

Industry 4.0: A big or a small revolution? Crucial competences!

Christoph Bach

Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Management, Slovak Republic
ch.bach-frankfurt@t-online.de

Rozália Sulíková

Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Management, Slovak Republic
rozalia.sulikova@fm.uniba.sk

Industry 4.0 describes how production as a whole, including its organisation, will be carried out in factories in the future. It differs from previous methods in a consistent use of digital data along the entire production cycle. Computers have become indispensable in offices today, and also inside production halls there are computers that influence production processes. However, there is not consistent networking between production, management etc. in most companies such as using an intranet, for example. Here, Smart Factory comes in: this new type gives managers the opportunity to react immediately to problems of all kinds and be pro-active.

Industry 4.0 is often said to be a revolution that will affect the entire working life. This raises the question of whether today's leadership skills will become obsolete. While to this day leaders are sometimes dominant but in any case confident and target-oriented. "New Leadership" is often associated with the so-called "Servant Leadership". Leadership no longer is just about planning, making specifications and recording results but rather strengthening employees' personal responsibility so that they can make their own decisions. The manager then becomes a kind of coach who wants to create a good working atmosphere and help employees work self-responsibly and productively. "New Leadership" may be an alternative to traditional leadership for some types of industry (e.g. the computer game industry) but that does not apply to most companies. The reason for this is the willingness to take responsibility. On the one hand, responsibility for decisions that have led to economically negative consequences might become untraceable so that no one can be held responsible anymore. On the other hand, managers also have to make negative decisions (such as layoffs). Acting as a leader is not only about planning, making specifications and recording results but also about making decisions that might be necessary for the company but negative for employees. Consequently, employees will not perceive their managers authentically anymore, which should have a negative impact on the working climate.

In the context of Smart Factory, Industry 4.0 and a different management style, the environment of the company is also an often discussed topic: today, it is characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA). A VUCA world, however, does not only require a different management style but also new competences. *At first glance, this thesis is entirely acceptable?* However, it foremost requires specialist and methodological competencies: Industry 4.0 and Smart Factory primarily require employees' and managers' digital competences. Social and personal skills, leadership and implementation skills, on the other hand, will remain the same in a VUCA world that is characterised by Industry 4.0 and Smart Factory.

This paper aims to show that the challenges of the future will not be solved by questioning everything that has gone before. A completely new management style or replacing all traditional competences with new ones will not suffice; one should rather adapt successful leadership patterns to the new challenges: new competences are integrated into the existing ones and outdated competences will be neglected.

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