



# Digitalization – competence and its connections

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## Abstract

**Aim:** The author intends to present in his study the impact appeared – on organizations and individuals – in connection with the emergence of the digital world. He considers it important to show the interconnectedness of the triad of the environment, the organization and the individual.

**Methodology:** In the study, the need to change the examined topic is presented through the definition of concepts related to managerial competence, using a wide range of research methodologies.

**Findings:** Through the description of the general main competencies, it illustrates the development of digital competence, its development, as well as the changes in leadership competencies that are of paramount importance for the future of the organization.

**Value:** The author in this study draws managers' attention to the fact that the sustainability and competitive advantage of today's organizations depends on their ability to adapt to the conditions dictated by the changing environment.

**Keywords:** organization, digitalization, competence, digital competence

## Introduction

Digitalisation is now permeating most areas of social, economic, cultural and political life. For decades, it has been continuously, almost imperceptibly, infiltrating our daily lives through the technical and technological possibilities provided by innovation. The incomprehensible amount of information has turned our normal lives upside down. The former personal administration has been replaced by the on-line system, the range and quality of services have changed

sharply. Processes that seemed unthinkable have now become automatism for almost all strata of society, regardless of gender and age. Most of the people who have been socialized in this world can acquire much more diverse, broader and deeper knowledge than previous generations. The digital world affects people in a much more intense and stimulating way.

## Competence

First, what is the meaning of the word competence (Berényi, 2012):

*'In today's vernacular, the word competence has a double meaning: 1) competence, authority; 2) expertise, competence, aptitude. [...]*

*The quality and qualification of the concept of competence in relation to each person acquires meaning in the competent, [...] words. The word competent means: 1) competent, entitled; 2) professionally competent, suitable. [...]. Competence is not synonymous with skill but ability to successfully solve complex tasks in a given context. The concept includes the mobilization of knowledge, cognitive and practical abilities, social and behavioral components and attitudes, emotions and values alike.'* (URL1).

When interpreting competences, we must also look at the role of the environment. All competences appear in some kind of organizational environment, so the changes that have occurred in them also greatly affect the competencies. We have two options: one is to look for our existing competence, a task that we can perform. And according to the second, for the task to be performed, we should look for the competencies and individuals who carry these qualities. A cycle is formed in which organizational goals are realized through the individual, with the individual having the competences that are important to the organization: *'the totality of a person's knowledge, skills, abilities, behavioral and behavioral traits, by which the person will be able to effectively perform a specific task.'*<sup>1</sup>

*'For the acquisition, development and application of the competencies of individuals, the basis for training [...] and work, (getting a routine) [...].'* (Pató, 2006).

## Digital competence

The need for digitalisation is nothing new on the part of man. More and more devices and systems have appeared and are appearing in our lives and we have to cope with their simultaneous use, the rules for their management and application.

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1 Act CI of 2001 on Adult Education § 29 10.

Digital and information dumping, on the one hand, is a manager of growth and development, and on the other hand, if its users are not sufficiently prepared and do not make effective enough use of the available opportunities, this can hinder growth. Each organization must invent, form the most suitable interface for its functioning, which is characterized by a harmonious balance of the processes taking place in the organization and employees. Not all organizations necessarily have to strive to develop digital systems. There are also organisations, not a small number of them, for which they need to take the first steps by digitising their existing systems. There are a lot of organizations that are based on and deal with digitalization and IT, in these cases it is the development that is important, the development of newer systems and their testing and further development, while for those who use it only as a tool, it is important to adapt the systems.

Nowadays, not digital tools, systems, etc. limit development, but the lack of competences and the inadequate level of the individual's competence that is the barrier to development. The forms of the machine, IT emergence of digitalization and individual competencies interact with each other. They form a unified system in which the development of one of his competencies brings with it the development of newer methods, methods, tools. As things appear and have already been applied in practice, they have an impact on the development of individual competence.

When examining competencies, it is essential to present the appropriate inter-relationships among the many competencies that help to understand the structure of the system. The EU has identified 8 key competences for lifelong learning that are also characteristic of the knowledge society:

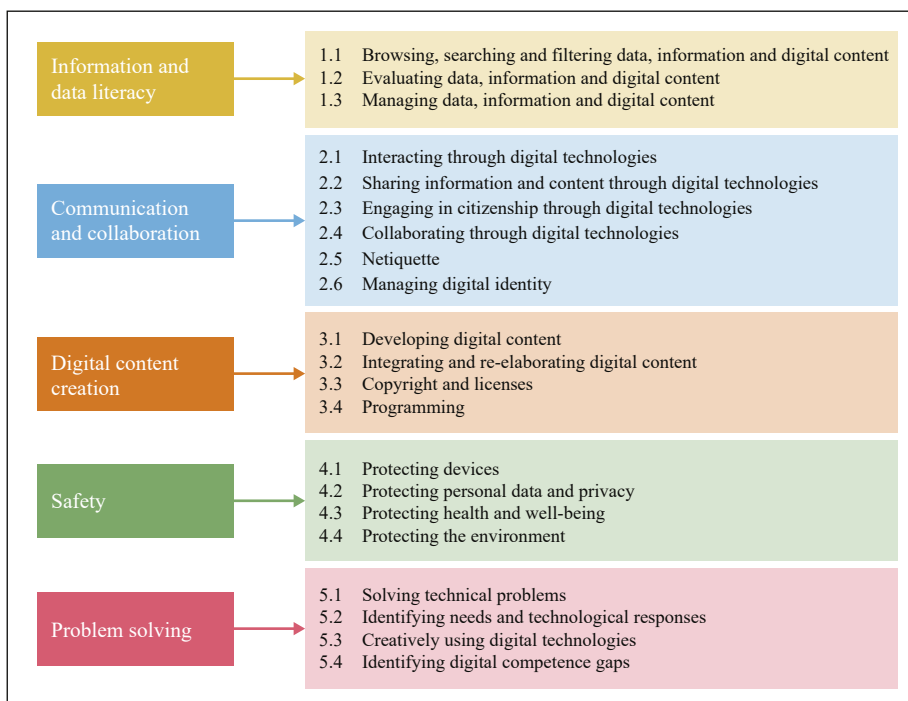
- 1.) Communication in the mother tongue;
- 2.) Communication in a foreign language;
- 3.) Mathematical, scientific and technical competences;
- 4.) Digital competence;
- 5.) Mastering learning;
- 6.) Social and civic competences;
- 7.) Initiative and entrepreneurship competence;
- 8.) Cultural awareness and expressiveness.

Key competences cover the whole area of life, they work in a system, some of its elements interact with each other, reinforcing each other, assuming each other's existence. The existence of digital competences as a way forward for other competences to prevail. It is not enough to have technological knowledge, but rather to use it consciously. The range of organizations and workplaces that are

organized only for the existence of this competence is much wider. A significant number of organizations operating in our society are merely users of this knowledge, using it as a tool in their daily activities. However, I think it is necessary to note that it is essential to apply this knowledge thoroughly and confidently.

The European Commission has created the European Framework for Digital Competence (DigComp) for its citizens, in which it defines 5 areas, with 21 additional layouts:

**Table 1**  
*The DigComp Conceptual reference model*



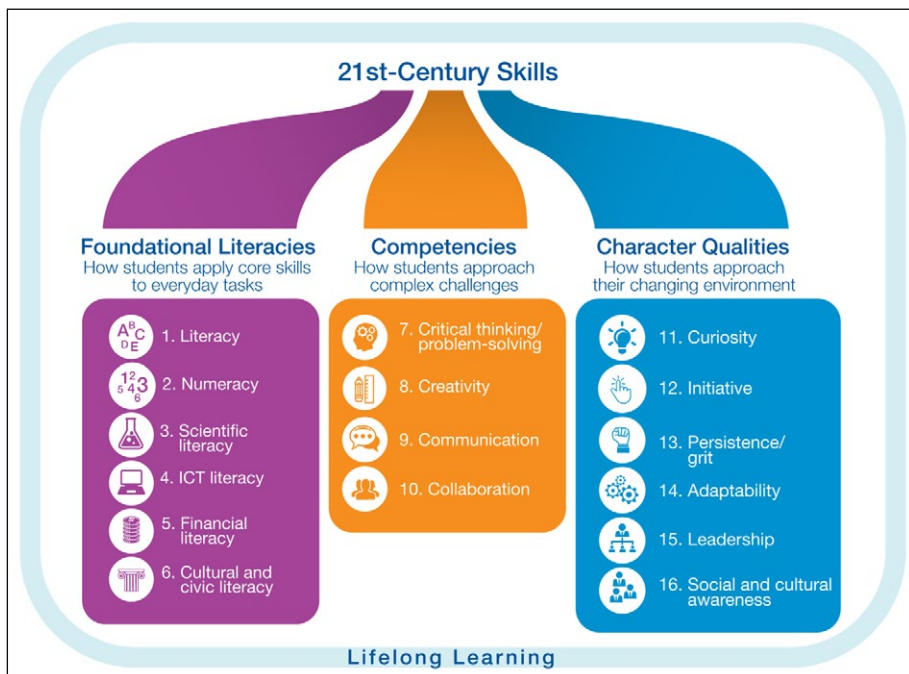
Note. URL2

In the digital world, in order to remain competitive and efficient, the development of organizations is essential. When examining organizations, we can distinguish two types of competences, on the one hand, organizational, according to which it is necessary to identify weak areas of the organization that need to be improved, those points where there is a need to make the necessary changes. It is necessary to identify the organizational development competencies that

contribute to effective work. On the other hand, the individual, which include the competencies expected of employees. It is through them that the further development of the organization is realized. These core capabilities have already been collectively known as ,digital' competences by other international organisations besides the EU, including the World Economic Forum.

Presentation of the educational competencies of the World Economic Forum (2015) in the 21st century:

**Table 2**  
*Skills for the 21st century*



Note. URL3

As a result of digitalisation, changes in the environment have had an irrevocable impact on the organisations operating in our society and the leaders who govern them. New organizations were formed, which also brought with them the emergence of new professions, which set new expectations for employees. In the new world, new competencies have emerged, flexibility, responsiveness and change management have become more valuable, and the old ones have been transformed, shifting the focus in all areas of life to the digital world.

The organization, the environment of the organization and the individuals operating in the organization are in close contact with each other. They interact with each other in a complex/dynamic way, influence each other in this way. There is not complete harmony between the change of organisms and the environment. The environment also changes regardless of the organization. The only question here is how much the organization wants and able to track these changes. Each organization is made up of individuals, so the changes that have occurred here affect each other more than in the previous example. Individuals seek to realize the goals of the organization in an organizational framework. The change of organization and individuals also brings with it a change in the operating framework of the organization (Busse & Böttger, 2021).

### **Digital world leadership competencies**

In general, in the case of an organization, the role of a leader is complex, he must be endowed with countless abilities. Just a few characteristics: innovative thinking, empathic skill, sincerity and honesty. All of them guarantee the success of the organization, the satisfaction of employees. In order for this to be truly realized, it is essential for managers to acquire the necessary level of managerial competencies and to continuously develop them.

*‘If you know who you are, you can use it to your advantage.’* What does this mean? Nothing but the importance of self-knowledge and self-evaluation, which is one of the leading competencies in the present. We must be aware of our positive and negative qualities, we must be ready to change or improve them, in this way we benefit our organization and act in its favor. In this case, one of Fayol’s 14 principles can be found, the primacy of achieving organizational goals over one’s own interests. In other words, if we see our own abilities clearly, we support our organization first and foremost. A well-functioning organization provides a framework for the individual’s further development.

Just a few important questions that the manager still needs to address. It must be emphasized that one must see and discover the possibilities in others and encourage and support them, the emergence of knowledge transfer. They must monitor the constantly changing environment and be able to keep up with it. Motivating the younger generation, facilitating their integration, creating a workplace atmosphere that effectively contributes to reducing turnover. The complexity of the leadership role can also be seen from these few examples.

The process of becoming a leader is multilevel, in which currently important competencies are built and complemented. Keeping stairs during the process

is important. After defining the goal, it is to create an 'I image'. The next step is to assess existing, expected competence elements and determine the necessary training program and to complete the process. Perhaps we go through this path to a good leader, which is of paramount importance. After all, the manager's current emotional and intellectual state, properties and characteristics are decisive for the organization, management and employees.

In our current age, we need to further develop the usual motivational schemes. Old methods can remain, such as reward, disciplinary responsibility, performance assessment system, etc., this does not necessarily mean that our employees become motivated. We can say that even the current system of performance assessment has not fully fulfilled its hopes. There were radical changes in our accelerated world, in the basic human competences. Much more emphasis should be placed on creating an incentive, inspiration, creative and innovative workplace atmosphere. Creating this is a guarantee of interaction between the leader and the subordinates and the availability of the manager. Do not think that the quality of the workplace atmosphere was not important until now. Nevertheless, many leaders did not keep it, they did not emphasize enough, thinking of subordination, the bureaucratic system will solve everything. Fortunately, this is not the case, generations are increasingly demanding it, and life is more and more enforced by leaders in the right XXI. century thinking and attitude. The need for development, the need for workplace progress, and the importance of career are becoming increasingly important for staff. On the one hand, the need for the quality of the workplace atmosphere was not triggered by digitalisation and the appearance of young generations in workers, which had been in the past decades. I go on, we can't say that there were no leaders who had emphasized the above, but were not enough. On the other hand, not with the appearance of quality should develop the ideal organizational forms and frames but it should appear at managers as a basic need. The digital world and its aforementioned competencies have been present in our society for more than a decade, constantly shaping and shaping it. We cannot claim that we have not had enough time to prepare for the changes.

There are serious changes in the leadership. Instead of the usual directors, delegates and control roles, individuals/ leaders who declare the organization's goals are characterized by strategic vision/ goal orientation. The tasks to be performed are voluntarily undertaken, organized into a team and responsible for their actions, assuming responsibility and risk taking. In the latter case, the leader appears as a team member who, leaving behind the old roles, creates an excellent, motivating workplace environment, an atmosphere, supports individuals initiative, development, makes a feedback and able to apologize.

It exemplifies the changes in leadership roles, that we previously considered a merit of the leader who had given the same position through the leadership of many years, even decades. In its characteristics and properties, there was no change or only a small amount, and nothing had encouraged him to develop. In the present circumstances, it can be expected and even required against the manager to measure himself in other areas. With this, you have new experience. As a natural process, we should consider the importance of some of the existing leadership competencies with the new assignment, while others are intensified and even new. This leader will have over time and experience other areas, a wider vision, and more thorough competencies that meet these requirements. He will be a much more professional member of his organization. Today we can no longer talk about a lifelong position, not the age or the years spent in the organization will be decisive.

The role of the leader in the organization will be determined by its competences. Based on the new view of management science, change in the relationship dynamics of the leader and the subordinates must be changed. There will be confidence, commitment, identification with the leader, loyalty, flexible adaptation towards the leader's role, and team thinking and team work will be strongly characteristic.

It is of paramount importance to get to know the changes in the environment and to develop a way of thinking that helps to rapidly understand the processes and ensure responsibility. Digitalization should not only be based on the development of technique and technology, but also use the exceptional, sole opportunities in human resources. The implementation of digital transformation into employees (managers and subordinates) will not be successful without education, training, support. In the midst of the changes, not only organizations have transformed into 'agile' organizations, but also leadership competences, which allow leaders to renew from time to time and be able to play different leadership roles.

Every manager and every employee are different, so it is not possible to raise the same expectations towards everyone. Members of the younger generation should be treated differently. You should not handle the new entrant equally with your old staff, but you also have to do a different attitude to an experienced but demotivated colleague (who has lost motivation). Individual competence elements should be established depending on the structure and functioning of the organization. Each leader and employees will achieve their goals in different ways, but in an organizational framework.

Most leaders in different situations act instinctively, experience and observe, and make their right or incorrect decisions. One, however, it is certainly a good leader who already has leadership competencies, but is constantly training, open

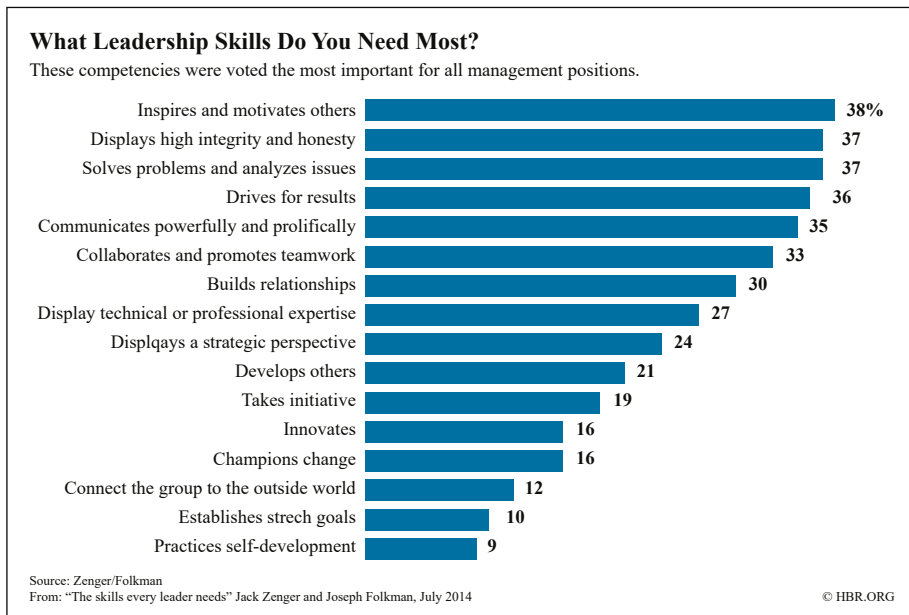


to new methods, procedures, and follow the changes in the environment. These leaders are called ‘agile’ leaders in the digital world, whose main competencies can be determined by 3 approaches. It is important to consider:

- 1.) The requirements of the employee staff against the manager.
- 2.) Leaders see themselves, what positive and negative qualities they have, how much they are aware of them. The supervision, which means self-knowledge, should be mentioned here. So the manager needs to see clearly which area to change and how well it is prepared. Only the human being who is aware of themselves can influence and change others.
- 3.) It has paramount importance how we think about the question of defining a ‘good leader’, and how important from the point of view of the leadership.

A research by Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman ([URL4](#)) has been processed by 16 competences listed, which best describes the ‘good’ leader. The leaders and their associates, as well as subordinates, were asked about the study that at different management levels that are necessary and have the greatest influence on the successful activities of the leaders.

**Table 3**  
*The skills leaders need at every level*



Note. [URL4](#)

Inspires and motivates others; Displays high integrity and honesty; Solves problems and analyzes issues; Managements for result; Communicates powerfully and prolifically; Collaborates and promotes teamwork; Builds relationships; Displays technical or professional expertise; Displays a strategic perspective; Develop others; Takes initiative; Innovates; Champions change; Connects the group to the outside world; Establishes stretch goals; Practices self-development.

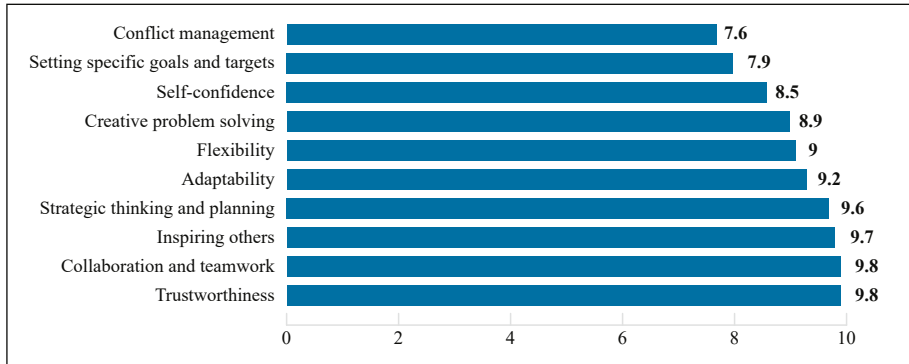
After the evaluation of answers, they stated that the result of the research had been expected. The competencies selected depended not only on management levels but also loaded positions and workplace conditions. The graphs showed the first seven competences in the order of importance, which shows that there were no great differences, so they are needed at almost every leadership level. It can be stated that these are basic competencies in our present age. For the rest, it can be stated that almost half of them were evaluated. It has been found that not all competencies need the manager at different stages of their professional careers. However, there are so-called critical competencies that if you wait to have them can be too late. Senior leaders want to discover these skills in future leaders, such as the existence of a strategic approach.

Changes in competence and development have already begun and continues today. Changes occurring are faster than 20–30 years ago, as our world is changing faster as a result of the 4 industrial revolutions. Examination and analysis of changes are essential for defining future trends. The results provided by the research help to determine the right directions of the change and can serve as a starting point in the development of employees' competences.

Dimitra Iordanoglou researcher, as a result of a two-stages European and US study, shows the summary results of the figures below. In its research, geographical location, the difference between leadership levels and the gender of research subjects are also important. It can be stated that in view of the above mentioned ingredients, every leader needs skills at all levels.

**Table 4**

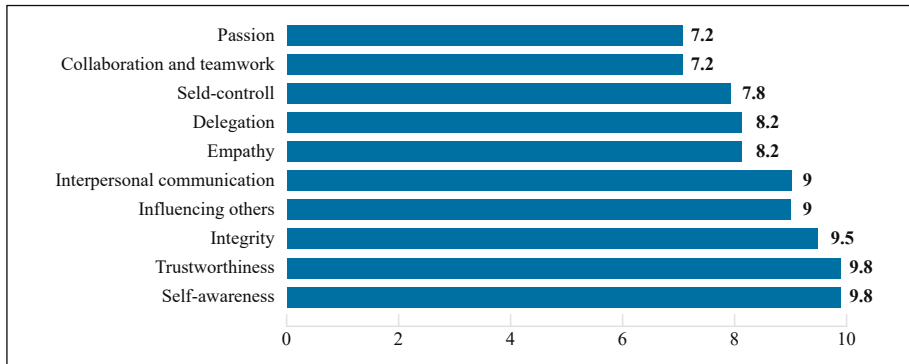
*Important leadership skills for future leaders – european sample*



*Note.* Iordanoglou, 2018.

**Table 5**

*Important leadership skills for future leaders – U.S. sample*



*Note.* Iordanoglou, 2018.

According to the two studies, it can be easily stated that the changing environment has produced similar results regardless of geographical location. So there are worldwide transformation processes that are already underway. Greater emphasis is on self-awareness, reliability, influencing others, personal communication, flexibility, adaptability, strategic thinking and planning for the organized, and cooperation and teamwork. These competencies appear in parts of this study in the display of short explanations. Other competencies in the research are also important but they received smaller values from the above during the evaluation.

## Summarised

The successful organization, leadership and leading secret are complex, and consist of many factors and circumstances. The effectiveness of organization – we measure it with any indicators – depends not only on the use of technical tools, advanced technologies, innovative methods but also from leadership competencies that help their own development, motivation, proactive attitude of employees and sustainable development.

The sustainability and competitive advantage of today's organization depends mainly on their ability to add to the circumstances dictated by the changing environment. The appearance of new processes is combined with new requirements. It is not sufficient to deal with new competencies, and it is important to consciously develop existing ones and to reduce the differences between labor market players.

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## Online links in the article

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- URL1: *The meaning of the word competence*. [http://janus.ttk.pte.hu/tamop/tananyagok/curriculum/iii\\_1\\_a\\_kompetencia\\_sz\\_jelentse.html](http://janus.ttk.pte.hu/tamop/tananyagok/curriculum/iii_1_a_kompetencia_sz_jelentse.html)
- URL2: *Definition of Digital Competence*. [https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/digcomp/digcomp-framework\\_en](https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/digcomp/digcomp-framework_en)
- URL3: *A 21. században szükséges készségek*. <https://widgets.weforum.org/nve-2015/chapter1.html>
- URL4: *The Skills Leaders Need at Every Level*. <https://hbr.org/2014/07/the-skills-leaders-need-at-every-level>

## Law and Regulation

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Act CI of 2001 on Adult Education

## Reference of the article according to APA regulation

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