

## LEADERSHIP IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THE DIMENSIONS IT CONSISTS OF AND ITS ACTUAL STATE IN SWISS COMPANIES

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### **Abstract:**

The aim of this study is twofold. First, it objected to reveal of what dimensions an adequate understanding of leadership for the digital age consists of. Secondly, it aimed to measure the state of this leadership understanding based on the revealed dimensions in Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) in Switzerland. To develop the dimensions of “digital leadership” we first drew on the rather scarce existing literature in the field. Globally, we defined “digital leadership” as a perspective on leadership held by leaders that is required to successfully encounter the challenges in the digital age. Based on the literature we conducted a Delphi study to reveal the single dimensions more clearly. 33 experts participated in it. Experts were persons in leading positions in companies that are involved in digitization. To check the content-validity of the ten dimensions developed based on the Delphi study, a factor analysis was applied. Finally, a survey was established and sent to around 2'700 companies in Switzerland of which 318 filled the survey entirely. The distribution was done by leading professional associations in Switzerland.

The findings do not only show the state of the leadership understanding in the digital age in the participating companies. By applying inductive statistics also some interesting and even surprising relations between certain dimensions could be detected, which are relevant for business in the future.

*Keywords: Digital leadership, digital literacy, agility, company size, Delphi, survey, moderation*