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## **NEW WORK EMPLOYERS' SEAL — HHL Tests Quality in the New Working World**

HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management provides the scientific foundation for an employers' seal which will be issued in conjunction with NEW WORK SE (formerly XING SE). The aim is to make the concept of new work measurable, particularly to honor staff-oriented employers and offer some orientation for workers. Led by Professor Dr. Tobias Dauth, HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management developed the scientific foundation for the measurement and analysis which are part of this qualification process.

### **An interview on this topic with Prof. Tobias Dauth, HHL**

**Question: What benefits does the new seal and/or the new working world offer to companies from an academic perspective?**

**Prof. Dr. Tobias Dauth, HHL:** The seal is important because the new work phenomenon will be one factor in determining the future of work. The working world is currently undergoing fundamental, sociological and technologically driven changes. What we can see in many employees, for instance, is the desire for more flexible working hours. In this context, digital change serves as an enabler, by generating digitalized work processes among other things. It also represents a driving force — e.g., by extending opportunities for agile operations and tools. The concept of new work influences not just when and where we will (be able to) work in the future. New work is also concerned with the way in which people work together, thereby reflecting new expectations from the employees regarding participation, flexibility and the achievement bestowed through work.

**Q: What are the criteria for awarding the NEW WORK EMPLOYERS' SEAL?**

**Prof. Dr. Tobias Dauth, HHL:** For the NEW WORK EMPLOYERS' SEAL, we measure new work from the perspective of the employees as well as the employers. They assess their company's status by considering four dimensions — "individual development", "transparency and appreciation", "leadership and organization" as well as "attitude".



**Q: What is the idea behind the NEW WORK EMPLOYERS' SEAL?**

**Dauth/HHL:** New work describes multiple facets of a new working world. This makes measuring new work both an especially important and challenging task. After all, there is not just one new work approach which companies have to implement to successfully transform work. So, for companies, it is just as important to register the dimensions of new work and to make them measurable. This is the only way to allow for internal and external positioning. Only by measuring new work can changes be highlighted and successes recorded. A recurring measurement of new work also represents the foundation for identifying parameters within companies that are important for implementing the concept of new work.

The NEW WORK EMPLOYERS' SEAL serves only to measure new work. It will provide companies with an extensive report showing in which fields they are already implementing new work adequately and where they may have some catching up to do.

**Q: How exactly do you define new work?**

**Dauth/HHL:** Scientists and practitioners are by no means in agreement on how to define new work. As a result, we have to observe the phenomenon and continue to adjust the dimensions and criteria which are important for the implementation of new work in companies. New work is a multi-faceted phenomenon so we will have to continue to develop our understanding of it as time goes on. Our project aims to help companies to implement new work.

**Q: How did you proceed in your research and the methodical development?**

**Dauth/HHL:** After analyzing the scientific literature on the topic of new work, we identified individual dimensions which we then converted into a conceptual framework aiming to define the phenomenon of new work in as much detail as possible. For each of the four dimensions, we developed three criteria by which new work can be registered and described. For instance, we examined how the term "leadership" is operationalized in companies. Each of those criteria was then transferred into so-called new work items which can be assessed both by employees and employers. The total of all responses and assessments is the basis of the new work scores awarded for the individual criteria and dimensions.

**Q: How do you evaluate the responses of the companies?**

**Dauth/HHL:** The companies are given a questionnaire in electronic form. The important thing is that the answers on that questionnaire must be verified by sources from within the company. This allows us to better understand how far the candidates have actually come in their implementation of new work.

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**Q: To analyze the employees' perspective, you use data from the kununu ratings platform. Why is this information so attractive with regard to assessing new work?**

**Dauth/HHL:** kununu allows all employees of a company to give feedback on a regular basis and rate their employer. There are several benefits we draw from it; on one hand, access to the platform is easy and identical for all users. On the other hand, kununu provides data on companies over a relatively long period. Of course, it is also possible to survey employees using a standardized questionnaire. However, people using kununu are able to give feedback on their own and in an unfiltered way. And if the comments there draw a positive picture of a company, that is already an indication of new work.

**Q: What was it like collaborating on the NEW WORK EMPLOYERS' SEAL?**

**Dauth/HHL:** NEW WORK SE and HHL co-developed a seal which is meant to help companies to measure and implement new work. We supported NEW WORK SE in analyzing the phenomenon of new work and creating a conceptual framework which is now the basis for the EMPLOYERS' SEAL. In our scientific work, we were very careful to connect the methods and findings closely to the practical world.

### **HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management**

HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management is one of the leading business schools in Germany and the world. It is a university-level private business school with the right to award doctoral and post-doctoral degrees. HHL's Master in Management (M.Sc.) program was ranked no. 1 in Europe and no. 2 worldwide (Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education College Rankings 2019). HHL was named "Best Entrepreneurial University by Stifterverband. The goal of the oldest business school in German-speaking Europe is to educate effective, responsible and entrepreneurially minded leaders.

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