

November 2020

20
years of
ceo

ceo

The magazine for decision makers

Work
in progress



A decorative graphic consisting of a thick orange rectangle at the top center, with a grey line that starts from the left side of the orange rectangle, goes down, then right, then down again, forming a large 'L' shape. A small orange circle is on the left vertical line. At the bottom right, there is a grey square-like shape with rounded corners, partially overlapping the main line.

20 years

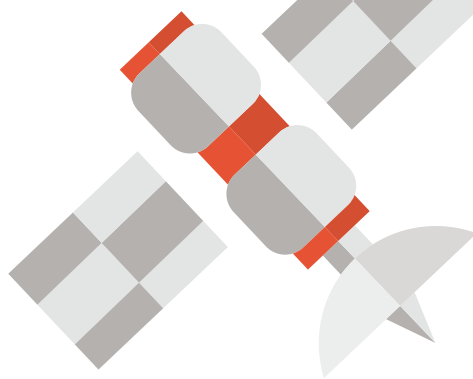
on behalf of the future

The first ever edition of ceo was published by PwC Switzerland in 2000. Over the years, in the magazine for decision-makers we've tackled megatrends and key issues relating to the economy and society, and discussed them with prominent figures from various industries. A lot has changed since then. Just one thing has stayed the same: we're still using ceo to encourage debate about the issues that concern decision-makers, companies and the people of Switzerland – now, tomorrow and in the future.

In this edition, we focus on the future world of work. We start by looking back ten years to see what's changed in our working world, and then we dare to predict what the next ten years will look like. In doing so, we make no claims as to the completeness or accuracy of our hypotheses. Using fictional examples, we outline the future in an attempt to make it more comprehensible. Our main focus is on people. After all, despite the latest technologies, revolutionary methods and disruptive approaches, there won't be a future without the understanding, talent, willingness to learn, versatility, creativity, empathy and judgement of every single person who will live and work in this new world.

Timeline

START



2013

There are now more mobile devices and connections than there are people on the earth.

In the US state of California, authenticated self-driving cars are officially allowed on the roads for testing purposes.

2012

2011

The global population passes the seven-billion mark. The first bookshops have to close as a result of online retail. Android, the smartphone operating system, achieves a global market share of 52.5%.

2010

Europe celebrates the Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. At the same time, China becomes the world's largest manufacturing nation and knocks the USA off the top spot.



¹ Cf. "New world. New skills.", PwC Global, 2019
² Cf. "New world. New skills.", PwC Global, 2019
³ Based on the "Principles of employers' policies: megatrends and future scenarios", Swiss Employers Confederation, 2018 (in German)
⁴ Based on "The case for change: New world. New skills.", Carol Stubbings, Strategy+Business, 2020
⁵ Cf. "World of Work 4.0", University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Northwestern Switzerland/School of Business, 2019/2020 (in German)
⁶ Cf. "Principles of employers' policies: megatrends and future scenarios", Swiss Employers Confederation, 2018 (in German)
⁷ Cf. "World of Work 4.0", University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Northwestern Switzerland/School of Business, 2019/2020 (in German)
⁸ Cf. "SBB Work Environment of the Future 2025–2035", PwC on behalf of the SBB Digitalisation Fund, 2019
⁹ Based on "World of Work 4.0", University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Northwestern Switzerland/School of Business, 2019/2020 (in German)
¹⁰ Based on the "Principles of employers' policies: megatrends and future scenarios", Swiss Employers Confederation, 2018 (in German)
¹¹ Based on "World of Work 4.0", University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Northwestern Switzerland/School of Business, 2019/2020 (in German)
¹² Based on the "Principles of employers' policies: megatrends and future scenarios", Swiss Employers Confederation, 2018 (in German)
¹³ Based on "Pensions at a Glance 2017, Flexible retirement in OECD countries (Chapter 2)", OECD, 2018 (in German)



2014

The US company Facebook buys the WhatsApp messenger service. 64 billion WhatsApp messages are sent via the web every day.

2015

Amazon and Alibaba dominate online retail. As part of the Paris Climate Agreement, the signatory states undertake to set national targets to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The United Nations sets out the "17 Sustainable Development Goals", which bring together social, economic and environmental aspects.

Every year, 10% of required functions are transformed by digitalisation.¹ This forces companies to determine their needs with neuro-linguistic programming and artificial intelligence and to step up their upskilling programmes. They do this by joining forces with other companies, educational institutions and the government.²

2016

Personal data, psychology and bots influence the results of the American presidential election.

2017

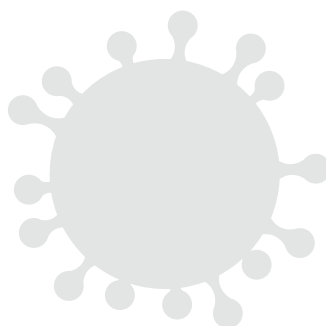
Facebook declares war on fake news. Google algorithms reveal 314 million search results for "future of work".

2018

An unusually hot summer with a sustained period of drought causes massive damage in the primary sector. The General Data Protection Regulation enters into force in the European Union.

2019

The 25th United Nations Climate Change Conference and the 15th session of the Kyoto Protocol are held in Madrid. The electric car manufacturer Tesla starts construction of its gigafactory in Brandenburg.



2021

2020

COVID-19 spreads around the globe at breakneck speed. Most countries declare a state of emergency. Schools remain closed and companies introduce working from home and remotely.





Switzerland makes the retirement age flexible, in line with many OECD countries. Anyone can work beyond the age of 65 (women) or 67 (men) if they so wish. The social security legislation is designed in such a way that working is worthwhile even after retirement age.¹³

2022

The potential for automation in Switzerland is largely exhausted. One-third of production sites that were relocated abroad for cost reasons are brought back into the country and their productivity is increased by technological innovations.³

2023

Reskilling and upskilling programmes have become established within international corporations, which spend an average of USD 20,000 per person for this purpose.⁴ Education and training is delivered via customised e-tutorials, virtual classrooms, webinars, wikis, social media, video-based learning, micro-blogs, simulations, serious games and augmented reality courses.⁵

2024

Half of the employees in Switzerland work from home or remotely. This number has doubled compared to 2019.⁶ Teams collaborate via cloud-based platforms.⁷

2030

2029

Sharing platforms for private transport and work-from-home models have alleviated the congestion on public transport caused by the commuter flows of the 2020s.¹²

2028

Most companies have reduced their office capacity. Offices are used primarily as places for inspiration and networking. New room concepts like desk sharing and creative work-spaces combine work culture, efficiency, innovation and well-being.¹¹

2027

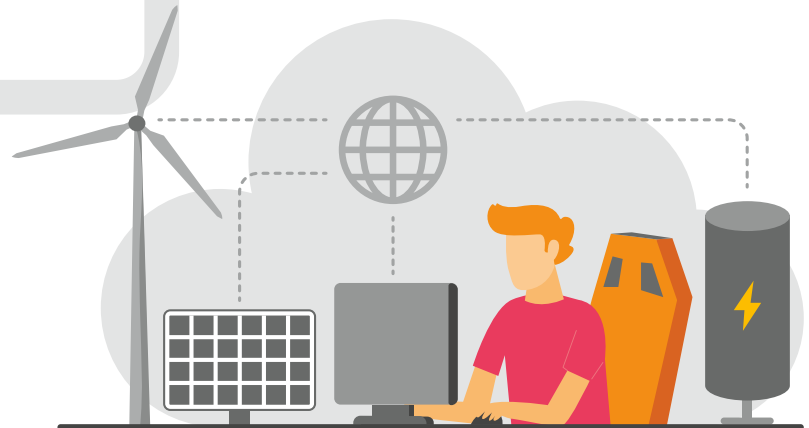
Only 9% of the working population are still salaried employees.¹⁰

2026

62% of the working population are classified as gig workers and fulfil several roles at the same time, like employees, project staff and self-employed individuals for example.⁹

2025

Compared with 2020, every third job no longer exists in its original form. Digital job profiles such as Design Thinker, AI Manager or E-Mechatronics Engineer and new roles such as Reverse Coach (junior coaches senior) or Chief Fitness Officer are in vogue.⁸





The working world of the future

Despite the technological transformation and the rapid pace of progress, employees are still the heart of every company and are regarded as a crucial success factor – today just as much as 100 years ago. So, it's all the more important for companies to equip their employees today with the skills that are needed for tomorrow and to create a diverse and inspiring environment where everyone can develop, learn and grow. At the same time, companies also need to offer an energetic atmosphere, flexible time models and equal pay and opportunities in the workplace.

In this issue, we shine the spotlight on these exciting topics, looking at them from an economic, psychological and social point of view, with contributions from prominent figures and from small and large companies from different industries. The COVID-19 pandemic remains a topic of importance and is therefore also addressed in this issue. We are also celebrating an anniversary: **the ceo was first launched 20 years ago.**



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PwC Switzerland, Birchstrasse 160,
8050 Zurich, Switzerland

Layout:

PwC Switzerland, Lisa Machado, Birchstrasse 160,
8050 Zurich, Switzerland

Image editing/printing:

Linkgroup AG, Mühlebachstrasse 52,
8008 Zurich, Switzerland

Cover photo: Marianne Janik,
CEO Microsoft Switzerland
photographed by Markus Bertschi

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20
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Time is timeless – the calendar was invented by us humans. But how do we define concepts such as “yesterday”, “the present”, “the future”? How do we keep pace with the times, and at the same time stay ahead of them? What matters tomorrow is something we can only speculate about and prepare ourselves for.



Andreas Staubli
CEO of PwC Switzerland

We published the first edition of ceo 20 years ago. I myself had just been promoted to partner at PwC Switzerland, never imagining that I would one day be CEO. Twenty years seem like an eternity ago, because today we are fully focused on the future – and are constantly working to keep our knowledge up to date.

That also applies to how this edition of ceo came into being: thwarted by COVID-19, it evolved from on-screen meetings from our home-based offices and since spring 2020 has been constantly updated and adapted to the fast-paced developments. In this issue, we examine the aspects of our working lives that are being transformed in interviews with individuals exploring what they expect as employers, managers, lecturers and experts. We asked them how they are helping to shape the new world (of work), what skills they are seeking to acquire and how they are looking ahead to the future.

The pandemic requires us to adopt a new understanding of time, speed and flexibility. It has shortened the half-life of announcements and accelerated developments that had already turned our lives upside down – above all, digitalisation. Jobs and job descriptions come and go, new ways of working are coming into being, CVs are being rewritten.

In turbulent times such as these, we as decision-makers must create a working environment in which each and every one of us can make a contribution. What’s needed are workplaces and models that suit the health and work-life balance of different age groups, managers who coach their teams and a culture in which everyone can rediscover themselves – regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation or cognitive abilities.

With this in mind, we at PwC have launched the “Your Tomorrow” upskilling initiative and earmarked USD 3 billion worldwide for this project. We’re doing this to develop team members who are agile, robust and constantly learning, and who can help drive the transformation.

The number of people who are unable to participate in the World of Work 4.0 because they lack the skills is increasing all the time. So, let’s work together to turn the employees of today into the strong players of tomorrow.

I hope you find this an informative read.

Andreas Staubli

Current studies on the subject



PwC



Upskilling Hopes and Fears (2019)
PwC's global survey on technology, jobs and skills



SBB Work Environment of the Future 2025–2035 (2019)
How can companies prepare for it?



What colour is your future? (2018)
Digitalisation and the working world of the future



Workforce of the future (2018)
The competing forces shaping 2030



The way we work – in 2025 and beyond (2017)
Key trends in six areas of HR and a prediction for the workplace of the future



Winning the fight for female talent (2017)
How to gain the diversity edge through inclusive recruitment

Others



The Global Talent Competitiveness Index (2020)
Global Talent in the Age of Artificial Intelligence



Mega trends and images of the future (2018)
Employer Policy Vision 2030



Leadership of the future (2018)
Between inspiration and empowerment



Top management between digitalisation and the world of work 4.0 (2017)
Leadership, HRM and communication strategies at Swiss companies



Diversity management in Switzerland (2017)
Taking account of sexual orientation and gender identity



Older employees (2017)
Older employees in the Swiss employment market

The evolving workplace

People were pushed by the COVID-19 pandemic into living virtual lives and working remotely. But a lot of the workplace change was coming anyway, says Jose Marques, Partner People and Organisation at PwC Switzerland. The virus response just accelerated and amplified it.



Jose Marques
Partner, PwC Switzerland

Work times and workplaces – how will these look in future?

The COVID-19 outbreaks created a laboratory for offices of the future by forcing people to work remotely and differently. Working from home requires being more digital. This is a great opportunity to reskill and upskill ourselves, at scale. Another aspect related to this is flexible working. Government work rules need to accommodate it, and still protect workers. Company policies on this are therefore evolving. Creating a sense of community with your people at the centre matters more than ever.

Old jobs are dying, new jobs are born. What does this mean for companies?

According to PwC's report "Hopes & Fears", 53% of workers believe automation will significantly change or make their job obsolete within the next ten years. But automation is also about the opportunity for more meaningful work and finding new, value-adding things to do. Companies have to help with the transformation too. New technology – yes. Training to use it – definitely. There's no point in investing in technology unless your people can use it properly.

There is a mismatch of skill supply and skill demand – how do we solve it?

Skill requirements are continually changing, and today with COVID-19, we have seen unquestionable evidence that we need digital, soft and business skills. Organisations need, especially now, to consider their future needs in terms of skills, employees and jobs. It's cheaper to train than to recruit and bring new hires up to speed. PwC Luxembourg worked with the government of Luxembourg on an iconic project in this space. They created an ecosystem with a job market: individuals' skills are matched to internal jobs and then training is coordinated to address skill gaps. Also, help is given in finding external positions for those who want to leave. For organisations in our current world, this is essential.

How has leadership changed in the past 20 years?

Current developments teach us that not everything can be solved and led by technology. Machine learning and artificial intelligence cannot save us yet. The true heroes of today are definitely humans like medical experts and crisis managers. Today's leaders need to be maestros – like conducting an orchestra. They bring an ensemble together to be greater than the sum of its parts. They also need a purpose and a vision, with strong values. Leaders must articulate a strategy and then sell it to employees, to customers, to suppliers, to investors. They need to be able to handle the unknown, or even a crisis like today's, which we could never have imagined.

Diversity and inclusion – are these just about political correctness?

They're a must. At PwC Switzerland, diversity and inclusion are seen as business imperatives not just nice-to-haves. We create value through diversity. Studies have proven that organisations with a diverse workforce, that make employees feel they belong and offer them support, do better economically and make better decisions. A successful company needs the collective engagement of its workforce.

Jose Marques, thanks for your thoughts.

20 years of ceo, and an online success too for the last year.

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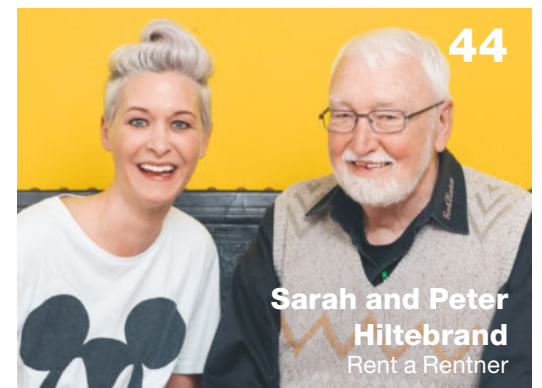
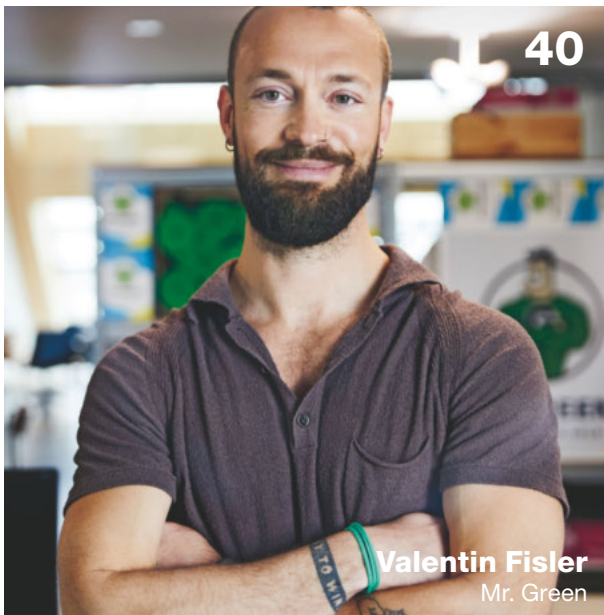
Mr. Green

Diversity and inclusion are part of Valentin Fislser's company DNA

44

Rent a Rentner

Sarah and Peter Hiltbrand see diversity as a valuable asset



Updated on 25 August 2020

Learn. Work. Lead. Live.

Learn

Digital upskilling

Upskilling – the imperative for action

Upskilling is more than just providing access to training; rather, it's a key strategic investment. It requires an effective strategy to support and inspire people to take action today and continue to adapt in the future. The challenge is also to shape corporate culture so that companies and their people continue to have a place in the working world of the future. There is no going back!

Visualized

Digital learning formats encourage highly effective learning



In a nutshell

By upskilling, we mean preparing people for a technology-driven future. It includes the ability to interact with technology, i.e. having a high degree of digital fitness. It is also to be combined with enhanced cognitive capabilities – critical thinking, problem-solving skills, creativity, emotional intelligence and resilience. There is a clear opportunity to improve how we use intrinsically human skills and attributes, leaving machines to what they are best at. Upskilling is first and foremost a new way of thinking.

Minimising potential risks

Some business leaders might think their companies do not need upskilling, but they are mistaken. Doing nothing is no longer an option, as there will be new jobs created and companies need to be ready to have the right people and skills. New technologies have changed how we work. More and more people are being shut out from the digital economy, and this is creating social and economic risks:

- Transformation is happening at a faster rate than people's ability to develop their skills independently or to move into other professions and sectors.
- Wage inequality continues to rise and this is often linked to lack of the skills that organisations need.
- Tax receipts to governments are falling because fewer people are able to enter the world of work. At the same time, we are facing a major increase in unemployment costs in most economies.

- There is social unrest and people are demonstrating.
- National economies and society being undermined.

Top of the agenda

Higher productivity, stronger growth, more innovative momentum and an acceleration in the digital transformation – for CEOs worldwide, these are the advantages of upskilling. In a survey, 79% of CEOs expressed concern about the availability of core skills prior to COVID-19.¹ Today, a lack of people with the right skills and adaptability is hampering companies' ability to thrive in a post-pandemic economy. CEOs know that their strategy and operating model need to change, but they don't have the right people with the right skills to make their strategy a success. Organisations are now rethinking their upskilling and reskilling efforts, both in the short term and the long term.

Unlearn, relearn and keep on learning

77% of the world's workforce would learn new skills today or retrain completely to boost their future employability.² This calls for openness and a lifelong willingness to learn. Optimism about the digital future correlates with respective age and educational level.

Make vs. buy

Experience shows that developing the desired skills among existing employees is easier and cheaper than recruiting new talent. That is because most of the time the needed experts are not available or not affordable.

Cost alert!

The World Economic Forum estimates that 1.37 million jobs in the US alone are currently threatened by digital change.³ The upskilling costs are estimated at USD 34 billion or USD 24,800 per person. To spread this cost burden, companies should use networks and operate in ecosystems with other companies, customers and the government.

E-learning

Digital and web-based learning formats promote individual learning and are therefore highly efficient. This currently involves e-tutorials, virtual classrooms, webinars, wikis, social media, video-based learning, microblogs, simulations, serious games and augmented reality applications, and will continue to be at the forefront after COVID-19. There is a clear new paradigm for skills and talent with a new learning ecosystem.

From labour force to force of nature

A great deal of momentum is created when people drive forward technology. Companies must combine the top technologies with the best people, preferably by taking a systematic approach:



A structured approach is best:

1. Analyse the employee environment, and identify and prioritise skills gaps.
2. Develop a strategy for those gaps with the potential to add the most value.
3. Invest in technology and help people understand what this means.
4. Build a culture of continuous learning.
5. Nurture physical and mental well-being.
6. Set up an employee-driven innovation process.
7. Offer personal development plans, training and coaching.
8. Provide a motivating learning experience, time to learn and incentives or rewards.
9. Measure learning success and employee commitment.
10. Jointly develop and promote new job profiles.

¹ "PwC's 2019 annual CEO survey", PwC Global, 2019

² "Upskilling Hopes and Fears", PwC Global, 2019

³ Insight Report "Towards a Reskilling Revolution", World Economic Forum, 2018



CEOs need to change
their way of thinking:
digitalisation means
decentralisation of power

Nicolas Bürer (42) grew up in Geneva and studied physics at EPFL Lausanne. He then moved to Zurich where he took up an advisory position, before later working in management roles at Dein Deal and youth channel Joiz. He is co-founder of Movu, a digital home-moving services platform, which was acquired by Bâloise.

He's also been involved in three other start-ups. He joined digitalswitzerland as Managing Director in 2016. Bürer lives in Zurich, is married and has two children.



He learned a great deal through failure and, now in his early forties, has worked his way to the top: **Nicolas Bürer**, CEO of digitalswitzerland, talks to us about Switzerland's digital future and the opportunities in the new world of work.

digitalswitzerland is the joint initiative between business, the public sector and science, and its aim is to make Switzerland an international leading digital innovation location. It focuses on the transfer of knowledge, training, start-up eco-systems and political frameworks. The association was founded in 2015 and its members include more than 175 of the most reputable companies and organisations as well as innovative locations throughout Switzerland. In 2019, the Swiss employers' association and digitalswitzerland co-launched a number of initiatives including the national campaign #LifelongLearning.

www.digitalswitzerland.com

Journalist: Simon Eppenberger
Photographer: Marc Wetli

Within a matter of days, the outbreak of COVID-19 meant that people from thousands of companies had to start working from home. In Switzerland, are we experiencing the largest boost ever to digitalisation?

Temporarily, yes. Digitalisation now plays a bigger role in many sectors than it did before. When it comes to interaction between teams, companies and customers, we've never seen anything on this scale before.

Do you think this exceptional situation will make Switzerland more digital in the long term?

I expect many people will return to their previous work environment. How leaders act will be a crucial factor. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they were forced to think and act differently and also relinquish a certain amount of control. Working from home doesn't fit into the classic top-down management model. Instead, it involves a network where teams and individual employees take on greater responsibility. This is the future.

Society had to start getting to grips with the digital transformation, even before COVID-19. This creates hope, as well as fears. How do you respond if

somebody fears losing their job due to digitalisation?

The facts are clear. Over the next 15 years, around 20% of current jobs will disappear. This is a serious situation. Out of five million employees, this means that one million will no longer do the jobs they do today. But fear is a poor basis for decision-making. The solution is curiosity and life-long learning.

How will the Swiss economy brace itself against the disappearance of 20% of today's jobs?

By investing in education, further training and innovation. We expect things to develop similarly to how they did during the third industrial revolution. 20% of jobs disappeared, but now we have more jobs in new areas.

This level of transformation on the job market is not easy to manage.

There is the risk that it will increase social inequality. The third revolution lasted 20 years, but today everything happens twice as quickly. The unemployment level must not rise too much, and in particular the number of long-term unemployed people. It's not good for society if too many people are affected while the most highly-qualified people receive an endless stream of job offers.



Traditional management is being revolutionised. Companies are adopting an empowerment leadership model in which responsibility is shared.

So does life-long learning need to become the top priority within our society and economy?

It needs to be high up on the list of priorities at least. As part of a major survey conducted by Tamedia, half the population stated that at the moment they don't feel as though they need to continue learning. I find this alarming – within this group are people who will lose their jobs.

What approach do employers need to take to deal with digital skills and training?

This needs to be a priority for the Board of Directors and the Executive Board. Many of the big tech companies have known this for a long time. Training is one of their main priorities, alongside their core business and finance.

The digital working world is evolving at a fast pace. What other risks are associated with this?

The major risk is one that applies to our private lives too: loss of privacy, values and social contacts. Companies can misuse digitalisation and use it to track their employees, for instance. Working at home all alone in ten years' time wearing smart glasses is not an exciting prospect.

What opportunities will the digital working world bring?

Many things will be more practical, more convenient, and we'll see a huge increase in services. Mobility will be transformed, agriculture will be automated, smart homes will take over our housework – machines will carry out lots of tasks. People need to be more creative about how they work together, and focus more on analysis and development and less on execution.

The #LifelongLearning campaign by digitalswitzerland and the Swiss employers' association is committed to a continuous learning process. What's the specific objective?

Initially, it was to make people aware that learning is an opportunity for life that each and every one of us needs to seize. This year, we're focusing more on activation. We can now offer companies direct financial support for training their employees.

How can companies promote "digital upskilling" within their workforce?

Mandating digital upskilling would be a step too far. But what's essential is that companies allocate enough days for training. Tech companies invest up to 20% of their employees' time in training – even outside of their core business. Training is a key performance indicator.

What are the main challenges companies face with the "digital upskilling" of their employees?

There's a fine line between enforcement and self-motivation. Both the employees and the managers must want it. Digitalisation means decentralising power, and CEOs need to change their way of thinking.

How does Switzerland fare when it comes to education? Are talented young people equipped for the future?

Here in Switzerland, we like to complain, although for the last seven years we've ranked number one in the Global Talent Competitiveness Index. We're not in pole position when it comes to digital education for children. But having said that, IT is on the 2021 school curriculum for 11-year olds, which is a very important development. The next step in education is "computational



In the spotlight



Fear is a poor basis for decision-making. The solution is curiosity and life-long learning.



thinking”, in other words the interaction between people and machines. This involves children learning how to program robots. Digitalisation isn't just about software.

Children will learn how to program robots?

If I look at my children as an example, they have no reservations or inhibitions when it comes to automation. Why vacuum when a machine can do it for you? I'm not really that excited about the thought of self-driving cars, but my children think it's cool! The next generation is also very socially minded.

There's high demand for digital skills but an insufficient supply in some areas. Where does Switzerland sit with regard to the digital talent gap?

According to a study by ICTswitzerland, over the next few decades there'll be a shortage of thousands of digital specialists. Some large companies, SMEs and start-ups are already starting to really notice the talent gap.

How can companies fill this talent gap?

Firstly by upskilling and secondly through the immigration of digital experts. This statement is purely based on statistics and it's a major problem in lots of countries. Every year in Switzerland, there's a shortage of several thousands of specialists. It could be addressed by issuing tech visas. This is something that's already happening in the Netherlands, which explains why there are Swiss tech companies operating subsidiaries in Amsterdam.

Half of the founders in Silicon Valley aren't from the US.

Training is expensive. Why do companies need to invest in it?

Training is a means of incentivising, and employees are grateful for training opportunities. When they're able to put what they've learned into practice, they'll remain at the company and contribute towards its productivity.

What is your vision of the future world of work?

I hope that machines will make our lives much easier, and that we as people can concentrate on analysis, interpretation, creativity and further training. And essentially: on maintaining social contact. More people will have several different jobs, they'll be more flexible and there'll be more digital nomads. This means we really have to cultivate contacts.

Is digitalisation also changing how companies are managed?

Traditional management is being revolutionised. The keyword is people empowerment. This means focusing on the people and teams, and giving them greater responsibility. At the same time, companies will be measuring and analysing more, and they'll be guided by validated data. This requires an understanding of complex structures. Top-down management no longer applies, instead companies are adopting an empowerment leadership model in which responsibility is shared.

What were you doing 20 years ago?

I'd just completed a Masters in Physics at EPFL Lausanne.

20 years ago, could you have imagined that you'd be a CEO today?

No, never!

When did you consciously first come into contact with digitalisation?

I first realised what digitalisation is all about eight years ago, when I was working at digital start-up Dein Deal.

Can you remember your first mobile phone? What impressed you about it most?

It was an ancient Nokia phone. The same thing impressed me about the "Natel C" in my father's car 30 years ago: the fact that you can communicate wirelessly and when you're on the move.

What are you doing in terms of your own personal digital upskilling?

I read a lot every day. I've also founded a digital start-up and invested in three others. I'm really committed to it, and I learn a lot by doing.

What is it about your work that fulfils you?

The purpose and vision of turning Switzerland into a digital innovation hub together with the great people around me, as well as the flexibility that makes the work possible. These are all things that fulfil me.

How do you maintain a work-life balance?

For me, it's not about balance. The 9-to-5 model no longer applies to a lot of people. Jeff Bezos said that the future is "work-life harmony". I like that. During the day, I might do something non-work-related, and in the evening I might work.

Your personal career tip?

Failure! It's an opportunity for your future.

Nicolas Bürer

Commitment to training is essential

Marianne Janik, CEO of Microsoft Switzerland, is committed to a culture of continual training. Being bold, having the confidence to do things and seeing learning as a means of personal enrichment not only apply to the tech company's employees but also to its partners and customers.

Microsoft has been active in Switzerland since 1989. The national subsidiary of the software corporation from Redmond in California, which also owns LinkedIn and Github, has around 620 employees distributed across the locations in Wallisellen, Bern, Basel and Geneva.

www.microsoft.com

Journalist: Editorial team of ceo
Photographer: Markus Bertschi

We're given a warm welcome, but we're living in the times of the coronavirus so there are no handshakes. Instead, Marianne Janik greets us with a namaste by pressing her palms together. At the Microsoft Switzerland offices in Wallisellen near Zurich, where strict hygiene rules still apply, we are welcomed by Marianne Janik. The topics we're going to cover are life-long learning, digital upskilling and the future world of work.

In a world that is growing closer together yet changing rapidly at the same time, networked thinking, creativity and a sense of judgement are becoming more and more important, we're told by the 55-year-old CEO, who has been managing the Swiss national subsidiary of the American corporation since 2015. Technology and automation play a special part in this: "We're increasingly surrounded by sensors. We're seeing an exponential increase in data volumes and computing power." This duality between humans and machines is having just as much of an impact on society as it is on corporate culture and leadership principles, says Marianne Janik.

The qualified lawyer sees it as her responsibility to make sure that the managers and teams are given the right programmes and tools to make learning accessible and attractive. This offering also needs to be rolled out to the customers and approximately 4,600 partner companies. And the self-responsibility of each and every individual to continue learning needs to be reinforced within this network.

Positive change

"As is the case in all other companies, the purpose and scope of our learning offering is questioned now and again," says Janik. "But the approach towards digital upskilling among the 620-strong workforce at Microsoft in Switzerland is a positive change. Many employees see this as an opportunity and are proud of their learning success. This is also apparent from the posts on social media. "I'm pleased with what our employees say on social media," comments the company's CEO.

But nobody should feel under pressure to perform. Those who don't succeed in obtaining a certificate the first time can try again. Not everyone learns at the same speed, nor do they have the same level of receptiveness. And there's a lot to learn – the skills that will be required in the future are challenging. "We have to understand and master increasingly complex technology. And the areas of artificial intelligence and quantum computers require very specific knowledge," continues Marianne Janik.



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We have to understand and master increasingly complex technology. And the areas of artificial intelligence and quantum computers require very specific knowledge.



Marianne Janik (55) has been CEO of Microsoft Switzerland since 2015. Before this, she was a member of the Executive Board of Microsoft Germany and was responsible for the public sector, education and healthcare sectors. Born in France, she's a qualified lawyer. She began her career at Daimler Benz and EADS. Marianne Janik is extremely committed to the digital transformation in Switzerland, in particular in the areas of innovation, security, education and training. She's a member of the Executive Committee at digitalswitzerland and the boards of the associations ICT Switzerland and ASUT. Marianne Janik is married and has two children.



We're seeing an exponential increase in data volumes and computing power. And we're increasingly surrounded by sensors.

The emotional aspect of work is important

Skills like the self-organisation of teams and project management are becoming more and more important. This is based on a leadership culture where learning is encouraged. "This is something we'll continue to invest in," the CEO promises. It's time-consuming, but being able to mobilise the potential within the company pays off. This includes giving employees the necessary freedom to encourage creativity and networked thinking.

It also means getting leaders to do more "emotional labour". Marianne Janik believes that Microsoft Switzerland is halfway along this journey. "We definitely still have some way to go," she tells us. It's a continual process. And she doesn't know what tomorrow's world will be like. But the US corporation's products keep pace with technological change: "Learning makes us fit for the future."

Group experience during the learning weeks

Within the company, it's important to create transparency and to allocate the necessary amount of time towards learning. This is why we introduced "learning weeks". Creating a group experience has proven to be successful, even if each participant is learning in front of a screen. The group participants all support each other, so any differences in level even themselves out.

Cloud services are a focal point of the learning content, reports Janik. There are tests and certificates for these courses. Other important topics include project management and coaching, which are both worthwhile – even for people who aren't in a management role. Microsoft Switzerland distinguishes between mandatory training that everyone has to complete and personalised training offers.

First and foremost, digital upskilling involves empowering people to have greater confidence to do things. The CEO wants employees to see learning as a means of personal enrichment and for them to feel ready to take on the tasks of the future. Commitment to training is vital at all companies. And it's up to the leaders to create a suitable learning culture. In Janik's experience, CEOs are often too far removed from this topic. "They need to do more than they're doing today and shouldn't be afraid digging down into the details. It's about learning, learning and learning."

Between two worlds

At her company, people also respond differently to the training offering, which comes as no wonder as Microsoft Switzerland employs people from 40 countries. "As is the case across the entire company, we have cultural and regional differences here too," says the multilingual cosmopolitan. Finding highly-qualified people is a challenge for Microsoft, as there's a global contest for recruiting the best talent. "Switzerland has a lot to offer," says Janik, referring to the education system. It's important that talents from other countries are able to remain here, especially foreign students once they've completed their studies.

Physical presence in the office will become less important overall. Janik comments on how people are more relaxed about using technology nowadays. Today, hardly anyone has reservations about turning on the camera of their laptop in their own home. And thanks to the cloud, people can access all their data from around the world. This goes hand in hand with an increase in self-responsibility too. She sees it as a positive sign that there was nothing to suggest employees would abuse the freedoms granted to them.





As is the case across the entire company, we have cultural and regional differences at Microsoft Switzerland too.



In the spotlight

What were you doing 20 years ago?

Life was just as exciting back then as it is now. At the time, we were entering a new digital era. Lots of money was being pooled together for crazy ideas and some bold decisions were made.

20 years ago, could you have imagined that you'd be a CEO today?

Not really. But even back then, I was on the look-out for professional challenges. Sometimes, my job today seems like a dream.

What do you want to see in the future world of work?

Technology is and will continue to be an important driver for change within the economy and society. I'm immensely inspired and motivated by being able to contribute towards the technological evolution in general, together with our partners and customers. I hope that I can pass this inspiration onto others, so they feel the same way about it as I do.

What is it about your work that fulfils you?

I'm delighted when I succeed in finding the right approach for my employees, the company and myself.

What do you value in particular about your employer?

The fact that I'm given a great deal of freedom, which is something that you don't necessarily expect from a major US corporation. I can also largely define my role myself.

How do you maintain a work-life balance?

Over the years, I've learned how to effectively combine family and free time with work.

What are you doing in terms of your own personal digital upskilling?

I put aside at least half a day every week and read a lot. I'm continually searching for new publications on future topics.

Your personal career tip for employees?

Keep your eyes open for opportunities and offers. And choose carefully who you want to work for.

— Marianne Janik —

The future is within reach

One of the consequences of this new world of work is that less office space will be needed in future. But personal contact will still be invaluable, says Janik. Next year, Microsoft Switzerland will relocate to "The Circle", a huge business complex at Zurich airport. The company is in the process of setting up the offices. They're initially being designed for the next ten years; the spaces will be used more flexibly and there will be more frequent conversions than in the past.

Marianne Janik doesn't dare provide a glimpse into what the next decade will be like: "That would be pure speculation," she tells us. But one thing is certain: people will still be people. And the range of skills required is increasing along with diversity –

across generations too. "There will be more people who can and want to carry on being productive, even in their seventies." The needs of the individual and dealing with emotions will also become more important.

"We'll learn how to deal with the robotics and artificial intelligence that will be ever-present in our day-to-day lives," she believes. What we need to do is design the interaction between humans and machines in such a way that the benefits are still obvious. At work, there'll be new forms of collaboration, video conferences, the use of avatars and new haptic experiences. "Software will help us to overcome language barriers. All of these things will soon be within our reach."

Learn. Work. Lead. Live.

Work

The workplace of the future

Updated on 26 August 2020

How can we maintain our corporate culture with employees working flexibly from anywhere?

Childcare and work should be compatible





Room for something new

We are in the midst of one of the most important periods of change in the workplace. COVID-19 has significantly shaken our traditional ways of working. Nowhere is this upheaval more evident than in the office. As new technologies are providing increasing mobility and employees' expectations are changing, new working models, infrastructure and collaboration are emerging. For employees themselves, this is now a question of where, when and for whom they will be working in the future – and what the relationship with their team and managers will feel like. Reimagining the office, keeping an agile mindset and being flexible will be the new normal.

Working to live, not living to work

In the past, a job was mainly about making a living. That has changed completely: employees now expect meaningful work and a satisfying work-life balance. Now more than ever, dedicated and talented employees want to know what their employer stands for. Young workers attach importance to flexibility with less compulsory attendance, adaptable career models and the opportunity to help shape their own roles.⁴ Today, companies need one thing above all: an open-minded corporate culture so they can remain attractive to gifted employees.

Far beyond the workstation

A full-time contract, a five-day working week, 8am to 5pm office hours – employment models like these belong in the past. In an instant, COVID-19 has proven the capabilities of people to work from home and adjust their work schedule, to be flexible and agile. Working from home is definitely not a question of reducing real estate costs, but it is really fostering a stronger sense of resilience. While reflecting on current developments, here is a range of forward-looking work models with countless variations that are worth thinking about:

- Job sharing or tandem jobs
- Home and mobile office
- Project work and annual working time with flexible working hours
- Freelancing: freelancers negotiate the terms of the contract and take care of invoicing and social security contributions themselves.
- Coworking: cooperation on a flexible time basis between freelancers, creative workers, small companies, etc.

- Crowdsourcing: certain tasks are outsourced to a group of voluntary users on the internet.
- Gig work: a matching platform brings employees and employers together at short notice. Remuneration and social security contributions are paid via the platform. Gig work is especially suited to people who are starting or returning to their career.
- Contracting: employees enter into a longer commitment with a single employer for what is usually a highly qualified job.
- Talent sharing: two or more companies exchange talent with each other.

Structures in motion

The changes taking place in corporate culture include a new error-tolerant environment in which mistakes are considered an indispensable part of the learning process. Team performance is also becoming more important than individual performance. Agile teams, self-organised collaboration, joint decisions and flat hierarchies are displacing rigid vertical structures. New communication channels are also becoming more important. Members of generation Z (born between 1995 and 2009) mainly communicate via digital tools. They require not only regular, but constant feedback as this is what they have grown up with. And ultimately a modern corporate culture will include further training that does justice to the age mix. In most cases, older employees need different and more intensive training on digital applications and methods than digital natives.

New place to work

COVID-19 has transformed the way we work, collaborate and co-create remotely and has proven that the workplace of the future is able to offer the following:

- Remote workstations
- Cloud-based applications for teamwork and video conferencing
- State-of-the-art IT with mobile devices and fast network connections
- Cross-company information management tool
- Freely selectable workplaces, open-plan offices, think boxes, coworking spaces, lounges, relaxation zones, etc.
- Feel-good atmosphere with ergonomic office equipment and more room intelligence (internet of things and sensor technology)
- Digital assistance systems that promote inclusion, health and quality of work
- Workplace-as-a-service: works like software-as-a-service, but with integrated hardware.

Attractive not exploitative

Traditional, money-led approaches are giving way to new evaluation and incentive systems. Regular discussions and check-in meetings are replacing the annual employee appraisal. Constructive performance discussions and coaching are also proving fruitful. Nowadays, feedback comes much more often from colleagues, not just the boss, and it is often more qualitative than quantitative. For example, Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996) are increasingly striving for incentives that will permit them to achieve a healthy balance between work and family life.

⁴ "The way we work – in 2025 and beyond," PwC Switzerland + HR today, 2017

A world of work that caters for different lifestyles and working models

Coworking makes flexible working possible, but childcare is usually designed for the classic 9-to-5 job. **Sarah Steiner** offers both. As co-founder of Tadah, her goal is to make work and family compatible.

Tadah is Switzerland's first large coworking space with integrated childcare. The unique thing about it is that you can not only flexibly book workspaces, but also childcare days. The children and coworking spaces are in different rooms of the same building, so that children can play or babies be taken care of, while parents are able to work in peace. In 2016, CEO Sarah Steiner and her three co-founders Diana Wick, Klara Zürcher and Julia Cebreros started the online magazine with the same name – a platform for working mums and dads. In October 2019, they added the coworking space with childcare in Zurich.

www.tadah.ch

Journalist: Melanie Loos
Photographer: Andreas Zimmermann

You spent ten years working in corporate communications. So why did you decide to become self-employed?

I became pregnant in 2014, while I was working for FIFA. After my maternity leave, I wanted more flexibility. I met one of my co-founders during my pregnancy and in 2016 we founded Tadah, an online magazine focusing on juggling work and family. We did it all alongside our day jobs. After speaking to so many parents, we knew exactly what the problems were. So we thought, why don't we just do something about it? The thinking behind it was to make flexible working possible for working parents.

Coworking is booming. How difficult is it to establish yourself alongside large companies like Regus or Wework?

For a coworking space to be successful, you need a specific target group and to build a community – ours is working parents. Coworking is a "low-margin" business. We offer more than other providers in the market: we bring the crèche and coworking space together in one place and offer lots of additional services, such as events,

summer schools and advice. We provide a platform for work-life balance and offer flexible childcare. Our customers can also work part-time, drop off their kids and register up to 48 hours before.

You're also getting more and more corporate customers. What does your service for companies look like?

Right now – in the midst of COVID-19 – we offer companies and their staff an innovative alternative to working from home. Companies can buy a specific number of coworking and childcare days, which are made available to their employees. Over the last few months, many companies have realised that it's not easy for their employees to juggle work and family. We offer support – and now not only with an innovative childcare model but also by providing companies with advice on the subject.



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For me, inclusion also means seeing the big picture. That means treating people as individuals, not just employees.

Originally from Zurich, **Sarah Steiner** (36) studied journalism and communication at the School of Applied Linguistics in Zurich. She started her career in 2005 as Marketing and Communications Assistant at FC Zurich, before going on to be a sports journalist at Tamedia and Project Manager for the advisory firm EUrelations. From 2013 to 2016, she was a writer for FIFA's company magazine. In 2016, while working in communications at Pestalozzi, she founded the online magazine Tadah. She then took the decision to become self-employed. Together with her three co-founders, Sarah Steiner founded Tadah and in October 2019 they opened their coworking space with childcare in Zurich Albisrieden. Today, they have four employees. Sarah Steiner lives with her partner Christian and her daughter Malou (6) in Zurich Albisrieden. Malou goes to nursery and her grandmother looks after her three afternoons a week.

Tadah supports future-oriented working models: what do you think the world of work will look like in 20 years?

I hope that it is much more flexible: a world of work that caters for different lifestyles and working models, and where the quality of work is more important than the number of hours worked. For that, employers need to trust their employees. What bothers me about the discussion around work-life balance is that it is always about career and employees, while the focus should be on the individual. The objective should be to employ a person in a company in a way that works for both sides.

Do companies need to do more for their staff when it comes to juggling work and family?

They will definitely be expected to do more in the future. But I don't think companies will do a complete rethink of their own accord. They will be forced into it by the new labour market, given the skills shortage and the fight for the best talent. The younger generations are no longer prepared to work 100% of the time. They want to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

What role does diversity and inclusion play in the future world of work?

A big one, I hope. We need the right political and economic conditions in place for that. There needs to be equal pay for men and women. And we also need to take a look at the salaries in certain industries. The COVID-19 pandemic should have opened our eyes in this respect as well. There are too many "key workers" who are too badly paid. But for me, inclusion also means seeing the big picture, i.e. treating people as individuals, not just employees. And also recognising that diversity can actually create a better big picture. Part-time management roles are a good example here. Yes, it probably does take more time and effort to fill a position with two people. But you also gain an awful lot, namely two personalities, two sets of skills, two opinions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced employers in Switzerland to allow their staff to work from home and with more flexible hours. Could that lead to a lasting change?

There is no doubt about it. I'm convinced that every crisis also has its positives. And that we can and must make the most of them. After COVID-19, everyone knows that working from home is possible for a large number of industries. But everyone also knows that working from home

when you have small children is very, very difficult. In general, hopefully everyone will have a new understanding of time, trust, social constructs and community – be that in your personal life or your professional life. And we will hopefully all be a little more humble.

How can companies contribute to a better work-life balance?

They need to create many more part-time roles – including in management. Companies need to recognise that allowing their employees to work part-time will benefit them. Men also have a responsibility to request part-time so they can spend more time with their children, while still being able to pursue their career. Active communication between both sides is important here, as are equal opportunities for men and women, including in terms of salary.

Tadah is committed to the cause of work-life balance. Do traditional employer-employee relationships fail here?

Traditional roles still hold too much sway, and that isn't going to change so long as the executive boards of the biggest Swiss firms remain predominantly male. Many don't understand that women want both career and family. The most important thing is that everyone has the opportunity to have the life and work that makes him or her happy.





Family and work redefined

The Tadah coworking space brings career and childcare together.



In the spotlight

What were you doing 20 years ago?

When I was 16, I thought the world was my oyster. I always wanted to get my own way.

20 years ago, could you have imagined that you'd be a CEO today?

No. But I always knew that I wasn't a person who could just do any old thing. I already knew back then that I would do something I found meaningful and that I was passionate about.

What advice do you give to young workers, working parents, employers?

It's extremely important to listen to your heart and to try out all the things you want to do. I advise anyone who is thinking about starting a family to ask themselves the following questions: What do I really want? What is it that makes life worth living? There is no right time to start a family. I advise managers to trust their people.

Where do you see yourself in ten years?

Still at Tadah – knowing that, through our coworking space or spaces and our platform, we have achieved something great and made an important contribution to work-life balance. In ten years, when people in Switzerland hear the term work-life balance, they should automatically think of Tadah.

What book do you have on your bedside table?

None, unfortunately. The only thing I read regularly is "Reportagen", which is Switzerland's journalistic masterpiece in my opinion.

I recharge my batteries by ...

... spending time with my horse. I bought her just before we founded Tadah. And it was the best decision. It clears my head and is a way for me to spend time with my daughter.

Sarah Steiner

The result: there is a lack of women in business, especially in management positions. Is that entirely down to the environment in which companies operate?

Salary transparency would definitely be a step in the right direction. Equal pay for men and women means equal opportunity and also equal incentive. Certain political conditions need to be created, because otherwise it simply doesn't happen. The same is true for female quotas. It's clear that without statutory quotas, nothing changes. They also don't need to be implemented always and forever.

To what extent can Tadah contribute to a rethink?

We want to be the platform for work-life balance. We'd probably be overreaching somewhat though if we thought we could spark a rethink at every level. But our contribution can be that we set an example that shows it is possible to have children and



We're a platform for work-life balance.

take on responsibility at work. As founders, we can take a leading role there. We also want to speak to as many companies as possible, to challenge them, advise them and together forge a path towards a better work-life balance.

My backpack's my office, everything else is

in the cloud

Jörn Harde, 44, grew up in Schwelm, near Wuppertal in North Rhine-Westphalia, and completed a commercial apprenticeship at Siemens after graduating from grammar school. He has been with the company ever since. He has worked in finance and controlling and also completed his studies at the Distance-Learning University of Hagen. He has held various operational management roles, including being responsible for integrating Nokia Networks into Siemens Networks, and later developed off-shore wind farms in the UK. After four and a half years heading up the MB office of Siemens CEO Joe Kaeser, he became CFO of Siemens Switzerland in 2018. He is married and lives in Oberengstringen. Outside of work, Jörn Harde plays chess and loves travelling to Greece, where his wife hails from. He also enjoys hiking and takes to the ski slopes in winter.





Siemens Switzerland has ushered in a cultural change to its leadership, affecting all its 5,700 employees. CFO **Jörn Harde**, who believes in the importance of issues such as new leadership, diversity and inclusion, the changing workplace and “new normal”, explains how this has proven a boon during the state of emergency and how he is helping to shape the future world of work.

Siemens has been operating in Switzerland since 1894. Today, the company is active in a wide variety of sectors, including energy, mobility, digitalisation, building technical services, automation and health. The headquarters of Siemens Schweiz AG is located in Zurich, while the international headquarters of the “Smart Infrastructure” branch is in Zug. Here in Switzerland, Siemens and its subsidiaries employ more than 5,700 people and generate sales of CHF 2.24 billion, making it the largest industrial employer in the country.

www.siemens.ch

Journalist: Simon Eppenberger
Photographer: Markus Bertschi, Siemens

Anyone who visits Jörn Harde’s office for the first time is in for a surprise. The CFO of Siemens Switzerland manages the company’s finances from a simple room in Zurich – without a single scrap of paper. No folders or documents are to be seen, not even a notepad on his desk. Only on the flipchart next to the meeting table are a couple of blank pages visible. The 44-year-old cannot help but smile when he says “My backpack’s my office, everything else is in the cloud”. He has been working this way for nearly 15 years now – and it is a natural fit with Siemens.

The corporate giant is not only strong in areas such as energy, building technology, industry, health and mobility, but is also doggedly pursuing a digital strategy both internally and externally. This includes the “Smart Infrastructure” division. Its smart buildings simultaneously serve the needs of property owners, operators, tenants and users. Siemens’ technology can also be used in existing buildings, such as its headquarters in Zurich, which was built several decades ago.

At the Zurich headquarters, smart building management is shrinking energy consumption and employees have access to a fast, secure Wi-Fi network every-

where. All Siemens locations and their employees are connected to each other through the network, and confidential internal data can be quickly accessed using chip cards and authentication. The system is so stable and secure that 98% of the CFO’s signatures are electronic. “The other 2% are for contracts that require a wet ink signature for legal reasons,” he says.

Virtual handover of a locomotive

Although Jörn Harde has long been a trailblazer for paper-free working methods at Siemens, COVID-19 has given digitalisation an enormous boost, both within the organisation and on the customer side. A whole fleet of locomotives was even inspected using only camera glasses and live streaming. No one had to turn up at the site. “In five weeks, we’ve made more changes than we usually do in five years,” says a beaming Harde.

At Siemens Switzerland, Harde also has his eye on issues such as new leadership, diversity and inclusion, the changing workplace and the “new normal” evolving from the comprehensive changes wrought by COVID-19. The impact of the pandemic has been so strong that people and companies are finding it impossible to get back

to the old ways of doing things, even as the crisis passes. Instead, a new working world is emerging which will become the norm in the future.

Who would have thought that out of all the people in the organisation it would be the CFO who moves issues forward rather than just dealing with the basic financial numbers? But this quickly becomes apparent when you listen to Jörn Harde. "It's a matter very close to my heart," he says. Before his current role, he headed up the office of Siemens CEO, Joe Kaeser, for more than four years and thus participated in shaping the company's global strategy and cultural transformation.

Trusting not controlling

Since then, the central leadership has been streamlined and the group now has independent businesses with more entrepreneurial freedom. "This strategy is supported by a cultural change towards an ownership culture. Our understanding of agile, productive leadership does not work by controlling everyone, but by trusting them and giving them personal responsibility," says Harde. He does not see himself as a manager, but as a coach and guiding figure who sets the goal and

the framework for action but does not monitor every step. For Harde, diversity and inclusion are an important part of this transformation.

"These goals can be combined very well with finance: having mixed teams and different perspectives stops prejudices and stereotypical evaluations from forming and therefore leads to better business outcomes." At the same time, he is self-critical, as there is still a lot to do. Siemens currently has too few women in management positions, for example.

The ongoing cultural change has also proven a boon in the emergency situation under COVID-19 and the lockdown. Despite its size, the group has been able to respond quickly and effectively. "First, we protected the health of our employees and partners. We then did everything we could to keep hospitals and other critical infrastructure for energy supply and mobility running," says Jörn Harde.

This has been achieved practically without any problems to date. Many teams were already working agilely before the pandemic and are digitally fit, and the changeover to working from home was quickly achieved. Virtual meetings became the norm within

a short amount of time. All the while, management has been watching and listening intently. It wants to know what people in the company want, how teams operate and how productivity is changing in this new working world. And it is becoming clear: people appreciate the new flexibility and the trust is paying off. "Despite the new challenges and decentralised working, we are just as productive if not more efficient than before," says Harde.

Hybrid working model

This has already prompted Siemens to introduce mobile working as a new standard worldwide in July. "We wanted to be one of the first large industrial companies to establish mobile working two to three days a week worldwide," says an enthusiastic Jörn Harde. "We're not talking about simply 'working from home forever', but about a hybrid working model with new opportunities and challenges." For this to happen, he says it is essential not to prescribe a "new normal". Teams are given the freedom to choose the best way of working together, based on the respective roles. The working model in the production and service parts of the business may differ from that of office work. Maintaining direct social contact is still important, and colleagues continue to meet regularly in person. This is so for existing team members and especially true for new team members. Harde is convinced of this: "When someone new onboards, there's no substitute for a face-to-face meeting."

Working from home also entails risks like one's private and professional life meshing too closely or not having a suitable workplace. So, he stresses that it is essential to treat yourself and the team with care. This is one of the reasons why offices and meeting rooms will continue to play a key role at Siemens in the future. However, the way in which they are being used is changing, as can be seen not too far from Harde's office.

One department is converting to the new way of working right now. All desks are being cleared so that they are always free for those working on site. To create more openness and transparency, interior decorators are removing the almost room-high privacy screen from the glass wall of the meeting room. "For Siemens, cultural change and flexibilisation are not a form of disruption, but an evolution that is taking place individually in different ways. The goal





Despite the new challenges and decentralised working, we are just as productive or even more efficient than before.

In the spotlight



Jörn Harde

The ceo is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. What were you doing 20 years ago?

After completing my commercial training at Siemens, I started my first job at Siemens Corporate Finance. One year later, I married my wife.

Would you have thought 20 years ago that you would be CFO of Siemens Switzerland today?

No. But I loved Switzerland even back then and I knew that I would one day aspire to a leadership role.

How do you keep yourself digitally fit?

By enjoying and being open to technology and exchanging ideas, especially with younger employees who are on-trend.

Why does your work fulfil you?

Two things fulfil me: exchanging ideas with so many great people – and our technologies which contribute to making a better world.

What is the most important thing for you personally at your workplace?

In my direct environment, that would be trust and satisfaction. Work is a big part of life and you should be able to laugh sometimes.

How is your work-life balance – or work-life integration?

I'm always available, both during the day for my wife and in the evening for employees. It works well, as your private life is respected here in Switzerland. Mindfulness is important in order to get a good balance.

Your tip to other companies on the working world of tomorrow?

Give everyone more personal responsibility and give up controlling everything. It is impossible anyway.

is to achieve satisfaction and productive cooperation – not to reduce costs, although that might be a consequence.”

As someone well-versed in technology, Jörn Harde is certain COVID-19 will bring about many changes. “A huge number of work processes can be mapped virtually.” Even large meetings involving a hundred participants and teamwork are already possible digitally. “I can move as a figure through the virtual space and take part in group discussions as usual.” What sounds like a game works surprisingly well in practice. This is why even in the future people will have to travel less.

Creativity and collaboration

At the headquarters of the “Smart Infrastructure” business unit in Zug, Siemens is showing what the physical workplace of the future could look like. In 2018, it had a building constructed there in an especially sustainable and smart way. The rooms offer users new levels of comfort, for example by automatically regulating the temperature. And in the “Spark” innovation space, everyone has an inspiring environment for different types of collaboration open to them. Featuring an abundance of plants and inviting furniture, this area is far removed from the traditional

meeting room with its four white walls. The rooms and the small amphitheatre are used for design thinking, presentations, regular team meetings and film screenings.

Creativity and collaboration are not only key elements in the innovation space. Jörn Harde believes they are the future. “My vision and hope is that we provide people with a healthy, creative work environment, a working culture that fulfils them and where everyone is equally important. The “why” question will continue to gain in importance as a driving force in personal commitment. “Our guiding principle is to make what is important a reality. We serve society and contribute to a better world, for example by using scarce resources more and more efficiently. Having this purpose is something I look forward to every day and is something I’m excited about working for.”



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New management

Transforming leadership

With COVID-19, we are living through a period of disruption unlike anything we have ever seen or experienced before. Virtual working is a significant adjustment for many organisations and requires transformative leadership skills and new management models. As companies review their operating model and post-COVID-19 strategy, employees need to know the clear rules of the game and the boundaries in which they can freely operate. In such a new world, managers become coaches who motivate, convey meaning, allow mistakes to be made, instil confidence and focus on the team.

This is the new way.

Where will it lead?





Inspiring leadership means that managers increasingly act as role models.



Time to foster talent

What changed first: workplaces, bosses or employees? Change is taking place simultaneously at all these different levels, and this calls for a multi-layered paradigm shift among future managers:

a) From real to virtual: We're social and cooperative beings by nature. Immersive on-screen collaboration from home isn't exactly natural, but we can all adapt. Through clear communication, trust and commitment, working in virtual teams can quickly become second nature.

b) From work to meaning: Employees are looking for empathy, self-awareness about their personal impact, appreciation of individual team members, charisma and inspiration, as well as a harmonious work-life balance. Dedicated, talented young people want to know what their employer stands for. The manager is now an ambassador of values and meaningful corporate culture, and needs to embrace all aspects of the team.

c) From instruction to inspiration: Employees want to be involved, to contribute creatively, to have their say and thus actively help shape the future of their company. They want not only regular, but constant feedback.

d) From security to risk: Today is the age of prototyping, testing, launching and learning. This means managers must work collaboratively with a co-creative approach and use technical tools such as robotics or artificial intelligence.

Squaring the circle

Vertical management structures with steep official channels where information only flows in one direction are a thing of the past. But one single organisational model is not the future either. Companies are evolving into network organisations with many small teams and shorter decision-making paths. There is a trend towards fluid forms of cooperation with project-like structures. For example, in the organisational model of holocracy, hierarchies, departments and titles disappear. Holocratic enterprises are organised in circles representing projects, departments and business areas. They pool tasks into roles and assign several roles to each employee.

People leading people

Despite digital tools, behaviour and skills are becoming increasingly important. Leaders have an opportunity to create a positive working environment that enables everyone to contribute to conversations, team up, develop and freely share new ideas. In empowered leadership, managers give their employees greater scope for creativity, action and decision-making. Inspiring leadership means that managers increasingly act as role models, paint a vision of the future, encourage their employees to be creative and foster individual development. Responsibility is not only borne by the boss, but by the whole team (shared leadership). In the 360° Leadership model, the successful leader of the future is a transformational leader who takes change on board.

Culture with performance

72% of C-level managers worldwide consider corporate culture to be the main reason for employees joining a company.⁵ Innovative leaders should establish values and cultural rules that follow a start-up logic. In other words, being creative and daring, making mistakes, and learning from mistakes are allowed and create a new mechanism for success. Companies with an inspiring management culture based on self-responsibility have a proven track record of higher productivity, stronger performance indicators and a more pleasant working atmosphere.

Control is good, but trust is better

People today place their trust on the basis of two criteria: the keeping of promises and (ethically) correct behaviour. Ethical factors such as integrity, reliability and determination drive 76% of the trust capital of companies.⁶ The emergence of social media platforms has shifted people's trust from a top-down orientation to a horizontal orientation in favour of peers. In a turbulent world, people see their employer as a peer. So anyone who wants to be trusted in an executive role must take the lead in times of change, position themselves clearly on key issues, show themselves in public, speak the language of the employees, make fact-based decisions, communicate regularly and exemplify the company's values.

⁵ "Global Culture Survey", Strategy&, 2018

⁶ "Edelman Trust Barometer", Daniel J. Edelman Holdings, Inc., 2020

Heike Bruch (53) has been the Professor of Leadership at the University of St. Gallen since 2001 and heads its Institute for Leadership and Human Resource Management. Her research and practice focus on “new work transformation”, “energy and momentum” and “leadership of the future”. She is one of the leading academics in human resources research in German-speaking Europe, as well as one of Switzerland’s 100 most successful women. She studied and worked at the Free University of Berlin, the University of Hanover and London Business School. Heike Bruch supports leaders in business and politics and founded the energy factory St. Gallen.



We need visible role models at the top

The world of work is changing and, with it, companies' management culture, says Heike Bruch, Professor of Leadership at the University of St. Gallen. Especially now after the experience of coronavirus, managers need to redesign work and leadership in a courageous and responsible way, she explains. **Heike Bruch** is a researcher and coach in the areas of "new work transformation", "energy, speed and momentum" and "leadership of the future".

The Institute for Leadership and Human Resource Management (IFPM) at the **University of St. Gallen** focuses on research, teaching and practical support in the fields of leadership and human resource management. Professor Heike Bruch and her team work very closely with companies and an international research network on practical issues in areas such as energy and momentum, leadership culture, healthy performance and new work. Empirical and field-tested findings inform their teaching, training for managers and cooperation with companies – following the university's guiding principle "From Insight to Impact". To address the topic of new work, Professor Heike Bruch founded the company consortium "Pioneering – Future Leadership & Work" in 2015.

www.ifpm.unisg.ch

Journalist: Editorial team of ceo

Photographer: Editorial team of ceo, University of St. Gallen

What have been the most striking changes in the world of work over the last ten years?

Companies are gradually moving away from traditional hierarchical structures towards network organisations with much smaller teams. They can react more quickly and flexibly than before, have become more innovative and are endeavouring to provide their employees with greater freedom. The purpose behind this is to keep pace with the rapid speed of developments and to support change and initiative-taking. And to increase their attractiveness as an employer.

What do employees expect from the future world of work?

Individualisation is shining a light on the differing needs of the individual. For some, flexible working time and unrestricted project-based work is important. Others still need well-defined structures and regular hours. Not everyone simply wants more freedom – far from it. Because more freedom and flexibility also means greater responsibility and requires

greater personal skills, in particular the ability to set boundaries. This has also been made evident by the introduction of mobile work and working from home. During the COVID-19 crisis, we've seen a sudden increase in mobile and flexible work models. But there aren't really any alternatives. Mobile work can sometimes be more challenging because the divide between professional and private life becomes blurred. There is a danger of feeling isolated, and you need much more self-discipline. Some relish this, while others prefer to be in the office.

What do companies want?

The future world of work is one where the wishes of the company and those of the employees will be much better aligned by managers. The "new work" concept means employees can work more flexibly, take on more responsibility and be more committed to the company and are given the best conditions to achieve that. This is also the approach of "unbossing", where barriers, rigid structures and hierarchies are broken down so that people can achieve their



goals without disruption. Ways of working that include a lot of empowerment and employee freedom only function, however, if the employees have the requisite personal skills as well as the right cultural conditions. In a “new work” culture, traditional values like trust, reliability, conscientiousness and loyalty play a key role. These virtues sound old-fashioned, if not obsolete, but are in fact essential elements of success in these complex, highly interconnected and fast-changing times.

The “new work transformation” is in full swing. What does this term mean?

The new work transformation is the transformation of the working world from traditional, location-based, highly hierarchical work to a network organisation with mobile/flexible work, a flattened hierarchy and fluid structures. Even before coronavirus, more than 90% of companies were undergoing the new work transformation. In this context, job profiles and requirements are changing in a disruptive way. And technology is a key driver here. This represents a huge opportunity, especially for young people. They bring a different, modern perspective to work and technology.

Not everyone will benefit...

There’s also a gloomier side to this scenario which involves winners and losers. Rapid technological developments mean that some qualifications will no longer be needed. We could see a massive increase in the number of people facing issues such as exhaustion, overload or isolation.

How can this be mitigated?

We need to make the right decisions now that put us on a path towards a positive scenario. This is the responsibility of company leaders, but also of educational

institutions, politicians and society as a whole – each and every individual.

When compared with the rest of the world, how are Swiss employers doing in the new work transformation?

Some US companies, especially in the IT sector, are further ahead than companies here. The IT industry is leading the way in terms of speed, digital working, new ways of working and customer relationships. Most companies in the USA and Asia are not so far along. They are lacking something that is a key strength in western Europe and Switzerland. Here, we have a more democratic culture, where workers collaborate as equals and receive targeted skills training. We should build on this. But Switzerland also has some areas where it needs to do some catching up. For example, we fall behind somewhat when it comes to innovation and entrepreneurship. We have a lower risk appetite.

What do the successful ones do differently?

The new work transformation needs to penetrate deep into the underlying structures and be driven forward boldly, consistently and with a systematic approach. Leadership and corporate culture make the difference, as shown by a study conducted during the current coronavirus crisis. Companies that had already leveraged trust and flexible ways of collaborating as part of transformational leadership were already more successful and are now also coping with the current crisis much more effectively. Others only strengthened those elements of new work that were unavoidable during the pandemic: working from home, virtual collaboration and digital communication. They are now entering a phase where their people are longing for leadership, role models and cultural game rules. Some

companies are now making the mistake of moving back towards a “command and control” approach. Even though the crisis means leaders need to provide greater direction and make certain things clear from the top down, authoritarian or overly transactional leadership is counter-productive. The crisis needs to be managed through modern leadership. Companies that give their leaders and employees freedom and offer individualised models will be the ones that are successful – they will make it possible to organise work in a way that allows employees to optimally accomplish their tasks while giving them options so they can individually adapt their working style to fit their skills and preferences.

How important will leadership be in the future world of work in general?

A common misconception these days is that leadership has become less important or is simply not needed anymore. “Un-bossing” is important, but if it is misunderstood and leadership is weakened, it leads to a laissez-faire style of management. What’s really needed is a modern form of leadership that sets down new rules of play.

What role does leadership play in the transformation process?

New, inspiring leadership should take the place of traditional management styles. Leadership should encourage an understanding of the meaning behind our work, provide autonomy and foster decentralised initiatives – it should move us towards achieving a goal together instead of taking a “top down” approach. This type of transformational leadership has been empirically shown to be the most effective form of leadership, during times of crisis and otherwise. In the context of “new work”, it is critical for success.

In the spotlight



Isn't leadership about more than just inspiring people?

Inspiration is essential. But it should be accompanied by a broader, ambidextrous leadership spectrum that addresses the requirements of different work contexts in different ways. Some work requires the highest level of precision, quality and efficiency. This is still important in many companies and needs to be supported by management. There are also an increasing number of tasks that are much more about innovation, creativity and a start-up approach. This work requires a different type of support. Both leadership styles – results-oriented and explorative – are important and should be communicated clearly and applied explicitly, but the two should not be mixed.

What does it mean to be a role model?

Evoking enthusiasm in others for their work, encouraging thought and identifying connections are key leadership tasks. This is not only the case for lower levels of management – senior management in particular must visibly set an example for modern approaches to working. This has often been lacking during the pandemic, and more and more middle managers have been looking for greater direction and visible role models at the top.



A common misconception these days is that leadership has become less important or is simply not needed anymore.

Where does trust come in?

Trust has always been important, but now in a modern working world it is the crucial factor for effective leadership and collaboration. “New work” means that in the future people will have more freedom and autonomy and will do much more virtual working, in changing teams and with people that they might never have met in person. Managers can only relinquish control and allow their staff to work autonomously if they have complete trust in them. And only then will the team show full commitment and work together to achieve what's possible.

What were you doing 20 years ago?

I had come back from London to be a professor at the University of St. Gallen and was full of enthusiasm.

20 years ago, could you have imagined that you'd be in this management role today?

I was not thinking so far ahead at that time. But our team at the university has accomplished a number of things that I wouldn't have thought possible. While other things were not as easy as I had expected.

What is your personal vision of the future world of work?

My vision and that of our team is a world of work where everyone is fully committed to their work and uses their energy to shape our future in a responsible way.

What do you consider important when managing your employees?

For me, it's vital that we focus our work on what is important for society and the economy. And that everyone in the team is aware of the influence our work has on students and companies and that we take this responsibility seriously. We want to support companies in a way that enables them to responsibly shape the future and develop knowledge together with them that provides other leaders with direction and energy in their leadership tasks. Our work motto is “responsibly shaping the future”.

Your most important project right now?

The question we're currently working on is: how will leadership change in the context of “new work”? And what does responsible leadership look like? These questions will be decisive for the future overall. They have become incredibly more important now in light of COVID-19 and its consequences. New work, leadership, responsibility – these things are all considerably more difficult during the crisis, but also enormously important.

Your message to managers? To CEOs?

Courage, enthusiasm and resilience are essential.

Heike Bruch

Navigating digitally through the crisis

During the global pandemic, logistics and transport have proven what a vital role they play within the world economy. Kühne+Nagel is a Swiss company at the forefront. CEO **Detlef Trefzger** is steering the group through these challenging times with a steady hand. He relies on digital technology, the expertise of his teams and shared basic values – while consistently optimising the sustainability of the company's operations.

Founded in 1890 by August Kühne and Friedrich Nagel in Bremen, **Kühne+Nagel** is now one of the global leading companies in its sector, with more than 1,400 subsidiaries in over 100 countries and around 80,000 specialist employees. The 130-year-old company is headquartered in Schindellegi in the canton of Schwyz, and in 2019 it achieved revenues of CHF 25 billion.

[home.kuehne-nagel.com](https://www.kuehne-nagel.com)

Journalist: Editorial team of ceo
Photographer: Marc Wetli

During his seven years as CEO of Kühne+Nagel, Detlef Trefzger has never experienced anything like this before. In the usually busy headquarters of the global logistics company Kühne+Nagel in Schindellegi, high up overlooking Lake Zurich, there was nothing but silence at the end of May. Nevertheless, the company didn't stop for one second. And nowhere did the company's international business grind to a halt. It was able to seamlessly deliver services, wherever possible from a legal and customer perspective, explains Trefzger, who manages the global organisation that employs around 80,000 people in more than 100 countries.

The majority of Kühne+Nagel's employees were working from home at the time. The company has coped well with the business environment that arose as a result of the economic lockdown during the first half of 2020 in many countries. The workforce has been connected together for a long time using standardised digital systems and a communication platform with video conferencing.

Employees working remotely

Even though it wasn't possible to predict what the consequences of the pandemic would be, Kühne+Nagel was prepared, not least thanks to the early investments it made in its communications and IT structure, and in the expertise of its teams. Within just a short period of time, 45,000 employees around the world, representing more than half of the total workforce, began to work remotely – supported by the group-wide business continuity plans. It was a logistical masterpiece. Trefzger himself had a feeling early on that something might happen to the company and to the world. He first heard of the virus at the start of the year. The group employs 5,500 people in China alone, and also has a presence in Wuhan in the province of Hubei.

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Being a leader means setting clear objectives and motivating the team to achieve them.



Dr. Detlef Trefzger (57) has been CEO of transport logistics provider the Kühne+Nagel Group since 2013. Previously, Trefzger worked at other logistics service providers including Schenker, as well as at the Siemens Group and Roland Berger & Partner.



For our interview on the working world of the future, Detlef Trefzger naturally suggested doing it via video conference. The digital transformation which was launched a while ago at Kühne+Nagel was further accelerated by the COVID-19 crisis – as was the use of digital communication technologies. Fast internet and secure data connections are common within our country but not in every corner of the world of course. The decline in production and reduced global demand also affected the business at Kühne+Nagel, although the impacts of the crisis were felt less severely than elsewhere.

Digital platforms drive efficiency

The company began a targeted transformation process a number of years ago – centred around the interaction between customers, technology and employees. In this process, Detlef Trefzger can continue to build upon a culture of trust and self-responsibility. Even before the outbreak of the crisis, the employees were using a lot of digital technology, the CEO tells us. The internal collaboration platform that is used throughout the group allows employees to keep up to date with what is happening at all times. Thanks to this platform, everyone has access to important internal infor-

mation, but the CEO also communicates regularly with the global workforce by video through his “CEO Talks”. The general content on the platform is designed to reinforce the shared values as well as to improve and facilitate processes and work. What is relevant for the employees also receives the necessary attention. The head of the group emphasises that the internal platform drives efficiency throughout the entire company.

Internal continuous training is a top priority

According to Trefzger, it’s vital that employees have access to continuous training and that they remain open to new ideas and initiatives. Continuous training is a top priority within the group. And there are special programmes in place for the 1,000 or so apprentices to familiarise themselves with the systems. Managers of all grades must give their employees the opportunity to become qualified in line with the continually changing requirements of new technologies. The in-house platform allows employees to define their own individual learning plan with a free choice of topics. This encourages independent learning outside of the office environment too.

Maintaining the family-like culture

By having shared basic values within the company, everyone is pulling in the same direction, even during challenging times. Credible leadership requires comprehensible principles and guidelines for behaviour as well as good governance. Trefzger sees it as his responsibility to live by these values, encourage others to do the same and motivate them. He stresses that leadership is all about people, about the individuals who are integrated into a large organisation. He attaches particular importance to encouraging solidarity and maintaining the family-like culture that is a huge part of the 130-year-old company’s culture. The human element should never be neglected, explains the top manager. His management approach is calm and unpretentious. For this reason, he preferred to ask others to describe his management style: attributes used to describe him include “authentic, curious and reliable”.



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Leadership is always about the people, the individuals.

A matter of trust

The last few months have also shown us how important trust is, says Detlef Trefzger. Customers around the world entrust their products into the care of Kühne+Nagel – including life-saving goods like pharmaceuticals. Since the start of the year, Kühne+Nagel has transported 17,000 tonnes of protective equipment.

The employees make sure that the goods make their way from A to B in the best and quickest possible way, even during a pandemic. Planning is carried out using the company's internal digital platforms and via video conference. This has led to colleagues getting to know other colleagues who they otherwise wouldn't have met. Many new contacts have emerged this way. Working from home has proven to be effective, but at times employees have also found it to be stressful.

Detlef Trefzger is convinced that digital solutions will continue to replace many business trips even once the pandemic is over. This plays into the hands of the manager for another reason, as he is consistently optimising the sustainability of Kühne+Nagel's operations. Even during the pandemic, he has not lost sight of his goal of making the activities of Kühne+Nagel carbon neutral this year. It's an ambitious goal that can only be achieved through shared basic values, which is what Kühne+Nagel is all about. After all: "Sustainability is a responsibility for society and for each and every individual."

In the spotlight

What were you doing 20 years ago?

Even back then, I was a member of an executive board, working as head of finance for a large logistics firm in Southeast Europe. It was a fascinating time with the economy opening up to the east and the south, as well as the start of the new millennium.

20 years ago, could you have imagined that you'd be a CEO today?

It's not something you can or should plan for – you have to know what you want to do and what you don't want to do. But it's helpful if you like taking on responsibility and leading, if you value others and feel part of a team.

What do you want to see in the future world of work?

I hope that human contact is not neglected, despite technology. I also hope that environmental aspects in the world of work will not be overlooked, even during a pandemic.

Your personal career tip for employees and young talent?

Always be natural and authentic. Being a leader means setting clear objectives and motivating the team to achieve them. But you can't force someone to have a career. All people are different. This is why at our company, we've established two different career paths: an expert path and a path with management responsibility.

Dr. Detlef Trefzger

Updated on 27 August 2020

Learn. Work. Lead. Live.

Live

Diversity and inclusion

The diverseness of diversity

Diversity encompasses all the qualities that distinguish employees, be they gender, ethnicity, age, qualifications, cognitive abilities, attitude, sexual orientation or emotional intelligence. Inclusive diversity is crucial for companies, the economy and society.

*Different people -
same challenge*

1.5 metres



Inclusive diversity

Diversity and inclusion are inseparable. Simply put, diverse teams are only inclusive, if no member feels excluded. All team members must feel that their individuality brings added value to the table. It is therefore incumbent upon companies to recognise what sets employees and applicants apart, and to value and respect how they are. Subconscious bias, unfair wages, inefficient workplace structures and prejudices are obstacles to parity and handicapped companies in the fierce competition to recruit skilled workers and talented individuals.

More than one good reason

Inclusive diversity is good for business in many different ways:

- It reflects a diverse and forward-looking corporate culture that enables companies to spot more opportunities and risks.
- It allows employees to unlock and develop their potential.
- It promotes open dialogue.
- It drives innovation.
- It boosts the efficiency of collaborative work.
- It recognises the diversity of markets, customer target groups and employees.
- It enhances the company's image and the public's perception.

Good-bye to groupthink

Groupthink is a social process in which a group makes poor or unrealistic decisions because each individual tries to conform to the expected group opinion or to the opinion of a dominant member (highest paid person in the office, HiPPO). This results in compromises or actions that individual members would reject under normal circumstances. Groupthink is behind most crises and wrong decisions, as it distorts a team's dynamics. Groupthink is virtually absent on committees that are diverse and inclusive.

Get specific about fighting racism

Recent protests across the globe have made it clear that people from all walks of life are fed up with racial discrimination. Companies that are serious about distancing themselves from racism need to become specific about their approach. Senior leaders can make general statements but they also need to ensure that HR processes are designed to prevent or identify racism, that managers can implement the message and that employees understand how to avoid racism and feel free to speak up.

A question of age as well

Ageism – discriminating against people because of their age – is a very common form of discrimination. In Europe and Switzerland, it is more common than sexism and racism. Age discrimination mostly affects older people. Strikingly, many younger employees also report experiencing ageism. As the population continues to age and generation Z enters the labour market, the age range in companies will only widen. A key role is being played here by initiatives for diversity and inclusion such as age-appropriate upskilling, health and fitness support, and a deliberate mixing of experience and age in teams.

Women at the helm

Many countries have brought in legislation setting quotas for women on management boards. In Europe, the statutory benchmarks range from 30% to 40%. Although equality is a constitutional requirement in Switzerland, women only make up 16% of board of directors members of the country's one hundred largest companies, and only 6%⁷ of executive board members. This raises the question of how companies can be forced to make things better for themselves. After all, Credit Suisse's report "The CS Gender 3000: Women in Senior Management" has demonstrated that gender diversity increases returns on equity, improves the price-to-book ratio and allows for higher dividend payments. One interesting fact is that men apply for a job if they meet 60% of the required criteria, while women generally only apply if they meet the requirements in full.⁸

Equality pays

Equal pay is paramount to inclusion. How can people feel valued if they know or think that employees are paid differently for doing the same work or work of similar value? Equal pay also goes hand in hand with good corporate governance. The Swiss Ordinance against Excessive Remuneration has been in force since 2014, with the amended Swiss Gender Equality Act and the Swiss Ordinance on the Reviews of Wage Equality Analysis in effect since 2020. These stipulate that employers with 100 or more employees must carry out an internal wage analysis every four years until 1 July 2032. In other countries too, regulators demand "equal pay for equal work". In Switzerland, the EQUAL SALARY certification is gaining in importance in the absence of a clear global definition of equal pay. With this seal of approval, companies can have their commitment to equal pay and opportunities verified by an external body. An interest fact is that Millennials, in particular, prioritise working for a socially conscious company above earning lots of money.

Offering strength, developing strength

Regardless of whether employees are homosexual, bisexual, queer, pansexual, asexual, LGBTIQ or LGBT+, two questions are fundamental: who should I identify with and who can I trust? In their everyday working lives, one in four say they have experienced LGBT+ discrimination, with younger people affected more often than their older peers. When part of a strong community, these people can stand up to hostility more easily and develop their potential. Employers can provide such a community by embracing inclusive diversity and supporting LGBT+ initiatives.

⁷ "The diverseness of diversity", Bruno Rossi, Partner, Audit, PwC Switzerland, 2019

⁸ "Leveraging Leading and Lagging KPIs to step change Inclusion & Diversity", Jasmin Danzeisen, People and Organisation Senior Manager, PwC Switzerland, 2019

My job is to identify the needs of everyone in the team

A customer need, an ecological goal and a major social commitment: these are the ingredients of Mr. Green's secret to success. The innovative Zurich-based company relies on collaborating with people who are faced with difficult life circumstances or who have disabilities. We spoke with the founder and Managing Director **Valentin Fisler** about the working world of tomorrow.

Mr. Green is a recycling service provider. Mr. Green's private and business customers receive special bags delivered to their home or office. Recyclable materials like plastic, metal, old electronics and drinks cartons can be collected in the Mr. Green bags, without having to first be sorted. The team at Mr. Green collects the full bags from the customer's premises, sorts the recyclable materials and forwards them for recycling. These materials include drinks cartons and plastic film that private individuals are often unable to recycle otherwise. The company offers employment to people with disabilities or who are faced with difficult life circumstances. Mr. Green operates in the cities of Zurich, Bern, Basel, Winterthur and their surroundings.

www.mr-green.ch

Journalist: Julia Decker
Photographer: Markus Bertschi

Why is your business model so successful?

There's a very practical reason for this: we look at the recycling market through the eyes of the customer. Nobody else does this to quite the same extent as us. Recycling used to be a supplier market. There were recycling centres and collection points, but nobody actually asked the customers what they really wanted. What's more, recycling is a hugely important trend market. Today, people want to be more ecological. A trend that will undoubtedly become even more pronounced in future.

What do diversity and inclusion mean for your company?

Diversity and inclusion are in our company's DNA. Ever since the foundation of Mr. Green, we've been working with social foundations that support people with disabilities, for example. Our customers value the fact that we offer work to these people, which includes helping to collect and sort the recyclable materials. Without this social aspect, the Mr. Green model would be inconceivable.

What do you mean by difficult life circumstances?

People who've been unemployed for a long time, and who've left the mainstream employment market. Some people are just kept occupied in any way possible, and others receive government support to help them get structure and routine in their lives so they can re-enter the mainstream employment market. I hear these stories and am moved by them. People have problems that could affect any one of us, like addiction. By working together, there's a really strong sense of togetherness at Mr. Green.

Do problems sometimes arise as a result of diversity and inclusion?

Things don't always run smoothly. Some things have to be explained a number of times or in a very clear way, and we also have to check things sometimes. And although it shouldn't happen, occasionally a Mr. Green bag might not be collected. But if this does happen, we come back for it. A healthy service mentality is vital of course for our business. But one thing



Valentin Fisler (33) founded the company Mr. Green ten years ago when he was a student, together with his three flatmates. The qualified business economist is Managing Director of the recycling service provider. Together with another partner, Fisler also runs the project lab “Who is Nik”, an agency for sustainable business. He lives in Zurich.



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From nothing comes nothing – we need more people who are passionate about their ethical and social values.





All our employees can implement their ideas and are allowed to make mistakes from time to time.

we've noticed: if we're generous, we also find generous customers. In a world of diversity and inclusion, you'll have issues if you're too strict with yourself and others. Besides a healthy service mentality, what also helps of course is a sense of humour and a big smile.

An attractive work environment is also key to successful company management. What do you offer your employees?

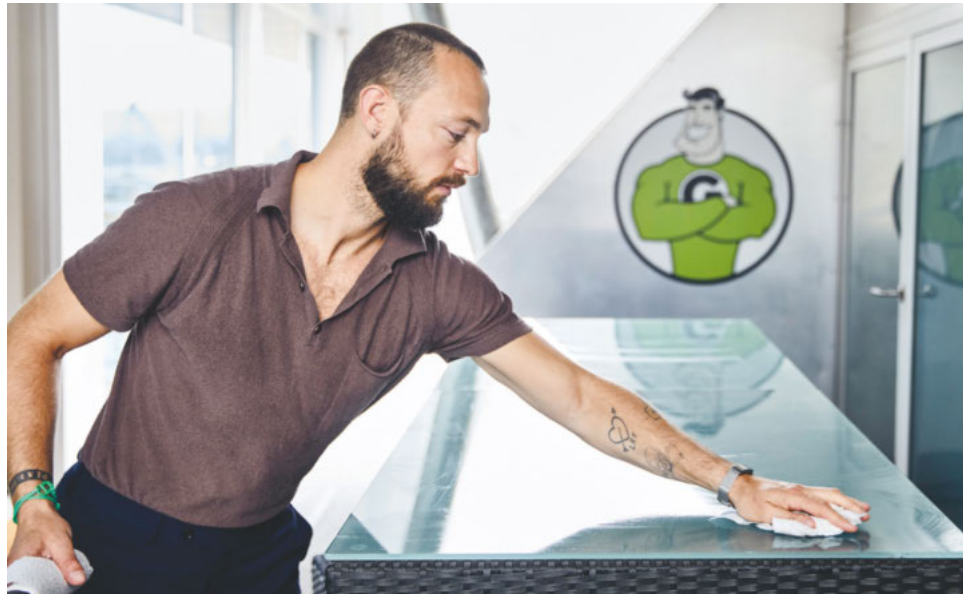
Our corporate culture involves having a purpose that applies to all our activities. People apply to work here because they want to do something meaningful. Mr. Green doesn't offer a 14-month salary or an extra bonus, but everyone who works here can have a go at something and learn something.

What does success mean to your employees?

Consider this: people with disabilities often make things in workshops that then end up in an online shop and are never ordered. But with us, our customers pay for recycling services and at the same time are offering people a chance to perform meaningful work. This means that the work they do has real purpose. The people who collect and sort the waste feel how valuable their work is. And for them, this means success. And thanks to this, there's a very special spirit within the company.

How do you motivate your employees?

I'm a motivated person myself, and so I try to motivate others. People are all motivated by different things. My job is to identify the needs of everyone in the team. This way everyone performs their best. Some people feel the benefits of jogging for an hour during the day, many employees have a set day during the week when they work from home. And others, like me, are happy when they can bring their dog to work, for instance.



How do you promote the individual nature of your employees and their own special talents?

At our company, people can't just do as they please, but they're given a great deal of freedom. We give them a lot of flexibility to organise their own working hours, for example. All our employees can implement their ideas and are allowed to make mistakes from time to time. If an employee is convinced by a particular idea of theirs, then I would never try to talk them out of it. Instead, I would try to give them my input.

In terms of managing employees, what do you do more successfully today than you did ten years ago when you founded the company?

I'm more patient. I think. Or at least I hope I am. I'm 33 years old now – when I founded the company I was 23. I've grown up with Mr. Green. Today, I have a more moderate and more understanding approach.

In which direction might your company develop?

Waste avoidance is the key word. We want to work more in the reduce and re-use sector. When more people use reusable products, then recycling will no longer be needed. We're aware of this and we see this as an opportunity to expand our offering.

What new challenges do companies need to meet in future?

I'm seeing a trend towards ecological behaviour, and ideas for alternative business models like post-growth often pop up. Social inclusion and conscious

consumption will also play a role. These are things that speak for Mr. Green. But only if we continue to reposition ourselves.

What do you feel society is lacking today?

More people should perhaps stop defining themselves solely by their work. Admittedly, coming from me this may not sound credible, as work is a huge part of my life. But even I need to change how I think. Companies require new models if they don't want to simply chase profit maximisation. So far, the focus has been on doing things more quickly and more efficiently. We need more people who are passionate about their ethical and social values. This will add a greater human element to business. And maybe we need more wide-reaching measures like alternative economic systems?

What is your view of the future?

I have a positive outlook. We combine a customer need with social commitment and ecology – this appeals to people. By signing up for our service, customers feel as though they are making a donation in some way. People are happy to be involved in something that is for the greater good. Without just thinking about what's in it for them. And we're always keeping an eye on new fields of activity. We see this as an economy with a future.

In the spotlight

Valentin Fisler

What were you doing 20 years ago?

I'm Zurich born and bred. I attended Aemtler secondary school in Zurich. Just around the corner from where our office is today. 20 years ago, I was probably just staring out of the classroom window or playing basketball.

20 years ago, could you have imagined that you'd be a CEO today?

Never. I prefer not to present myself as CEO of the company. I don't like the idea of there being one person who sits at the top of the tree. I simply find flat hierarchies more pleasant.

Do you have any entrepreneurial role models?

In terms of ethics and ecological values, I look to the American founder of Patagonia, Yvon Chouinard. His actions have always been true to his values. No matter whether or not this resulted in short-term gains. This has strengthened his brand and has paid off economically as a result.

Do you have a personal superhero?

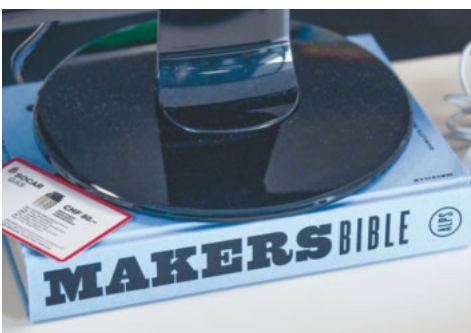
Mr. Green, our company mascot: taking on huge challenges like saving the world while tripping over one's own feet, but always with a smile – I can relate to that.

Where do you get your inspiration for good ideas?

I go for walks with my dog. I find inspiration when I'm feeling relaxed rather than when I'm tense. Whether it's when I'm taking a shower, hiking or having an extended lunch break.

Do you have a good motto?

Yes! Mr. Green's motto, which is: Together we'll save the world – a little.



“

In order to enjoy a healthy and happy retirement, people need to be open-minded and creative in their regular working lives.

Sarah Hildebrand (44) founded “Rent a Rentner” together with her partner Reto Dürrenberger and her father **Peter Hildebrand** (76), just as he was entering retirement in 2009. The Hildebrands are from Bachenbülach in the canton of Zurich, where Peter ran his own electrical business before retiring. Sarah graduated from the School of Design in Biel/Bienne and went into advertising. Together with Reto Dürrenberger, she runs DIE ANTWORT agency in Zurich, which employs 11 members of staff. The pair have a daughter together. Peter Hildebrand has three children.



People and performance are what count, not age

A digital company from Zurich shows us what can be achieved when a father and daughter form an unlikely partnership: an award-winning employment agency with thousands of highly-qualified members.

The digital firm **Rent a Rentner AG** from Zurich has been operating the platform of the same name for the past 11 years. It is dedicated to promoting the services of older workers. The registered pensioners are free to define which services they offer and at what price. Customers can choose from more than 300 services, from a courier service by bike to babysitting or legal advice. Basic registration on the site is free, but it also offers paid membership at a fixed price. The offering is not designed to compete against SMEs, but instead to act as a platform for odd jobs that nobody wants to do otherwise. Sarah Hildebrand's agency DIE ANTWORT is responsible for the overall image and communication. The company also owns the digital platforms "Date a Rentner", "Adopt a Rentner" and "RentnerFinder".

www.rentarentner.ch

Journalist: Simon Eppenberger
Photographer: Andreas Zimmermann, Tobias Stahel

What they are doing today was once unimaginable for Sarah Hildebrand and her father Peter. She left home at the age of twenty, studied art and design, and he ran his own electrical business in Bachenbülach, in the canton of Zurich – until all of a sudden, he felt extremely bored.

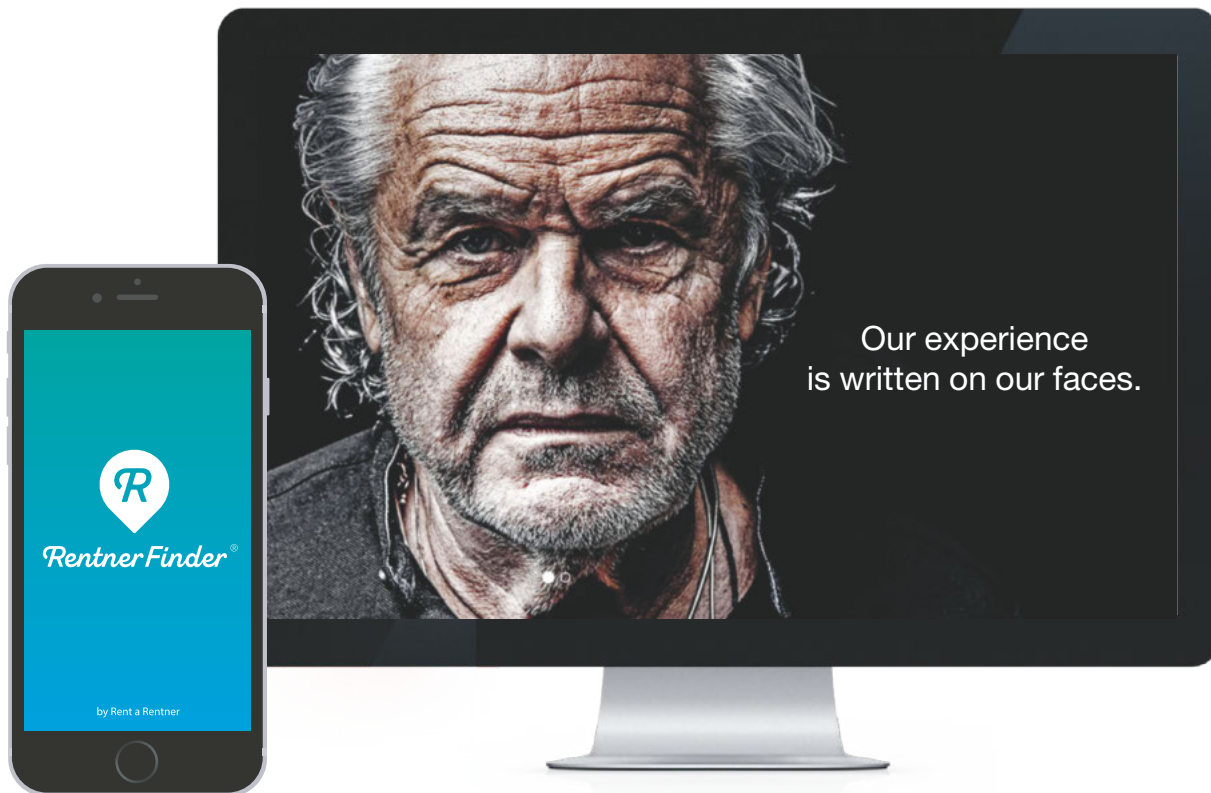
Peter Hildebrand retired but realised that sitting twiddling his thumbs was not for him. Feeling frustrated, he spoke with his daughter and her partner Reto Dürrenberger, who run an advertising agency in the hip Wiedikon district of Zurich. Together, they looked for a solution and formed an unthinkable venture: the 65-year-old set up a digital company together with his daughter and her partner, who are some 30 years younger than him. The purpose: to act as an intermediary for pensioners who enjoy working.

In 2009, the trio launched "Rent a Rentner" online and could not have imagined what it could one day grow into. "Smartphones had not been around for long and we had two target groups who were not very digitally minded: old tradesman and their clientele, who were usually of a similar age," explains Sarah Hildebrand.

Peter Hildebrand managed to sign up the first few members at a regular get-together. "At first, they asked me what kind of nonsense it involved," says the now 76-year-old with short grey hair, glasses and beard. He then told his retired friends about how he was able to still enjoy practising his trade – whenever and wherever he wanted to.

People became less sceptical and with each new registration on "Rent a Rentner", Peter inserted a pin on a map of Switzerland – until there was no more space left. In 2011, the idea was awarded the Marketing Prize, then in 2013 the trio converted their limited company into a stock company and their website crashed.

The reason for this was a cheeky advertising campaign and an article in Swiss tabloid newspaper "Blick". Rent a Rentner's adverts encouraging people to "Rent an old sack or an old bag" featured on billboards across Switzerland. It soon made the tabloid's headlines. "We had so many enquiries that day that our platform couldn't cope anymore," Sarah Hildebrand tells us laughing.



Over the next few years, the father, daughter and Reto Dürrenberger won further awards and launched the "Date a Rentner" portal, as well as the world's first "RentnerFinder" app to help locate retired tradesman registered on their platform. After winning the "SilverEco" award, it can even be described as a leading platform among companies around the world that focus on the silver surfer segment. Rent a Rentner now has more than 3,000 registered members who offer more than 300 services. In the background, the trio have been working for Rent a Rentner AG together with the advertising agency run by Sarah Hildebrand and Dürrenberger.

One of the benefits of the lively trio is that values like diversity have grown organically – rather than being defined as success factors and then introduced afterwards. For Sarah Hildebrand, combining established skills with fresh talent is an obvious part of running a business. "Our team is made up of young people, middle-aged people and a recently retired copy-writer/concept developer."

Employing a workforce that is predominantly "young, sexy and eager to work" does not fit with her ethos. "People, an open mind and performance are what count – not age or gender." In a genera-

tional context, the Hildebrand daughter and father duo both see diversity as an extremely valuable asset.

"It's not just society that benefits when us oldies don't give up, but instead carry on doing what we're good at and what makes us happy," explains Peter Hildebrand. And for this to happen, he believes there are three important factors that make employees of all ages stand out: health, curiosity and life-long learning. "In order to enjoy a healthy and happy retirement, people need to be open-minded and creative in their regular working lives," he says.

They both believe that employee motivation is not the sole responsibility of the management team. "Obviously this requires flat hierarchies and self-responsibility, and individual ideas and input need to be taken seriously," says Sarah Hildebrand. "But none of this can be achieved without self-motivation," adds the father, as his daughter nods in agreement.

For the agency owner, continuous learning in particular during the digital revolution is a crucial factor. "Previously, somebody working in advertising could take a two-year sabbatical for example, but today this would be like falling off a cliff edge." So, for her, digital upskilling just makes sense.

This doesn't mean having to chase every trend though, but understanding the direction in which things are developing and then getting on board. "It's also about openness. I can't chat with customers over TikTok if I haven't opened a TikTok account." She also realises how important digital applications are in everyday life: The management tool "Trello" makes it easier to manage projects, while team messenger platform "Slack" enables companies to communicate internally more efficiently.

The digitally savvy daughter and the open-minded father working at a joint company – is this really an example of how two generations can work together in harmony or are there conflicts? Peter Hildebrand leans back, folds his hands across his black jacket and says: "She can do everything, I'm just the figurehead. It works really well like this." His daughter laughs. "He trusts me a lot and doesn't really speak up much." Only once did he vehemently veto a decision. They wanted to run an advertising campaign featuring pensioners as cemetery goths. In the end, they opted for the old sacks and packages. Since then, Peter Hildebrand's car has been covered entirely with a burlap sack.



In the spotlight



It's not just society that benefits when us oldies don't give up, but instead carry on doing what we're good at and what makes us happy.



Sarah and Peter Hildebrand

What were you doing 20 years ago?

Sarah: I'd just completed my art and design studies at the School of Design in Biel/Bienne.

Peter: I was running my own electrical business in Bachenbülach.

20 years ago, could you have imagined that you'd be running "Rent a Rentner" together today?

Sarah (looks at her father and laughs): Never! Back then, I was a goth and could never have imagined working with him.

Peter looks back at her, laughs and nods.

When is a job satisfying for you?

Sarah: When there are no spanners in the works and I feel as though I've done something good, and when things continue to go well. I get more satisfaction from this than resting on my laurels.

Peter: My needs have changed. I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease five years ago. So I live every day as though it's my last, I laugh a lot and I play music.

As a senior citizen, do you still offer your services on "Rent a Rentner"?

Yes, for electrical work and tree felling. I did extra training for this.

And how are things going with "Date a Rentner"?

I met my partner through another online platform. When I wanted to deregister from the platform, I realised I'd taken out a subscription. This is what led us to set up "Date a Rentner". I'm not active on there, I'm still in the same domestic partnership.

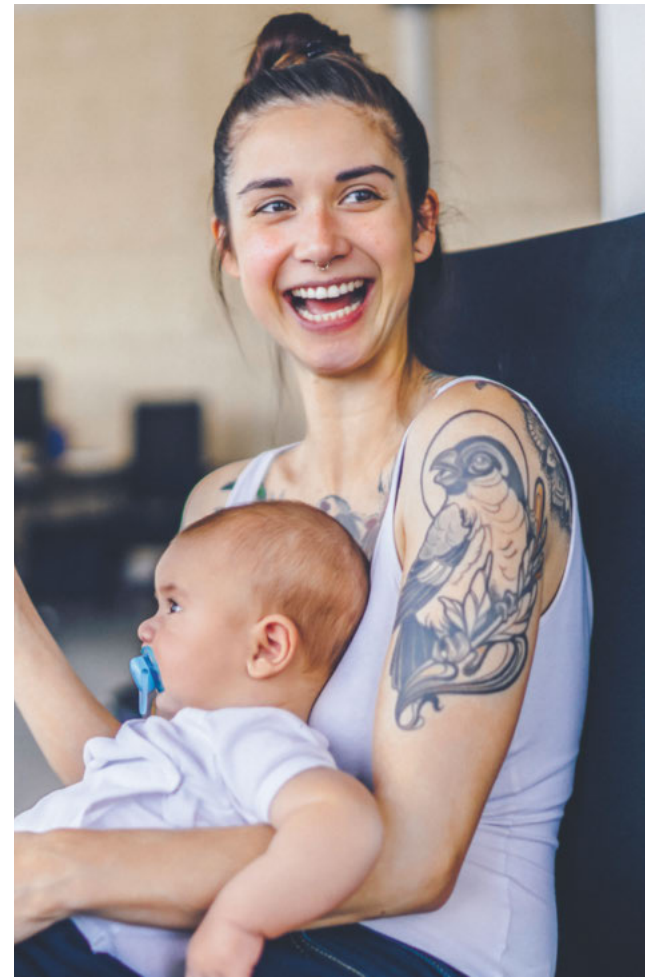
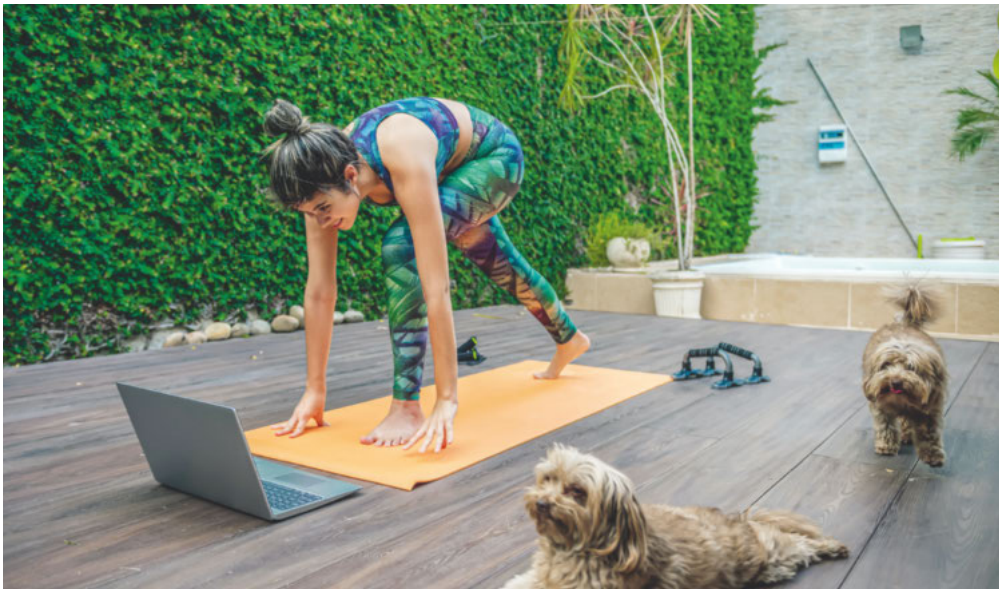
As a business owner, how do you maintain a work-life balance?

Sarah: My work and private life merge into one. This means I'm online when I want to be. I might answer emails at 6.20am but then go to the gym before I start work. Tasks that don't wear me out but instead spur me on are what helps me keep a balance.

When did you learn a lesson for life?

Peter: When I realised how well my three children have turned out.

Sarah: When I experienced failure, I learned that I'm stronger than I thought and that I can get back up again and carry on. And since having a daughter of my own, I know that lots of things in life really aren't that important. Starting with myself.



“ What matters tomorrow is something we can only speculate about and prepare ourselves for.

Andreas Staubli
CEO, PwC Switzerland





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