

Digital Work Design – How Digitization Transforms Work and Leadership

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Abstract

Digitization crucially transforms the way in which work is done and leadership is carried out in organizations. This poster discusses these changes as well as their potential chances and risks based on the results of a qualitative survey with experts from industry, research, associations and politics.

Theoretical background & research question

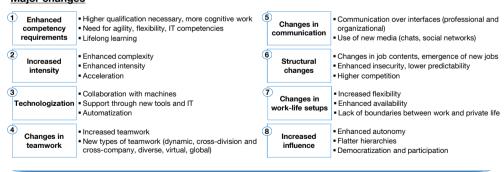
- Due to the digitization of all life domains, the world of work in organizations currently changes dramatically (Grant & Parker, 2009)
- Introducing new information technologies fundamentally shifts the conditions under which work is done
 and leadership is carried out (Parker, Wall, & Cordery, 2001)
- While existing theories of work design (Hackman & Oldham, 1975; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006) and leadership cover a wide range of important factors, it seems worthwhile to assess these theories' validity against the background of an increasingly digitized working world (Oldham & Hackman, 2010) and to assess the chances and risks associated with potential changes in work design and leadership

Method

- Qualitative online expert survey with 49 German-speaking digitization experts from industry, research, associations and politics (70 % male, 66 % working in top management)
- Two survey rounds:
 - Round 1: Changes of work design and leadership due to digitization
- Round 2: Ranking of these changes and assessment of their changes and risks
- Qualitative coding by two independent raters (Kappa_{Work} = 0.84; Kappa_{I eadership} = 0.84)

Results - Work Design

Major changes



Major chances

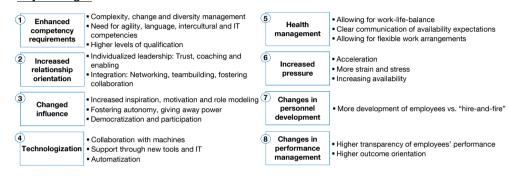
More development and learning More diverse and interesting jobs Increased autonomy More flexible work-life-models

Maior risks

Increased strain and stress Less intense relationships Feelings of insecurity Job loss

Results - Leadership

Major changes



Major chances

Increased performance Changes in leadership scope Relief for leaders Shared responsibilities

Major risks

Increased strain and stress
Lack of competencies
Low willingness and capability to change
Loss of power and control

Discussion

- Results show that digitization crucially transforms work design and leadership, especially with regard to necessary competencies
- Certain dimensions of work design outlined by previous research (Hackman & Oldham, 1975; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006) seem to gain importance due to digitization, e.g., autonomy, task variety, complexity
- In addition, new dimensions of work design seem to emerge due to digitization, e.g., acceleration, intensity, teamwork, automatization, insecurity, competition, democracy, flexibility, internationalization
- For leaders, it seems necessary to react to these changes in work design especially by displaying a higher degree of relationship orientation and more participatory influence behavior

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