

Business Ecosystems as success factor for interim managers

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James F. Moore coined the term business ecosystems in the early 1990s by making comparisons between economic systems and natural ecosystems. So it's not a new topic. This has happened with other successful methods and procedural models. The lean methodology, which was initially mainly used in Japan, took almost 40 years from the 50s to the 90s of the 20th century for its successful march to Europe. Scrum as an agile method took 25 years to spread from software development to the breadth of product development.

Business ecosystems are cooperative networks. Their goal is to create more value together in a network of several companies. The silo structure of fixed supply chains that has been shaped over decades is increasingly being supplemented and displaced by the value logic of business ecosystems. The striving for efficiency inherent in supply chains finds its limits in increasing technological complexity. Electrification, digitization and AI are creating new business models by breaking the boundaries of traditional industries. For example, it is no longer enough to be successful in e-cars if car manufacturers develop electrical machines and buy the electronic control units for them. They have to rethink the car from the perspective of digitization and focus on the software architecture. Increasing added value across such industrial boundaries means increasing effectiveness, i.e. doing the right thing. That opens up perspectives - especially in medium-sized companies. Because medium-sized companies can jointly adapt to changed rules of the game faster than large corporations.

When specialists work together flexibly, cooperatively and creatively across industry and branch boundaries, added value and flexibility arise. For this, however, cooperative forms of collaboration are necessary that focus more on eye-level, human skills and values than the classic supply chain, which is characterized by rigid rules.

Interim managers are used to working in technological and organizational cross-border projects. Therefore, their knowledge and skills in the subject of business ecosystems are the most important tools. With this competence they achieve an extraordinary value contribution for their customers.

Interim managers, entrepreneurs and executives who want to think and work in business ecosystems should know this new logic and understand its benefits. Topics such as agile forms of cooperation, self-organization, social benefit, common good and sustainability automatically move onto the agenda.

Interim managers can thus make valuable contributions:

- Determine the transformation needs in companies
- Make the latest technologies available to customers across industries
- Bring in the necessary skills for new topics and technologies
- Achieve sustainable value enhancement through further development of the company, for example through initiatives in the direction of new, complementary business models
- Bring together complementary companies that complement each other sensibly in terms of their unique selling points, that is, help to build a future business ecosystem

The subject of Business Ecosystems is also covered in the book "Unternehmer Deines Business Ecosystems", which was published on November 12th, 2020. It is available in hardcover, paperback and as an e-book, currently only in German language.

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More Informationen about:

Uwe Klaus Hotz

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HOTZ management

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