. Based on a 2020 report published by Deloitte, it is anticipated that a significant proportion of job positions, approximately 35%, could be rendered obsolete within the next two decades due to technological advancements. However, it is important to acknowledge that 40% of the labor force in the nation is engaged in occupations that possess a low or negligible risk of automation. Additional research studies propose that entire professions are not expected to vanish entirely, but rather, specific tasks within these professions are likely to be replaced by technology (Arntz et al., 2016). For example, a study conducted by McKinsey in 2015 projected that automation has the potential to substitute approximately 45% of activities currently performed by humans, yet only 5% of entire job roles would be entirely supplanted by technology (Manyika et al., 2017). In general, these findings underscore the significance of organizational flexibility, efficient performance evaluation systems, and a nuanced comprehension of the consequences of technological developments within the framework of New Work. Subsequent research should further investigate these domains to offer valuable knowledge and direction for organizations navigating the changing terrain of work.

Method

In order to capture the diverse research focus of this study; this study follows the approach of an expert survey after the current state of research is presented. The relevant questions and problems are intended to provide the most precise possible insight into the working world of the future through the specific and concentrated knowledge of these individuals.

Participants, Design, and Instruments

The participants (n = 137) came from different industries and sectors. They were recruited via personal contacts and distribution lists from business circles. A total of 241 companies were contacted, resulting in a response rate of 56.8%. The participants indicated their position in the company as management/C-level (26.7%), division/department head (49.6%), expert/clerk (16.8%), and other (6.9%). Company sizes ranged from under 100 employees to over 10,000 employees.

The data collection was carried out through a structured guided interview and provided both qualitative and quantitative data. The open-ended questions were evaluated according to the inductive method, while the quantitative data were analysed descriptively. The interview guide was tested in advance on three respondents with regard to its feasibility and revised after constructive feedback regarding the clarity of the questions. Overall, the interview guide consisted of three central blocks, for which the interviewers and subjects needed an average of

45 minutes of interview time: 1) Content-related introduction and basics, 2) New Work principles (use, effects, obstacles), and 3) Requirements for leadership and organisational model

Procedure

In the case of positive feedback, personal appointments were made with the respondents. After a brief explanation of the background of the study, the later utilisation of the results, and the reference to anonymous processing and evaluation of the data, the data collection took place. The respondents were asked the questions contained in the interview guide. The respective answers were documented by the interviewers in the form of bullet points. After each question was completed, the central statements were presented to the respondent, checked for correctness and completeness, and corrected or supplemented if necessary. In the course of the data analysis, the method of inductive category formation was used for qualitative data, while a univariate frequency distribution was carried out for quantifiable data.

Limitations

This study involved and interviewed mostly managers and more innovative/pulsive people, as well as the overestimation/misestimation of the companies' use of the principles. Only a small part of the workforce is considered; the other elements are disregarded. The actual understanding of the content is much lower (see question 1). However, their perception is their "truth" and reality.

Results

The results are presented in the order of the survey. The evaluation of the qualitative answers is based on the principles of qualitative data analysis, according to Mayring (2000), and thus does not contain any additional information. The descriptive presentation of the quantitative results is supplemented by further group comparisons.

Content Introduction and Basics

In the first part of the study, the interview participants were asked about their basic understanding of New Work and which measures and initiatives they had already implemented in their companies. They were also asked why these measures were taken and whether it is possible to be successful in the working world of tomorrow even without New Work.

What do you understand by the term New Work? (n = 137)

The respondents could express themselves freely on this open question (multiple answers possible). Each statement was recorded individually and then assigned to categories. The answers to this question were very diverse and strongly dependent on the respective prior knowledge of the interview partner. They ranged from statements that New Work is a catch-all term, a buzzword or "bullshit bingo" to clear definitions and lists of the five principles. In the majority of cases, the statements were directly related to day-to-day business operations.

The most study participants associate new work primarily with new workplace and new working time concepts (n = 102). This includes spatial and temporal independence, for example, through home office or co-working. In a distant second place are new/digital working methods

and forms, which are expressed in agile methods, virtual communication or the use of digital tools, among other things (n = 39). The aspects more strongly related to New Work - attitude, mindset, culture & values - take third place in terms of the number of mentions (n = 35). Megatrends such as flexibility and mobility, and digitalisation (connectivity) are also associated with New Work (n = 31). Characteristic aspects of New Work thought, such as self-organisation & personal responsibility (n = 17), freedom and trust (n = 12) or purpose (n = 2), on the other hand, were mentioned significantly less.

Which "initiatives/measures" of modern working environments do you use/have you implemented in your company? (n = 137)

The answers to this question underline the basic understanding of New Work outlined above. For example, hybrid working is by far the most important of the measures that have already been carried out or implemented (n = 79). This category includes various forms of work such as co-working, home office, and decentralised or mobile (remote) working. The next two ranks are followed by flexible working time models (n = 36) and agile methods & digital working (use of digital tools with n = 31). Central features of a New Work organisation, such as flat hierarchies and new leadership styles (n = 9) or elements of training & development (n = 6) are mentioned less frequently.

Why do you use the "initiatives/measures" of modern work just mentioned? What is your intention in doing so? (n = 137)

The backgrounds and motivations for using New Work elements were also very diverse. However, the central starting point for the majority of participants was the Corona pandemic, which required necessary and extensive adjustments at short notice. According to the participants, without this external influence, many companies would not have taken any measures at all. The measures used are therefore largely - but not exclusively - due to the Corona effects and can be summarised in four overarching categories:

- Sector dependency (creative service vs. automated production)
- Market dependency (pressure for change not necessary)
- Customer dependency
- dependence on environment, region (traditional environment, yes or no)
- Position, market power of the company
- Personnel dependency (young people are attracted, older employees with a greater need for security are not attracted)
- Acceptance problems (not everyone likes it)
- Culture dependencies
- Effort and investment dependencies (what resources are people willing to invest for change to work?)

What was particularly striking about this question was that the respondents made a very (self-) critical and differentiated assessment with regard to their own company situation. The indifferent study participants ("it depends") tended to answer both "yes" (never change a running system) and "no", provided certain framework conditions or influencing factors allow it. This is therefore a very complex and subjective assessment, also with regard to which elements are suitable for change in one's own business environment.

Principles of New Work

New Work embodies a human-centred concept that takes the approach of combining professional development with personal fulfilment. The original concept is based on the thinking of Frithjof Bergmann and has been translated into five key principles for application to today's business world. These aim to bring together more individual and flexible elements of cooperation that promote creativity, personal responsibility, and loyalty among employees. For companies, this leads to improved productivity, better employer branding, and longer and more satisfied employee relationships in the medium to long term. These five principles were presented to the participants in the study through a short information text (see red boxes at the beginning of each section) in order to create an equal understanding among all participants. Afterwards, the participants were asked the same questions about the five principles. The questions focused on the degree of use of each principle, its impact on selected targets (e.g., productivity or employee satisfaction), and potential barriers to its introduction or more intensive use.

Principle "Freedom"

Innovation and creativity are essential for entrepreneurial success. New Work means giving employees the framework conditions to engage with new ideas and topics with curiosity and confidence. How much do you use the principle of "freedom" in your company? (n = 137) The participants had the opportunity to set the use of the principle of freedom on a scale of 1-10 (0-100%). The average value was $M = 62.6\%$ ($SD = 7.9\%$), with most answers falling into the class 71 - 81%.

What do you think: What impact does a strong expression of the principle of "freedom" have on the following target variables? (n = 137)

In this question, the study participants were asked to rate the impact of the principle of freedom on the target variables quality of the product/service, customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, employer branding, and productivity. A scale of 5 (1 = decrease; 5 = increase) was available for this purpose. The participants generally see positive effects of a stronger expression of the principle of freedom on the described target variables. If the top 2 values (more likely to increase and increase) are combined, the values range from 50.0% to 93.0%, with the strongest effects being seen in the target values of employer branding (93.0%) and employee satisfaction (87.5%). For quality, it was 76%; for customer satisfaction, it was 50%, and for productivity, it was 80.5%.

What do you see as the biggest obstacles to a comprehensive introduction of the principle of "freedom"? (n = 137)

According to the participants, obstacles that can be traced back to the management level are primarily based on the fact that managers actively prevent currents towards more freedom because they are not in a position to exemplify a way of working determined by (more) freedom or to change their management accordingly (n = 23). The obstacles can be grouped into four main categories: "leadership", "culture", "employees" and "framework conditions". A total of 190 mentions of obstacles were documented. In this context, a loss of control (n = 18) and the

fear of losing one's own *raison d'être* play a central role from the managers' point of view. Furthermore, managers reported problems of trust ($n = 12$) towards their employees.

Under the heading "culture", the lived corporate culture ($n = 18$) as well as the error culture contained therein (the way companies deal with errors, error risks, and error consequences ($n = 6$)) are hidden. In some organisations, the existing cultural conditions and mostly hierarchical structures contradict liberal elements (experimenting, learning from mistakes, trusting and hierarchy-permeable networking). In this regard, one respondent commented as follows: "Freedom always means that managers have to give up responsibility. They have to learn to trust the employees and allow mistakes." Freedom must, therefore, be learned - this applies to both employees and managers. Directly connected to this is also the emergence of a freedom-promoting mindset and a corresponding attitude ($n = 17$).

With regard to the employees, the participants stated that there is a lack of self-discipline ($n = 16$) in dealing with freedom. There should be no abuse of freedom or unequal treatment of staff, as this leads to envy, demotivation, and a bad mood. In addition, there is a lack of willingness ($n = 12$) and will ($n = 10$) to accept more freedom, and there are no corresponding skills ($n = 9$).

The framework conditions are strongly dependent on the respective industry or sector or the specific activity. In the pharmaceutical industry or in precision engineering, for example, no error tolerances are possible; in the context of innovative processes ($n = 15$), the coordination effort to achieve results is sometimes greater, and in public administration, hierarchy, structure, and processes are clearly defined and predetermined. According to the participants, there are also regulatory or labour law requirements ($n = 13$) that make freedom difficult or impossible. In some organisations, the works council also opposes this due to (misunderstood) welfare or (questionably interpreted) principles of equal treatment with regard to different fields of activity (assembly line versus office work), and thus, entrenched structures exist ($n = 12$).

According to the participants, the social imprint - consisting of the educational path (parents, school, training) and general socialisation - also leads to the widespread perception of a "fully insured society" in this country. This is characterised by a low willingness to take responsibility and a low motivation to lead. This "affluence phenomenon", which is deeply rooted in society, inhibits concepts of self-responsibility and, thus, liberal ways of working. Nine interviewees assume that changes will reduce productivity, and obstacles are to be introduced.

Principle of "self-responsibility"

Participation sometimes does not lead to quick decision-making but delays it. In order to maintain their ability to act, organisations should specifically promote the self-responsibility of managers and employees.

How much do you use the principle of "self-responsibility" in your company? ($n = 137$)

The mean value for the use of this principle was $M = 65.2\%$ ($SD = 8.5\%$). By far the most answers were in the 71 - 80% class.

What do you think: What effects does a strong expression of the principle "self-responsibility" have on the following target variables? (n = 137)

The participants rate the effects of a strong expression of the principle of personal responsibility on the target variables as consistently positive. With regard to the top 2, the values range from 60.2 to 88.2%. In addition to productivity (88.2%), the influence on employee satisfaction (87.4%) is again rated high. For quality, 77.5% were in favour of increasing or more likely to increase; for customer satisfaction 60.3% and for employer branding 79.7%.

What do you see as the greatest obstacles to a comprehensive introduction of the principle of "self-responsibility"? (n = 137)

The barriers (132 mentions) can be grouped into three main categories, "culture", "staff" and "leadership". The issue of fear was particularly noticeable in connection with the introduction of self-responsibility. This fear expressed by the participants (n = 27) could be assigned to four superordinate characteristics: 1) Fear of wrong decisions and financial loss (MAs cannot handle budget responsibility), 2) fear of the manager that the employees can be "smarter, 3) employees' fear of responsibility and the consequences of their own actions, and 4) Fear of loss of quality and productivity.

In these points, a strong connection to the previous principle of "freedom" can be seen, in which an open error or trust culture (n = 17) plays a central role. This cultural prerequisite does not yet seem to exist in many organisations, which, in addition to a freedom-oriented way of working, also slows down the expansion of self-organisation.

As a further reason why self-responsibility or self-organisation cannot be introduced, a type of employee who cannot or will not accept such a transfer of responsibility is outlined. Employees are not willing or sufficiently motivated (n = 17) to take on responsibility and are either overwhelmed in such a situation or tend to overestimate themselves, which subsequently leads to costly wrong decisions. Instead, the employees "craved" leadership and were grateful to do their "duty by the book". One respondent described this attitude as follows: "It is very comfortable for employees to be told everything and to stay in the hammock emotionally/mentally."

From the perspective of management or executives, a threatening loss of control (n = 13) is again cited, which goes hand in hand with the fact that employees are not trusted to work independently (trust problem with n = 18). However, self-criticism also revealed that managers (n = 8) were not able or willing to qualify their employees accordingly, to empower them and to relinquish their responsibility (n = 11).

Strong differences were also observed between different industries/sectors. In the public sector, for example, the assumption of responsibility is not anchored. A sense of security predominates and is strongly prevalent. Self-management is only possible within the framework of legal requirements and is rarely, if ever, exemplified by managers.

Principle "Purpose"

Every organisation has a purpose and generates value. New Work organisations involve their employees in finding and sharpening this purpose by sensitising their employees and providing structured processes. In addition, meaning is a central aspect of individual self-realisation and thus fulfils an economic as well as a moral dimension.

How much do you use the principle of "meaning" in your company? (n = 137)

The mean value for the use of this principle can be given as $M = 66.4\%$ ($SD = 8.5\%$). Most of the answers were again in the 71 - 80% class.

What do you think: What effects does a strong expression of the principle "sense" have on the following target variables? (n = 137)

The participants also attribute a high potential effect to a strong expression of the principle of meaning. The top 2 achieve values of 75.8% to 93.0%, whereby the target variables productivity (87.5%), employer branding (91.4%), and employee satisfaction (93.0%) are very close to each other. The score for quality was 78.4%, and for customer satisfaction was 75.8%.

What do you see as the biggest obstacles to a comprehensive introduction of the principle of "meaning"? (n = 137)

Compared to the two previous principles, it is noticeable that significantly fewer obstacles were mentioned for the principle of sense (64 mentions). According to the participants, the degree of sense depends strongly on the respective activity. There are "thankless" tasks ($n = 13$) that are not very meaningful, but have to be done anyway. The problem then is to find people for these jobs who are happy to do them. Therefore, the degree of meaningfulness for the respective activity is subjective and has a different meaning for each employee ($n = 13$).

The participants also stated that a meaningful "charging" of activities is associated with a high expenditure of time and money and - depending on the size of the company - also with increased complexity ($n = 12$). Managers usually take too little time for this or do not see this task as part of their area of responsibility. One respondent reported the following process in his company: "The formulation [of meaning] is a really thick board! - Most of the time HR takes care of it, but then it doesn't get to operations."

From this account, it is clear that meaning is created locally and directly at the point of activity and that a high level of understanding of the nature and impact of the activity is necessary. Nevertheless, meaning is also always linked to the overall corporate goals and should be aligned with the vision and mission of the organisation ($n = 11$). A lack of reference to the "big picture" and the "imposing" of an externally developed meaning damages acceptance and does not create a convincing identification with the activity and the company. One respondent took this idea further as follows: "Many organisations have so far had the "sense" of generating profit. If such a company now tries to put another stamp on itself, it can appear untrustworthy."

The balancing act between turnover and purpose was mentioned as another obstacle. Meaning is important for an organisation - without meaning no one is willing to go the extra mile - but at the end of the day, it is also about profitability and measurability. Employees should recognise that their work is meaningful and know about their economic contribution to the company's success. This clear designation of purpose, coupled with economic relevance, is important in order not to push Purpose into the esoteric corner or to regard it as a pure marketing tool ($n = 4$). A further problem can arise in the form of frustration and disappointment if a formulated purpose does not occur or is not perceived in the desired form ($n = 3$).

In certain sectors (public service or church), meaning takes on a special role. According to the participants, meaning is (a) above average here and (b) decoupled from economic

considerations. The profession is seen more as a vocation, which makes meaning a great and efficient lever in human resource management.

Principle "Development"

Creativity and innovative impulses are more relevant to organisations today than ever before. New Work organisations create the framework conditions for this and specifically promote the creative spirit of employees.

How much do you use the principle of "development" in your company? (n = 137)

The mean value for the use of this principle was $M = 60.7\%$ ($SD = 7.0\%$).

What do you think: What effects does a strong use of the principle "development" have on the following target values? (n = 137)

According to the participants, a strong expression of the principle of development also has a positive impact on the target variables. The top 2 values range from 67.7 to 91.4%. The strongest effects are again seen in employer branding (91.4%), employee satisfaction (89.0%), quality (85.5%), customer satisfaction (67.7%), and productivity (84.2%).

What do you see as the biggest obstacles to a comprehensive introduction of the principle of "development"? (n = 137)

The obstacles to this principle (116 mentions) could again be grouped into categories. According to the participants, the lack of resources is the greatest obstacle. This concerns both the limitation of financial resources (n = 25) and the time made available for further education and training purposes (n = 19). Training and development opportunities need to be built into daily business but are often not recognised as working time and often conflict with existing milestones or deadlines.

Continuous development within the framework of collective learning structures must be strategically and organisationally anchored in an organisation. However, the hierarchies and silos that exist in many organisations are not conducive to active exchange and hinder further development. Participants also report a fluctuating quality of training and an oversupply of options. Too many trends are "run after" and planned measures are often insufficiently or half-heartedly prepared. A clear planning and control deficit can be derived from these statements, which also leads to the fact that the right development steps are not always taken (n = 20). Educational needs are very individual, and it takes a lot of effort to identify them. One respondent commented on this fact as follows: "Generalist and universal education offers have nothing to do with New Work and have no effect."

Despite the recognition that development is initially an investment in time and money but pays off in the medium to long term, corporate culture (n = 14) and mindset (n = 7) block the introduction of new ways of thinking and acting. The need or necessity for development is not seen, as past success legitimises the status quo ("never change a running system"). Due to this lack of pressure, a departure from existing structures and processes is categorically rejected or politically blocked. This also affects the active shaping of a culture of internal knowledge sharing. "Knowledge is power", which is why the sharing of knowledge and expertise has been deliberately withheld in many organisations in the past, not least to secure one's own job. This applies equally to managers and employees (n = 8). Similarly, the barrier that some managers

and employees are not willing to learn and develop together with and with others is reported. (n = 13) "We've always done it this way." This quote is often used as an argument to maintain existing working models and to ward off fears and scepticism. Proxy arguments put forward, such as "How will the customer react?" or "Does this really work?" distract from one's own comfort and willingness to leave the comfort zone.

Some participants report that the (rash and unprepared) breaking out of familiar structures or an oversupply can be overwhelming and cause a defensive attitude (n = 6). This is also true when training is made compulsory by the employer or when new processes and structures for development and joint learning are not created collaboratively but are imposed from above. Finally, it was pointed out that in the case of qualified staff, there would be a risk of poaching (n = 4) and, thus, a loss of manpower. This was commented on by one respondent thus: "Imagine if we invest in our staff and they leave." "Bad, but: imagine we don't invest in our employees and they stay."

Principle "Social Responsibility"

Organisations are directly connected to their external world. New Work organisations value a strong sense of togetherness and cultivate their local ties with the local community.

How much do you use the principle of "social responsibility" in your company? (n = 137)

For this last principle, a mean value of $M = 66.9\%$ ($SD = 7.9\%$) could be calculated.

What do you think: What effects does a strong manifestation of the principle "social responsibility" have on the following target variables? (n = 137)

The principle of social responsibility was found to have the lowest impact compared to the other principles. The range of the top 2 values is from 37.5% (productivity) and 39.2% (quality) to 89.8% (employer branding). More than half of the participants stated that no changes are to be expected for the target variables productivity (50.8%) and quality (56.8%) despite a strong expression of this principle (unchanged). On the other hand, the effect of a more pronounced social responsibility on the employer brand is to be rated as high.

What do you see as the greatest obstacles with regard to a comprehensive introduction of the principle of "social responsibility"? (n = 137)

After the principle of "meaning", the second fewest obstacles were registered for the principle of "social responsibility" (68 mentions). According to the participants, budget and time limitations are the main obstacles to a comprehensive introduction of this principle. Social responsibility and sustainability cost money (n = 21), which ties up human resources and time (n = 11) needed in the core business. In many companies, profitability is still the top priority (n = 10), which leads to problems in determining and measuring KPIs in the absence of standards.

The tension between profitability and social responsibility is particularly visible in ROI-driven companies, which argue that this is a long-term investment where the guarantee of return is uncertain. The financial benefit of an (additional) commitment or further sustainable measures is not seen (n = 5). Rather, it is pointed out that prices for products and services could increase and competitiveness decrease if local (usually more expensive) instead of cheaper

suppliers were relied on. The question that arises from this is: "What is the customer willing to pay more for?"

One respondent made the following statement in this context: "The middle class is not an altruistic NGO! You have to be clear about how much social commitment you can "afford". Companies that create jobs and pay taxes are social - they finance the common good." An even clearer conviction was held by one respondent who said that a product has to work and not be social. While participants recognise a positive effect on customers, albeit one that only develops over long relationships, they also note that too much emphasis on sustainability can exclude potential customers because they do not share the same beliefs. In relation to these convictions, the topic of credibility quickly follows, and that organisations must also follow their words with actions. Especially in times of greenwashing, serious and authentic efforts are essential in order not to create negative effects in the perception or purchase intention of customers (n = 13). Conceptless individual measures or campaigns that have no relation to the company's goals or culture do more harm than good. It also registers on the part of the public whether social responsibility and sustainability are the result of political or social pressure or whether it is justified by credible self-motivation.

According to the principle: "Do good and talk about it", communication is of central importance (n = 8). This concerns both PR and communication internally to the workforce. Organisations often find it difficult to integrate social and sustainable activities and operations into holistic corporate communication and thus miss the opportunity to establish a positive image and strengthen their employer brand.

Demands on Leadership and Organisational Model

What do you think: What impact will the modern world of work have on the following target variables? (n = 137)

The participants assume that the complexity and the time required for leadership tasks in the modern working world will increase significantly. However, despite greater pressure to perform and an increased workload, the participants also assume an improved work-life balance. The impact on the levels of difficulty for goal achievement and the achievement of KPIs is predominantly assessed as neutral, while it is assumed that sick leave will tend to fall slightly.

How would you currently most likely rate the following leadership characteristics of the managers in your company? (n = 137)

Participants rate the leaders in their company as predominantly loyal and attest to their ability to lead situationally or adaptively. Leaders have an above-average focus and goal orientation and are also characterised by cooperative and caring actions. However, these actions are not always perceived as transparent and comprehensible. In addition, according to the participants, decision-making and decisiveness are only average or less pronounced in about half of the managers. Furthermore, managers are rated as uninspiring and democratic. Likewise, just under half of the managers are described as having an average or stronger affinity for hierarchy and structure.

Which leadership characteristics do you think will be particularly relevant for the future of work? (n = 137)

The participants could give an unlimited number of answers to this question (218 answers in total). Due to the large number of answers, the evaluation is limited to the top 10 (151 answers \cong 69.3%). In addition to characteristics that can be specifically assigned, four abilities that require a combination of different characteristics were also named. These were, therefore, listed separately: Recognising and developing talents and potentials, empowering employees, leadership at eye level, and thinking and acting strategically and holistically.

It is clear to see that empathy (n = 35) will play a crucial role in the future of work. Furthermore, according to the participants, it will become increasingly important for managers to place trust (n = 20) in their employees and to be able to hand over responsibility. For this, it is important that managers make their decisions and actions transparent and comprehensible (n = 19), which requires strong communication and moderation skills (n = 19). Furthermore, the characteristics delegation-friendly (n = 10), inspiring (n = 10), adaptable (n = 9), and competent (n = 8) should be given.

How do you see the role of a leader in the modern world of work? (n = 137)

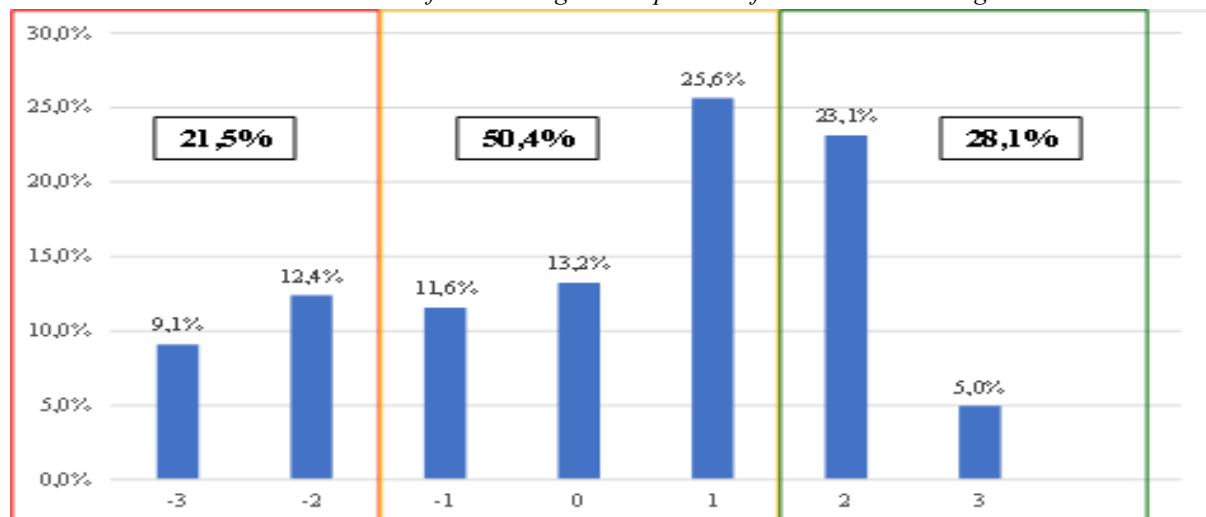
Participants had the opportunity to select several answer options for this question (max. 3 options). Most responses were for the role of coach/mentor (24.8%), followed by leader (20.9%), facilitator (19.1%) and entrepreneur (14.5%). Together, these first four options accounted for 79.4% of responses. Other roles included manager (8.2%), information guide (7.1%), representative (3.5%) or employee with 1.8% of responses.

What do you think: Are managers in your company sufficiently prepared for the modern world of work? (n = 137)

Participants were asked to answer this question on a scale from -3 (no, not at all) to +3 (yes, very well). As presented in Figure 1, the mean value is $M = .23$ ($SD = 1.73$). According to the participants' assessment, 21.5% of the managers are poorly or not at all prepared for the modern working world.

Figure 1

Mean Values and Standard Deviations for the Managers' Preparation for the Modern Working World

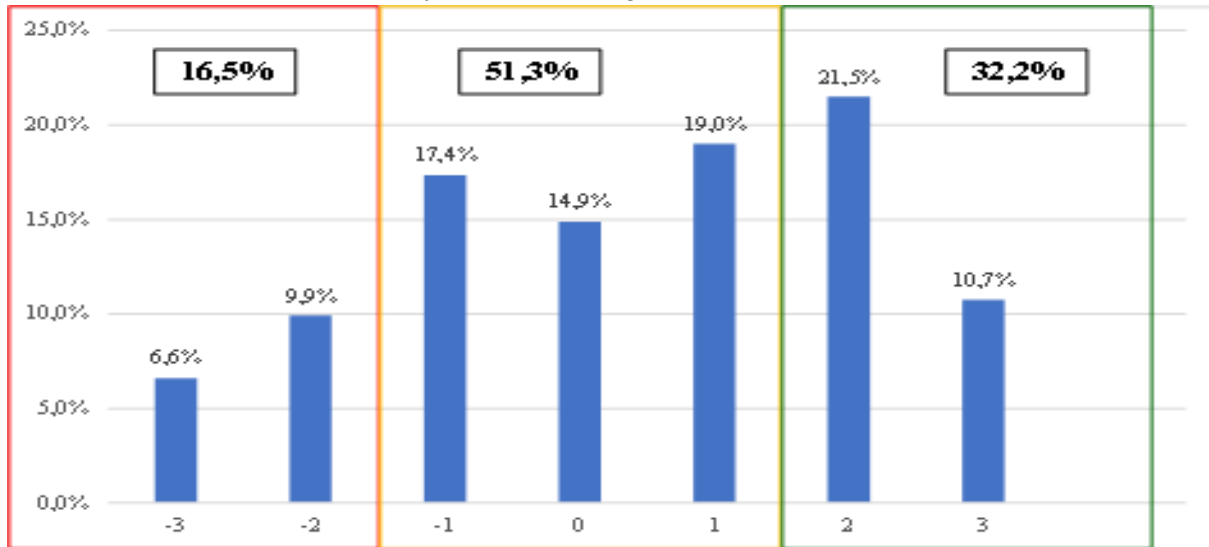


Do you think that you can meet the challenges of the new world of work with your current organisational model? (n = 137)

The participants again had the opportunity to answer this question on a scale from -3 (no, not at all) to +3 (yes, very well). As shown in Figure 2, the mean value is $M = .37$ ($SD = 1.74$). 16.5% of the participants assess that the current organisational model is poorly or not at all designed for the challenges of the new world of work. Slightly more than half (51.3%) consider the organisational model to be moderately prepared, and another 32.2% are of the opinion that the challenges can be met well or very well with the current organisational model.

Figure 2

Mean Values and Standard Deviations for the Current Organisational Model Assessment

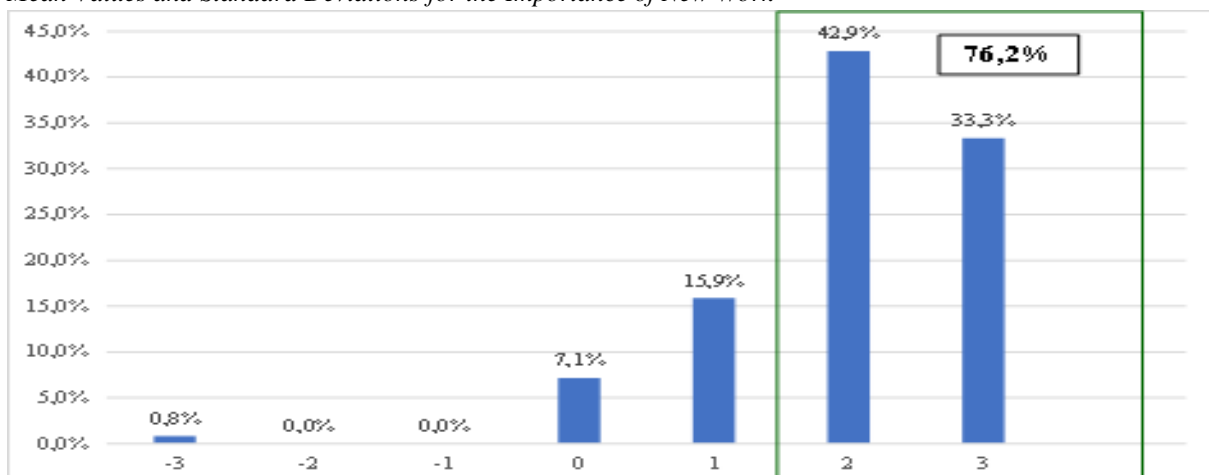


What do you think: In your view, will the importance of New Work increase or decrease in the future? (n = 137)

Once again, the participants were given a scale from -3 (strongly decreasing) to +3 (strongly increasing) to answer this question. As displayed in Figure 3, the mean value is $M = 1.99$ ($SD = .99$). Most of the answers, 42.9%, are for the value 2 (increase). Overall, 76.2% of the participants believe that the importance of New Work will increase to strongly increase in the future.

Figure 3

Mean Values and Standard Deviations for the Importance of New Work



Group Comparisons

Use of the Principles

With the exception of the principle of social responsibility, internationally active companies use the other four principles (freedom, personal responsibility, meaning, and development) on average 10% more intensively than nationally active companies. The geography of settlement (urban, suburban, rural) tends to influence the degree of use of the five principles. Urban companies use the principles of freedom, personal responsibility, meaning, and development more than rural companies. In contrast, social responsibility is more prevalent among rural-based companies. However, there is no correlation between company size and the degree of use of the five principles.

Owner-managed enterprises achieve higher values in the use of the principles of self-responsibility, meaning, and development compared to shareholder-managed enterprises and joint-stock companies. In contrast, the use of social responsibility is higher in shareholder-managed companies and public limited companies than in owner-managed companies. The principles of freedom and meaning are significantly more pronounced in service companies than in companies that manufacture physical products. Respondents over 50 years of age indicate that they use the principle of personal responsibility significantly more than respondents up to 35 years of age.

Effects of the Principles

Compared to rural-based companies, urban-based companies assume that a stronger expression of the principle of freedom will increase employee satisfaction to a greater extent. Compared to manufacturing companies, service companies assume that higher employee satisfaction also goes hand in hand with a stronger expression of the principle of personal responsibility. For shareholder-managed companies, the principle of sense has a stronger positive effect on the target variables of productivity, employer branding, and customer satisfaction compared to owner-managed companies. Companies located in rural areas estimate the effect of the principle of development on employee and customer satisfaction to be significantly lower than urban companies. For shareholder-managed companies, the principle of development has a stronger positive effect on employee satisfaction compared to owner-managed companies. No differences or correlations could be identified for the principle of social responsibility.

Leadership and Organisational Model

There is a positive correlation between the number of employees and the importance of New Work. The larger the company, the higher the future importance of New Work. In contrast, the organisational models of smaller companies are better prepared for the challenges of the new world of work than the organisational models of larger companies. Furthermore, the data suggest that urban companies are better prepared for the challenges of the new world of work in terms of their organisational model than rural companies. This also applies to managers, who are better prepared for the modern world of work in urban environments than in rural areas. Urban environments are generally more prepared for the modern world of work than their rural counterparts. These findings highlight the relationship between company size, location, and readiness for New Work principles.

Table 1 offers a comprehensive overview of the primary discoveries concerning the principles of New Work, their consequences, hindrances, qualities of effective leadership, and the changing responsibilities of leaders in contemporary work settings. Furthermore, it underscores the differing degrees of readiness and the anticipated significance of New Work in the future:

Table 1

New Work Findings

Aspect of New Work	Findings
New Work Principles	New Work principles include freedom, self-responsibility, purpose, development, and social responsibility. These principles are used to varying degrees in different companies.
Initiatives & Measures	Companies have implemented initiatives such as flexible working arrangements, agile methods, and digital tools, with adoption varying based on sector, market, culture, and other factors.
Impact of New Work Principles	Participants believe that a strong expression of New Work principles has a positive impact on quality, customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, employer branding, and productivity.
Obstacles to Implementation	Obstacles to New Work implementation include cultural resistance, lack of self-discipline, resource limitations, and organizational culture.
Leadership Characteristics	Key leadership characteristics for the future of work include empathy, trust, transparency, and delegation-friendly leadership.
Role of a Leader	Participants see leaders taking on roles beyond traditional management, including coach/mentor, facilitator, and entrepreneur.
Preparedness of Managers and Organizational Models	Not all managers and organizational models are sufficiently prepared for the challenges posed by the modern world of work. Smaller companies and urban organizations appear more prepared in certain aspects.
Future Importance of New Work	The majority of participants believe that the importance of New Work will increase in the future.
Group Comparisons	Internationally active companies tend to use New Work principles more intensively than nationally active companies. Company size, location, and other factors influence preparedness for the new world of work.

Discussion

In this chapter, the central findings from the results section are taken up and discussed from a practical point of view. In addition to a critical analysis of the study results, the authors also provide conclusions and assessments.

Understanding - Benefit - Motivation

When looking at the results, the questions on understanding ("What do you understand by the term New Work?") and use ("What measures do you use?") reveal that many organisations have only limited knowledge about New Work. New Work is often reduced to new workplace and working time concepts as well as agile/digital working methods. The deeper ideas and concepts of New Work as well as their use cases and added values, on the other hand, are only superficially known or not known at all. Consequently, only a limited proportion of New Work measures have been implemented in companies in these areas. In this context, the participants' statements on the use of the respective principles ("How much do you use the principle "xyz" in your company?") should therefore be viewed critically. With regard to the motivation to implement the measures, it became clear that this had predominantly resulted from a necessity arising from the Corona pandemic and would otherwise probably not have been pronounced to this extent.

The true meaning of New Work is not fully known in the companies surveyed. The mostly one-dimensional understanding leads to the fact that a holistic and integrative introduction of New Work measures does not take place, but only selective elements are implemented. The

realisation that New Work measures, if properly introduced and applied, can increase productivity is present in very few companies. Rather, the measures in the past served to maintain the ability to work. Only downstream are aspects of employee orientation relevant. The low level of transformation is most recently the result of external pressure to change and not inner conviction.

The fact that New Work is more likely to be practised in the city than in the countryside is a major reason for the persistent and increasingly glaring shortage of skilled workers and managers in rural regions (among other factors). Despite the low level of understanding and the limited use, the majority of the participants are convinced that the importance of New Work will increase in the future.

The Five Principles

The perception of freedom and personal responsibility is very subjective and strongly dependent on the individual perspective. Moreover, there is a close connection between these two principles in terms of culture, mindset, skills, and activity (see "Six key priorities for implementation" in this chapter). Freedom and empowerment are two sides of the same coin. If an employee is given more freedom, they can also work more independently. In turn, greater self-responsibility results in more freedom.

Based on the discussions with the participants, the principle of sense can be classified as the most difficult principle to introduce. This is mainly because the necessity of meaning is fundamentally questioned. An all-encompassing sense of purpose is not necessary for the existence or success of a company. Rather, it serves a post-material, idealistic component and is not immediately tangible for everyone at first due to its sometimes high level of abstraction. If no meaning has yet been defined, there are sometimes different horizons of interpretation based on different hierarchical levels and fields of activity. In this case, the challenge is either to "find" a meaning or synchronise existing interpretive approaches.

In theory, a successful business does not need meaning but does not hurt. Without purpose, no sweat, gumption or pain is invested in the company. The question of the "purpose of existence" goes even one level deeper and provides valuable insights into the USP of the company or its products/services. The search for meaning takes place either on the factual or relationship level and ideally promotes an emotional bond with the company as well as an affective commitment among the employees. Meaning is thus to be understood as a long-term investment that generates a high level of commitment and ensures that employees do not just work for money.

The principles of meaning and development have in common that they pursue long-term and overarching goals that only pay off later in time. This broad planning horizon, coupled with high investment volumes with no immediately recognisable or measurable return prospects and short-term optimisation goals, leads to these principles receiving insufficient strategic attention from management. This creates a paradoxical situation in which market pressure is not perceived or underestimated due to a lack of foresight, but at the same time, awareness of its relevance has increased significantly in recent years. Especially with regard to staff recruitment and retention, the principles of meaning and development are becoming increasingly important. Potential applicants increasingly pay attention to these "soft" aspects and consider them in their decision in the case of equivalent job offers.

Employees who pursue a meaningful activity and recognise an overarching corporate purpose are more motivated to advance the company, to develop themselves and to take responsibility for decisions. They develop a sense of both the immediate work environment and the "big (economic) picture". They engage more intensively with the company and can thus provide important impulses for continuous development or even renewal.

However, the results show that the principle of development on the part of the management level is too much reduced to pure training and further education. In addition, the opportunities for further training are often accepted by employees only to a limited extent or not at all. Executives and management interpret this behaviour as disinterest or demotivation and cut the funds for such offers. However, it remains questionable whether the offers are optimally geared to the needs of the organisation and the individual employee, whether time resources are provided in addition to financial resources, and whether a socially/culturally conditioned self-motivation of the employees is present.

The principle of social responsibility has the least impact on productivity or product/service quality and, thus has no direct financial benefit. Due to the lack of economic value, no budgets are approved for social/societal commitment, money is invested in individual projects, or greenwashing campaigns without deeper strategic considerations. As a result, the acceptance and credibility of the company suffer considerably, which ultimately has a negative impact on trustworthiness. The equally long-term goal of employee recruitment and retention that can be achieved with this principle is often misjudged. A visible, transparent, and lived social as well as societal responsibility generates trust in the employer and promotes loyalty.

Six Central Focal Points for Implementation

In all principles, six recurring factors can be identified that have an indirect or direct influence on the change of the working world and the introduction of New Work elements: Strategy, Structure, and Culture; Mindset; Skills; Activity; Leadership; Human factor.

The impact on the respective principles varies and is briefly presented with its respective implications in the following sections.

Focus: Strategy, Structure, and Culture

Strategy, structure, and culture together form the "magic triangle of an organisation". It describes the interdependent relationship of the three ends, which means that any influence on one of the ends always has a direct influence on the other ends. If one intends to develop the corporate culture in a new direction, this should always be accompanied by strategic and structural adjustments. Conversely, if strategy and structures are adapted, culture must not be forgotten. Because of this mutual influence, the three dimensions cannot be viewed or changed separately from each other. What is important here is that the structure supports the strategy and the culture and is at their service. Culture is the most inert element of all three dimensions, which also means that if strategy and structures do not give culture a real chance to change, it will not be able to change.

Since New Work takes a holistic approach, the elements and measures touch on all three dimensions - and thus also on corporate culture. Change in this dimension is complex and requires staying power and excellent leadership. New ideas that start at the foundations of an organisation and want to break up decades-old routines are a sensitive matter and will always

meet with a certain amount of rejection in the course of the change process. This is where the task of the leader comes in, to lead through change competently and empathically with strong social skills and, above all, emotional intelligence (à Focus: Leadership).

Focus: Mindset

The cultural or generational mindset can be very different within a workforce. While the Baby Boomer generation is focused on job security and a career within the company, Generation X pursues a work-life balance and a company-independent focus on professional activity. Millennials, on the other hand, prefer to work "with" organisations rather than "for" organisations and demand freedom and flexibility. The youngest Generation Z, on the other hand, strives for security and stability with a simultaneous desire for transition-free changes between employers. Taking all these needs, career, and life goals of the different generations into account poses great challenges for companies in the future and already today. In particular, the trend towards more security and stability means fewer employees are willing or able to take on management tasks or higher-level responsibilities. This will lead to problems in the future as the pool of suitable candidates for such tasks is becoming smaller and smaller.

Focus: Skills

The skills necessary for a comprehensive and integrative transformation are not available in most companies. This applies to both employees and managers, and it is not surprising that school and university systems have provided insufficient training for the modern world of work in the past. This concerns all competences (professional, methodological, social, and personal) as well as the mindset described above. The discrepancy between the educational offers and the requirements and needs of practice has grown in recent years. However, the courses of study, the curricula, and the training contents are increasingly adapting to the demand and thus ensure a correspondingly qualified next generation.

Staff and managers must learn to deal with the new framework conditions during the transition. Managers need to develop the necessary skills with employees and introduce them individually to free and independent working. Employees must be empowered accordingly and accompanied step by step into the new working world. Managers, for their part, must learn to relinquish decision-making power and control and instead place more trust in their employees.

Focus: Activity

The attitude towards New Work and the five principles as well as the use of New Work methods is strongly dependent on the individual's job. This becomes particularly clear when comparing different work areas, e.g., office work in service companies or administration and work in production. The comparison of spatial and temporal flexibility alone shows certain limitations. For example, production workers are spatially bound to their (machine) workplace and temporally bound to a shift system, while office activities can be carried out remotely and possibly outside of classic core working hours. This is simply due to the nature of the different activities; however, it does not mean that New Work elements or modern leadership methods cannot also be applied in production. Spaces for experimentation, autonomous room for manoeuvre and self-organisation in the team, budget responsibility for work equipment, activity-oriented meaning or cross-generational learning, and exchange formats are just a few examples of how the New Work approach can also be applied in the manufacturing sector.

Focus: Leadership

Leadership as a task and the tools of a leader are currently undergoing a dramatic change. The task is no longer purely technical, methodical leadership (technical expert), but is shifting towards "empowering" leadership (coach/trainer). The elements of good leadership lie more in motivation, giving meaning, and helping people to help themselves than in purely factual technical competence. Likewise, leadership tools are changing in management. Unfortunately, result-oriented leadership is often still a foreign word for many managers - they continue to lead by tracking and control rather than with freedom, trust, and self-responsibility. Important leadership tools for the modern world of work are often not included in the toolboxes of Baby Boomer and Generation X leaders because they have not explicitly learned and trained them.

Focus: "Human" Factor

Particularly in the case of the principles of freedom and personal responsibility, the "type of person" was frequently mentioned as a limiting argument. According to the participants, not every employee can handle freedom and/or personal responsibility and decision-making powers. There is often a fundamental lack of willingness, motivation, and ability to accept these. Instead, the desire for security and the ability to plan predominates. The more security is demanded, the more freedom and self-organisation have to be renounced. The development of certain personality traits and individual preferences is described by the participants as a further obstacle. Differences in personal predispositions (which have been influenced by education and socialisation) can sometimes be the deciding factor in whether freedom and self-responsibility inspire or slow down working methods and results.

Impact Chains

Staff satisfaction → Quality → Customer satisfaction

It is clear that the principles of freedom, personal responsibility, purpose, and development have the strongest (most positive) impact on employee satisfaction. Due to higher employee satisfaction, the quality of the product/service increases, which in turn increases customer satisfaction. Therefore, the four principles mentioned above have a very high internal impact due to their strong employee focus. At the same time, companies that actively live these principles are perceived as more attractive from the employee's perspective, which is why a positive effect on the employer brand can also be explained. On the other hand, social responsibility is primarily directed outwards, which hardly affects productivity and quality. In the public perception, however, an honest, committed, and transparent corporate image visibly leads to a stronger employer brand.

Technology → Structure & Strategy → Culture

The transformation of the working world, which gained enormous momentum due to the corona-related effects, initially focused on a purely technical dimension. The workforce's ability to work had to be ensured through a massive expansion of the hardware and software landscape and the introduction of digital tools. Due to the time pressure and the high speed of the suddenly necessary changes, processes and structures had to be readjusted or redefined during ongoing operations. The changed working methods and framework conditions ultimately made a strategic change necessary in some areas. In the course of this situation, which lasted for a long period of time, a new form of cooperation developed, for example,

through remote working, which decisively changed the mindset and the fundamental attitude towards the way of working.

A planned and structured introduction of New Work can go through similar phases, albeit in a much more coordinated way and with the necessary time. The phases are not distinct but should, on the contrary, be closely interlinked. The technical requirements primarily create the basis for new ways of working and forms of cooperation but should follow clearly formulated strategic considerations. Structural changes should be planned and implemented based on the same considerations. Ultimately, all measures and activities in the context of the change towards a new working world also lead to a change in culture. This is defined by "the sum of the deeds of all acting persons in a company", which means that the culture of a company develops through deeds and people from within and cannot be determined from the outside.

Conclusion

The concept of New Work, which emphasizes flexible forms of work, has gained momentum due to various long-term trends such as digitization, globalization, and automation. These trends have redefined the traditional boundaries between work and play. Frithjof Bergmann's vision of New Work involves a model where individuals engage in a mix of traditional work, work they really want, and high-tech self-production.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of flexible working models, including remote work, which has been shown to improve employee satisfaction, productivity, and work-life balance. However, the rapid transition has also highlighted the irony of automation, as more automation reduces opportunities for independent action and control. The changing nature of work, with a shift towards the service sector, requires workers to regularly adapt their skills and work processes in order to remain employable. "New Work" promotes flexible working conditions, including flexible working hours, locations, and hierarchies, and offers employees more freedom and autonomy. While remote work has a positive impact on employee satisfaction, it also comes with challenges, such as stress due to work-life balance and having work interrupted by chores. Despite these challenges, labor productivity remains unaffected. Organizations tend to rely on existing practices, and those with established performance management systems have been better equipped to adapt during the pandemic. Path-dependent theories suggest that organizations with entrenched practices are more conservative.

The pandemic has been found to be impacting employee well-being through stressors and leading to reduced job performance. Agile performance management approaches that include frequent goal setting and real-time feedback are proposed to improve performance in dynamic environments. However, the switch to New Work also harbors risks, as automation may make certain positions redundant. While entire professions may not disappear, certain tasks within those professions could be replaced by technology. Organizational flexibility and a nuanced understanding of technological developments are key to navigating this changing work landscape. Future research should further explore these aspects in order to guide organizations effectively.

Declarations

Acknowledgements

Not applicable.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Ethics Approval

Not applicable.

Funding Acknowledgements

Not applicable.

Citation to this article

Teichert, M. A., Pospisil, R., Brugger, D. P., & Lödige, M. (2023). Future of work: New Work as a saviour? *International Journal of Organizational Leadership*, 12(4), 442-467. <https://doi.org/10.33844/ijol.2023.60388>

Rights and Permissions



© 2022 Canadian Institute for Knowledge Development. All rights reserved.

International Journal of Organizational Leadership is published by the Canadian Institute for Knowledge Development (CIKD). This is an open-access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution \(CC BY\)](#) License, which permits use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

References

- Arntz, M. (2016). *The risk of automation for jobs in OECD countries*, OECD Social, employment and migration. Working Papers. OECD Publishing, Paris.
- Bergmann, F. (2005). *Die Freiheit leben*. (Living freedom)
- Bergmann, F. (2020). *Neue Arbeit, neue Kultur* [New work, new culture].
- Bogedan, C., & Hoffmann, R. (2015). Arbeit der Zukunft. Möglichkeiten nutzen, Grenzen setzen. (Work of the future. Utilising opportunities, setting limits.)
- De Cieri, H., Sanders, K., & Lin, C. (2022). International and comparative human resource management: an Asia-Pacific perspective. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 60(1), 116–145.
- Deloitte (2020). Remote Work. A temporary bug becomes permanent future. URL: <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/sg/Documents/human-capital/sg-hc-remote-work.pdf>
- De Menezes, L. M., & Kelliher, C. (2011). Flexible working and performance: A systematic review of the evidence for a business case. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13(4), 452–474.
- Groth, S., May, S., & Müske, J. (2020). Vernetzt, entgrenzt, prekär? Kulturwissenschaftliche Perspektiven auf Arbeit im Wandel [Networked, delimited, precarious? Cultural studies perspectives on labour in transition]. Campus.
- Hackl, B., Wagner, M., Attmer, L., & Baumann, D. (2017). *New Work. Auf dem Weg zur neuen Arbeitswelt. Managementimpulse, Praxisbeispiele, Studien*. (New Work. On the way to the new world of work. Management impulses, practical examples, studies.) Springer.
- Hartmann, A. (2016). Dienstleistungsgesellschaft. (service society.) In Hirsch-Kreinsen, Hartmut, Minsen, H. (Ed.). *Lexikon der Arbeits- und Industriesoziologie* [Dictionary of labour and industrial sociology]. Nomos.

- Hickmann, H., & Malin, L. (2022). Fachkräftereport März 2022. (Skilled labour report March 2022.) Kompetenzzentrum Fachkräftesicherung. <https://www.kofa.de/daten-und-fakten/studien/fachkraeftereport-maerz-2022/>
- Hofmann, J., Riedel, O., & Rief, S. (2020). Arbeiten in der Corona-Pandemie. Auf dem Weg zum New Normal. (Working in the corona pandemic. On the way to the new normal.) Fraunhofer Institut für Arbeitswirtschaft und Organisation.
- Hooker, H., Neathey, F., Casebourne, J., & Munro, M. (2007). *The third work-life balance employee survey: Main findings* (No. 58). London: Department of Trade and Industry.
- Kazekami, S. (2020). Mechanisms to improve labor productivity by performing telework. *Telecommunications Policy*, 44(2), S0308596119301120.
- Kersley, B., Alpin C., Forth J., Bryson A., Bewley H., Dix G., & Oxenbridge S. (2006). *Inside the Workplace: Findings from the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey*. Routledge.
- Kim, Y., & Chen G (2020). Cutback management and path dependency: evidence from the two recent recessions. *Local Government Studies*, 46(2), 278–305.
- MacDonald, I., Chikandiva, K., & Kanyangale, T. (2022). Performance management and the COVID-19 pandemic: Framework for an agile, continuous performance management system. *Acta Universitatis Danubia Oeconomica*, 18(5), 141–159.
- Manyika, J., Lund, S., Chui, M., Bughin, J., Woetzel, J., Batra, P., & Sanghvi, S. (2017). *Jobs lost, jobs gained: What the future of work will mean for jobs, skills, and wages*. McKinsey & Company.
- Mayer, M. M. (2021). *Fachkräfteengpässe und Zuwanderung aus Unternehmenssicht in Deutschland 2021: Stärkerer Anstieg als im Vorjahr angenommen* [Skilled labour shortages and immigration from a company perspective in Germany in 2021: Stronger increase assumed than in the previous year]. Bertelsmann Stiftung. https://www.bertelsmannstiftung.de/fileadmin/files/Projekte/Migration_fair_gestalten/IB_Policy_Brief_Fachkraefteengpae_2021.pdf
- Mayring, P. (2014). Qualitative content analysis: theoretical foundation, basic procedures and software solution. Klagenfurt. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-395173>
- Nadeem, S., & Metcalf, H. (2007). *Work-life policies in Great Britain: What works, where and how?* (No. 77). Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform.
- Pasha, O. (2022). Municipal performance management during the covid pandemic. <https://doi.org/10.1177/095207672211411>
- Pollack, G., & Ufimtseva O. (2020). Analysis of employees competences in the Industry 4.0. *Journal of Computational and Engineering Mathematics*, 7(2), 31–39.
- Popa, I., Simona C. Ștefan, A., & Popa, F. (2022). Modelling the COVID-19 pandemic effects on employees' health and performance: A PLS-SEM mediation approach. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(3), 1865.
- Schwarzbauer, W., & Wolf, M. (2020). Bedeutung der Telearbeit aktuell und nach der COVID-19 Pandemie [Importance of teleworking now and after the COVID-19 pandemic] EcoAustria - Institute for Economic Research.
- Zienhofer, M. (2022). *Work values and organisational commitment*. Institute of Leadership and Change Management.
- Zimmermann, K. (2013). Reflexionen zur Zukunft der Arbeit [Reflections on the future of work] In H. Hinte, & K. Zimmermann (Ed.), *Zeitenwende auf dem Arbeitsmarkt. Wie der Demografische Wandel die Erwerbsgesellschaft verändert* [Turning point in the labour market. How demographic change is changing the labour market]. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung.
- Zukunftsinstitut. (2022). *Die Megatrends* [The megatrends]. Zukunftsinstitut GmbH. <https://www.zukunftsinstitut.de/dossier/megatrends/>