

Challenges Posed by 21st Century and General Managers

Uri Porath

Tel Aviv, Israel

Email: uri@kpiace.com

How to cite this paper: Porath, U. (2023). Challenges Posed by 21st Century and General Managers. *Modern Economy*, 14, 923-957.

<https://doi.org/10.4236/me.2023.147050>

Received: May 22, 2023

Accepted: July 15, 2023

Published: July 18, 2023

Copyright © 2023 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

This literature review explores the challenges encountered by general managers in the 21st century. As organizations navigate a rapidly changing global landscape, general managers find themselves facing a multitude of complex and interrelated challenges. This review synthesizes the existing literature to identify common themes and areas of concern for general managers, encompassing technological advancements, globalization, shifting consumer expectations, talent management, ethical considerations, and strategic decision-making. By analyzing various scholarly works, this review offers insights into the dynamic and multifaceted nature of the challenges faced by 21st-century general managers, aiming to provide a foundation for further research and the development of effective management strategies in the contemporary business environment.

Keywords

General Manager, Challenges, Technological Advancements, Globalization, Shifting Consumer Expectations, Talent Management, Ethical Considerations, Strategic Decision-Making

1. Introduction

The role of General Managers (GMs) in large worldwide manufacturing companies is paramount in ensuring organizational success and addressing the challenges that lie ahead in the 21st century. As the manufacturing landscape evolves and becomes increasingly complex, it is crucial to understand the ideal characteristics and maturity level that enable GMs to effectively navigate these challenges. By examining the intersection of management studies, organizational behavior, leadership, and the unique challenges faced by GMs in the manufacturing sector, the research contributes to the broader field of management stu-

dies, providing valuable insights into the qualities and competencies required for GMs to thrive in the dynamic business environment.

The manufacturing industry, with its technological advancements, policy implications, and impact on human behavior, requires GMs to possess a unique set of skills and traits. This research aims to shed light on the specific characteristics and maturity levels that empower GMs to address the anticipated challenges of the 21st century. By conducting a comprehensive literature review in the fields of management, organizational behavior, and leadership, this study will identify relevant theories, frameworks, and studies that will guide the research and provide the necessary background information.

The findings of this research will have practical implications for manufacturing companies worldwide, assisting in the development of effective leadership programs, talent management strategies, and organizational practices that enable GMs to excel in their roles. Furthermore, it will contribute to the academic community by expanding the understanding of GM attributes and providing a theoretical foundation for future research in the field of management studies.

In the subsequent chapters of this thesis, I will delve into the literature review, methodology, characteristics of General Managers, maturity level assessment, challenges of the 21st century, integration, and analysis of findings, and conclude with a comprehensive understanding of the ideal characteristics and maturity level of GMs for success in large worldwide manufacturing companies. By investigating these crucial aspects, this research seeks to contribute to the knowledge base and provide practical insights that will benefit both practitioners and scholars in the field of management. Please note that this is a general introduction based on the information I provide with 25 years of experience as GM in worldwide companies.

1.1. Background

Regarding the term leadership, it can be said that there are many concepts, but in general, leadership includes aspects such as motivation, influence, and persuasion, and can be defined as “the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of objectives” (Robbins, 2009: p. 154). It is proposed that leadership has follow-up and action dimensions, in which the leader is responsible for gathering information, reducing ambiguity, providing structure, and overcoming barriers. In the dimension related to action, the leader must have the ability to facilitate decision-making and task completion. For Mintzberg (1998), leadership is one of the ten roles played by managers, which are divided into three groups: informational roles (monitor, disseminator and spokesperson), decision-making roles (entrepreneur, resource allocator, disturbance controller, and negotiator) and interpersonal roles (nominal boss, liaison and leader), with the leader role covering hiring, training, motivating and disciplining employees.

In this sense, the leader must be the one capable of providing discipline for decisions related to change and the needs of the customers that the company

serves, and at the same time avoiding organizational dispersion and ensuring its differentiation (Porter, 1999), being his/her biggest challenge “knowing the organization’s capabilities enough to think deeply about its strategic direction” (Mintzberg, 1998). It is worth adding that there is a difference when it comes to leadership and strategic leadership. Hambrick and Pettigrew (2001) advocate that leadership refers to leaders present at all organizational levels and their relationship with followers, while strategic leadership refers to the study of people at the top of the organization.

Rowe (2002) exposes three types of leadership: managerial, visionary, and strategic. For the author, managerial leaders seek stability, order, and maintenance of the status quo, while visionary leaders seek creativity, innovation, disorder and change of the status quo. On the other hand, strategic leaders “formulate and implement strategies for immediate impact and preservation of long-term goals in order to increase organizational evolution, efficiency and viability” (p. 13). Today, the environment where organizations operate is characterized by change and complexity driven by global and technological forces, which requires the organization to have leadership with characteristics that can lead organizational strategies efficiently, enhancing its ability to succeed.

Thus, “as strategic leaders are concerned with the future viability and current financial stability of the organization, they make decisions that maximize the return on investment and, therefore, create value for their organization” (Rowe, 2002: p. 16). It is in this sense that it is important for a company to maintain in its functional structure, a staff that can fit into such archetypes, in addition to disseminating the culture of change throughout the organization, starting not only from the highest levels in the hierarchy but from all levels of the organizational structure. “Although the revolution need not start at the top of the organization, it must be understood and endorsed by it” (Hamel, 1996: p. 80).

Whittington (2006) exposes a difference of view regarding the importance of leadership in the strategic process. According to the author, over the years, authors classified as classics of strategy defend visionary leadership, represented by managers with characteristics of charismatic, talented, inspiring vision and audacious people in command, while authors linked to the systemic approach emphasize the characteristics of those who are in prominent positions, which he calls business elites. In this case, leadership is seen as more than the simple insertion of a strategy in the market; it is about including oneself in the social environment. And therefore, it is not equally available to everyone, but a privilege of certain groups.

1.2. Research Aim and Objectives

1.2.1. Research Aim

This study aims to investigate the ideal characteristics of General Managers (GMs) in large worldwide companies, with a focus on their ability to effectively address the challenges anticipated in the coming years of the 21st century.

1.2.2. Research Objectives

- 1) To identify the key characteristics and traits that contribute to the effectiveness of General Managers (GMs) in the manufacturing sector.
- 2) To explore the leadership styles and communication strategies employed by GMs in large worldwide manufacturing companies.
- 3) To examine the decision-making approaches and adaptive management skills exhibited by GMs in response to the dynamic challenges of the 21st century.

1.3. Significance of the Research

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to the understanding of the ideal characteristics and maturity level of General Managers (GMs) in large worldwide manufacturing companies, particularly in the context of the challenges anticipated in the coming years of the 21st century. This research holds several key implications:

1) **Practical Implications:** The findings of this study can provide valuable insights for organizations in the manufacturing sector in their efforts to select, develop, and support effective GMs. By identifying the essential characteristics and maturity level required for GMs to address the challenges of the 21st century, organizations can make informed decisions regarding leadership development programs, recruitment strategies, and succession planning.

2) **Managerial Implications:** The research outcomes can guide practicing managers, including current and aspiring GMs, in understanding the critical competencies and skills necessary for success in their roles. By adopting the identified characteristics and maturity level, managers can enhance their leadership capabilities, adapt to the evolving business environment, and effectively address the challenges faced by the manufacturing industry.

3) **Academic Implications:** This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge in the field of management, specifically in the areas of leadership, organizational behavior, and the challenges faced by General Managers in the manufacturing sector. The findings can serve as a foundation for further scholarly inquiry, leading to the development of new theories, frameworks, and best practices in the context of GMs and their effectiveness in large manufacturing companies.

4) **Societal Implications:** Effective leadership in manufacturing companies has far-reaching implications for economic growth, job creation, and overall societal well-being. By understanding the ideal characteristics and maturity level of GMs, this research can contribute to the development of strong and resilient manufacturing organizations that drive innovation, productivity, and sustainable practices.

5) **Overall,** this research holds significant practical, managerial, academic, and societal implications by shedding light on the ideal characteristics and maturity level of GMs in large worldwide manufacturing companies. It provides insights that can guide organizations, managers, academics, and society in navigating the

challenges of the 21st century and fostering effective leadership in the manufacturing sector.

2. Literature Review

The policy of coping with challenges in companies and organizations is always a balancing act. It is to manage the company's economic success and attractiveness. These are inseparable, depending on each other, but often seem to oppose each other. The Compensation plan assists organizations with acquiring an obvious compensation strategy, giving believability to the representative pay process. For this, it recognizes the fundamental number of experts to complete the exercises, the capacities to be performed and the sum to be put resources into everyone. It permits the administration of representatives' presentations and shows whether they are monetarily perceived by the work created, refreshed on the web and consequently. It was only from the 1980s onwards that a strong connection was established between remuneration instruments and performance systems, consolidating in the 1990s with the emergence, among other techniques, of variable remuneration and profit sharing.

2.1. Challenges of the 21st Century and the Responsibility of Managers

With the advancement of technology, and with globalization, compensation strategies needed to be constantly renewed, today we can say that the most used system in organizations aims to contemplate the satisfaction and retention of good employees and the tool in question is focused on a system of remuneration for skills and abilities. But it is worth remembering that, regardless of the form of remuneration and the period in which it is being employed, "remuneration" has been, since the beginning of time, the most important link between companies and workers. Everyone depends on remuneration to survive, make dreams come true and achieve personal and professional goals (**Figure 1**).



Figure 1. Characteristics of Management (2018). Retrieved, from <https://businessjargons.com/management.html>.

“There are several methodologies for establishing and assigning correct salaries to employees.” All known systems are based on the value of jobs and their importance within the organization. The most used job evaluation and structuring systems are divided into open and closed. The open ones are Scheduling; Pre-determined grades; Comparison Grid; Comparison by factors and the Points System. The behavior of organizations that need to leverage results and establish organizational changes to remain competitive in the globalized business context and because companies need, together with their employees, to establish a differential in terms of productivity and competitiveness in the national and international scenario. Among the main activities of the remuneration professional are knowing the type of business and the operating strategy of the organization in which they work; monitoring developments in all functions of the organization; proposing salary practices aligned with the market; implementing and controlling the company’s salary policy, among others.

Among the main responsibilities are developing standards and procedures for the company’s salary policy and keeping it updated; control changes in the functional organization chart; supporting people managers and ensuring the correct application of legislation. As can be seen, Strategic Remuneration is linked to the global objectives and goals of organizations and, precisely because of this, it derives from the strategic planning, business plan and vision of the future of the main directors of companies. The first stage for implementing the Strategic Remuneration System, according to consultant Luiz Paschoal, author of the book *Administration of Positions and Salaries*, by Qualitymark publisher, is the development of the Business Plan. It consists of programming the organization’s direction considering important aspects that align the compensation system with the business strategy. The following areas should be paid attention to by General Managers while implementing the global compensation and benefits plan.

2.2. Positions and Pay Rates

The arrangement permits the board of the association’s compensation strategy and work and capacity depictions. Lined up with the necessities of each position and the requirements of the groups, the module oversees compensations from the underlying definition to the age of proposition for esteem changes, keeping the historical backdrop of everyone and consequently sending them to finance. It helps pioneers in planning individual abilities and getting ready for vocation progression plans, causing HR to accept more key and steady jobs for pioneers. Our fields of intervention should include:

- 1) Additional benefits: for optimized use of financial and non-financial benefits.
- 2) Bonuses: Relevant and motivating bonus programs based on SMART goals.
- 3) Compensation policy: in addition to numbers, it helps companies determine the right salary components for their employees.
- 4) Payroll: the correct payment correctly paid is the first obligation of each HR to create a climate of trust with the employee, but this is not always evident.

5) Performance-Linked Compensation: Does the result of the annual performance review lead to guaranteed payouts?

6) Salary increase: general or individual? A subtle but significant difference!

7) Salary review: how to establish transparent annual salary reviews?

8) Salary scale: how to adjust according to job, grade, and levels?

2.3. Staff Budget

Permit the assessment of expenses with HR and check how the sums are allocated. Through situations dependent on genuine data from associations, it permits reproductions to resize the opening table, do individual or aggregate representative developments, reclassify change rates, additional or benefits, as well as consider excursion plans and assess expenses like extra time. Our field of interventions should include:

1) Promotion: Rules for Linking Promotion and Performance.

2) Social security: how to protect employees when the state does not or partially fulfill its obligations?

3) Taxes: choice between taxable and non-taxable treatments.

4) Time management: presence and absence, planning holidays and overtime.

2.4. Opening Board

Permit the simple administration of the association's Vacancy Chart. This module makes it conceivable to collect the labour force as per the organization's present work, giving successful assets to its support, endorsement, and development checking. The arrangement permits checking the advancement of the staff, alarming or forestalling the constraints of opportunities set up by the association from being extrapolated by confirmation or interior exchanges. It additionally makes accessible a progression of administrative data as a correlation between the normal staff and the number of workers, introducing the harmony between opportunities and the subtleties of their occupations.

2.5. Strategies and Actions

Objectively formulates the business plan, considering organizational performance and development drivers. Additionally, establishes departmental and individual actions to fulfill the business mission.

2.6. Competences

Define and align the competences necessary for the business, organizational systems and processes, and individuals to execute the business strategy and plan. The compensation model to be defined enhances existing skills and directs towards the acquisition of those that are extremely necessary to sustain the business.

2.7. Changes in Employee Attitudes

Defining action strategies and formulating the competency model often leads to

significant changes in employee attitudes and behavior. What is expected is a greater and more organized contribution, generating value and wealth for the organization.

2.8. Reward Systems

These are ways of showing the company's recognition to employees through structured reward systems that contribute to the execution of the organizational strategy and objectives. After choosing the best strategy, it is a fact that one should turn to a conceptual and systemic design to monitor the organization's results. The main aspects to be considered in this phase are illustrated below.

1) Financial: The Company needs to prepare a mix of comprehensive financial indicators that are no more than four (4), short term, to manage the fiscal year.

2) Economic value: The company's managers also need to define results and medium and long-term business indicators linked to organizational development, which are comprehensive and have a maximum number of 04 (four).

3) Long-term sustainability and governance: A system for measuring results needs to be developed, linking, and integrating short-term indicators for the fiscal year with medium and long-term indicators to assess which results today are not compromising the overall strategy for sustaining the business.

4) Quality: A model of quantitative quality indicators perceived by customers' needs to be developed to support continuous process improvement actions.

5) Productivity: Objective and quantitative indicators need to be studied and considered in the earnings management model, as they reveal organizational growth and contribute to financial results.

The old compensation systems focused on salary structures based only on the importance of positions within the organizational charts of companies and did not consider the individual contribution of employees to the organization's results. New compensation systems have been developed to identify employees who can contribute, in the short and medium term, to the company's economic and financial results and, in the long term, to sustain the business. This is the concept of Strategic Remuneration. If Strategic Remuneration considers the individual contribution of employees, the salary models that use this type of system should work appropriately. The Strategic Remuneration System determines to identify ways of differentiating performance and individual talents through motivational factors enhanced by the perspective of financial recognition. To define employee compensation, it focuses on results, attitudes and behaviors that add value to the organization and on the strategic vision of the business. This plan will surely be inclusive and will be beneficial for the company in cultural terms as well. It will also reduce the layoffs in this situation.

2.9. Risk Analysis and Assessment

The analysis phase begins once all risks are considered and identified, and their causes and effects have been understood. The objective of the phase is to know

what risks are worth addressing. The answer to this question can vary according to the tolerance of the company and in terms of resources available, budget or time as well as the importance of the project. The purpose of these two approaches is to be able to prioritize the risks as well as to identify those for which decisions need to be made. First, the qualitative approach is subjective and is based on risk analysis by judgment and experience. There are many qualitative risk analysis techniques. Among them, the risk-impact table consists of a table of four columns. The first contains the description of the risk, the second a percentage of the estimated probability of occurrence of the risk, the third an estimated impact on the project ranging from zero to ten, and finally, in the last column, the value of the risk which is represented by the product of the probability and the impact of the risk. The list of all risks is then prioritized by this estimated risk value. Qualitative analysis is most effective if it is conducted with as many stakeholders represented as possible to obtain different points of view on the same risk (Andrei, Casu-Pop, Gheorghe, & Boiangiu, 2019).

The second possible approach is the quantitative approach. The latter is based on mathematical and statistical models to be able to represent each risk. Many quantitative risk analysis techniques rely on a probability distribution which can be discrete or continuous. A discrete distribution allows representation for a certain event and its different outcomes, the sum of which must be finite or countable. Binomial law and Bernoulli's law are examples of discrete distribution. A continuous distribution, although more complicated, allows further review and analysis of risks depending on the type of continuous distribution chosen. The pert distribution and the triangular distribution are two examples of continuous distributions (Kisielnicki & Misiak, 2017).

Once the risks have been assessed, from the list of priorities that has been created, it is possible to answer the initial question, namely the identification of the risks to which it is necessary to find an answer and thus complete the objective of the phase. It would be too costly in terms of time and money to address all identified risks, even the most unlikely (Kisielnicki & Misiak, 2017). The decision of the necessity of the treatment or not of risk is subjective and partly linked to the environment in which the project is conducted. For example, the risk of natural disasters such as tsunamis or earthquakes is much more present on the Japanese coasts than in Switzerland and therefore requires different treatment.

2.10. Risk Treatment

As with the identification of risks for which it was deemed necessary to find an answer, the choice of risk treatment strategy depends on several factors. First, the nature of the risk (its properties as identified using the Framework as well as the risk trigger are examples of elements making up the nature of a risk). Then, the impact and probability of occurrence of the risk as defined during the previous phase. Finally, risk tolerance and the preferences of the different stake-

holders are considered. An example of this last point can be the preference on the part of a customer for a late project rather than a project delivered on time but more expensive than initially planned (Kisielnicki & Misiak, 2017).

There are four responses to risk. To begin with, the acceptance or non-consideration of risk can be made when the latter is considered sufficiently improbable or has a sufficiently small impact on the project to be considered almost insignificant. If the risk is considered extremely unlikely but has an enormous impact on the project, it can be dealt with either by providing sufficient reserves in the budget to be able to respond to the risk or by providing an alternative plan. This is, for example, the case for companies with a business recovery plan in the event of a disaster (DRP) (Andrei, Casu-Pop, Gheorghe, & Boianjiu, 2019).

The second method is complete risk avoidance, that is, finding ways to prevent the risk from occurring actively, for example by choosing not to conduct the part of the project during which the risk is likely to produce if possible. Another example is if the risk of civil war in the country in which the company is located is considered important, it can be decided to completely relocate to completely avoid the identified risk (Kisielnicki & Misiak, 2017).

The next method is risk mitigation, which means reducing the probability of occurrence or the impact of the risk if it were to occur up to a level that can be deemed acceptable. For example, if it was deemed possible that the project is falling behind on periodic deliveries of intermediate versions to the customer, the addition of additional safety margins as well as more frequent monitoring of the speed of development of the solution is capable responses to mitigate the impact of risk (Boehm & Turner, 2003). Finally, if the risk is considered too great to avoid, it is impossible to avoid completely and despite attempts to reduce the impact or the probability the risk remains considered too great, it is possible to transfer it. This transfer makes it possible to completely avoid the identified risk.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to identify the risk arising from this transfer. For example, if the coding of a part of software requires knowledge of certain technologies that are unknown to the team in charge of developing the application, the part to be developed is essential to the application and no training can be implemented due to lack of time, it is possible to have this part developed by another development company (Elbanna & Sarker, 2015). It is the risk of this outsourcing that it is necessary to identify and assess to know whether the outsourcing of the project is beneficial or not. In addition to the potential added risks, risk transfer also has a financial cost that cannot be underestimated.

If the risk of a major event such as a flood destroying the business has been judged to be sufficiently likely, taking out insurance may be considered a suitable response to the risk but involves additional costs. It is, therefore, necessary to be extremely vigilant when transferring risk and to use it only when the latter is considered critical for the project. Once all the risks necessary to be addressed

have been identified and the strategies to respond to them have been selected and detailed, they can be grouped into a document that will be called the Risk Response Document (RRP).

2.11. Risk Control

Risk control is the part most often forgotten or neglected during the cycle life of a project. During this phase, regular monitoring of the conditions for triggering the risks identified and placed in the RRP as well as identification of new threats or opportunities affecting the project. To monitor risk, it is necessary to control its metrics as well as to communicate. If a risk achieves one of its triggering conditions, it is necessary to be able to quickly decide on the actions that need to be put in place to deal with the problem as quickly as possible. There are several ways to monitor risk. First, an audit can be done to ensure that all risks have been correctly identified and analyzed. Of the more this audit can ensure that the implementation of response procedures that have been selected has been conducted satisfactorily and that these procedures are updated regularly. This audit can be conducted by a team or a manager who should, whenever possible, be external to the project to offer a new perspective and avoid tensions within the team (Rehman, Nawaz, & Abbas, 2020).

In addition to ad hoc audits, the team conducting the project must hold frequent risk review meetings. This meeting will focus on identifying new risks and updating the assessment of the risks already identified. In addition to keeping the list of risks up to date, this meeting serves to remind all team members of which risks require special attention and which risks are becoming more dangerous for the project. Finally, a formal communication system, for example by sending reports, like risk review meetings, can be put in place to be able to better control the risks.

2.12. Risk Response

Risk response is the last phase of a risk's life cycle. Once the metrics for triggering a risk or its conditions of occurrence have arisen, it is necessary to apply the appropriate actions quickly to avoid the problem does not get worse or spreading to other parts of the project. It is at this point that identifying the nature as well as the links between the projects proves most useful. Normally, the actions to be taken are those that have been identified in the RRP during the risk treatment phase (Van Casteren, 2017).

The results of the actions taken for a particular risk are an immense source of information that can be used as lessons for future project risks. Lessons learned from these decisions should be shared within the company to be useful to all teams and improve their efficiency (Kisielnicki & Misiak, 2017). The knowledge outcomes from decisions made to deal with a risk improves the risk management process. Moreover, with enough risk information, it is possible to understand why a certain decision has been made and understand its implications for

other risks.

2.13. Managing Team

When managing a team, it is important to identify and monitor numerous sources of pressure throughout the project in order to maintain team efficiency. The pressure on the team resulting from the choice of methodology, although it may initially seem negligible, is a major element to consider. This is especially true during the initial phases of the project and throughout the development process. As previously discussed, waterfall methodologies required significant supervision from the hierarchical superiors of the employees involved in the application (Andrei, Casu-Pop, Gheorghe, & Boiangiu, 2019).

The pressure was exerted by the superiors who could, if the situation demanded it, exercise their power to remonstrate with the employees. The pressure exerted can be described as external to the group, and the hierarchical superior cannot be considered equal (in purely hierarchical terms) to the employees (Rehman, Nawaz, & Abbas, 2020).

In addition to the novelties observed previously, Agile methodologies have changed how pressure is exerted on employees. In Agile methodologies, supervision is much less strong. This, combined with the short iteration time, requires each member to be able to work autonomously. As mentioned earlier, the iteration duration is fixed, and the tasks conducted during each iteration are selected to fill the time most efficiently.

These tasks are estimated in terms of the time needed to complete them by various people considered to be experts capable of precision. They reach an agreement on an estimate, and non-completion or incomplete completion of a task generally implies that the person responsible for it has failed. In Agile methodologies, the pressure is therefore exerted by peers rather than by the hierarchy. This difference, although subtle in some cases, can be amplified in certain cultures. Collectivist societies, such as Japan, Korea, and China, base their society on effort and belonging to a group, whereas more individualistic countries, like Canada, Western Europe, and the United States of America, are based on personal achievement (Boehm & Turner, 2003). Therefore, we can conclude that Agile methodologies, although more effective when used with teams whose members belong to a collectivist culture, can exert more pressure on them than traditional methodologies.

2.14. Management of International Teams

“Organizations designing systems are forced to produce designs that are copies of the communication structures of these organizations” Mr. Conway. This adage, called Conway’s Law (1967), is considered a valid sociological observation that underlines the importance for companies building systems, especially computer systems, to create and maintain appropriate communication structures that are vital for the realization of projects. Managing team members and their

communications are essential tasks for any project and are represented respectively by the project management and communications management competency areas in the PMBOK. The importance and difficulty of these tasks are increased tenfold when the management of a geographically distributed team. In this chapter, we will start by looking at the differences between teams whose members are located nearby and those whose members are far away. Then we will see the advantages of these teams and will end by describing the elements necessary to succeed in the projects entrusted to this type of team (Hijazi, Khmour, & Alarabeyyat, 2012).

2.14.1. Differences between Local, Distributed, and International

In this thesis, we will differentiate three types of teams. Firstly, the local teams are those whose all members are in the same place geographical location and who are capable of direct contact almost immediately. Then, the distributed teams are those whose members are far enough apart geographically so as not to be able to communicate almost immediately face-to-face. For example, a team whose members work from home or in different offices in the same country is considered a distributed team.

Finally, international teams are distributed teams and must deal with various difficulties related to geographical separation which we will talk about several times repeated throughout the chapter. Throughout the latter, we will see some examples, among many others, of the differences between these three types of teams. Managing distributed teams is slightly more complex than managing teams locally. This difficulty is caused by the increased difficulty of communication between different team members. As mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the simplest example of such an organization would be that of a company allowing its employees to work from home. They would talk the same language, come from the same culture, and live in the same country. Another example posing different problems and presenting more risks important would be a Swiss company located in Geneva and having members of the team working in Zurich. Although all team members live in the same country and share the same culture, it is possible and even probable that they do not speak the same language.

In addition to the factors mentioned for distributed teams, international teams need to be mindful of the difference between cultures, which further increases the difficulty of team management. An example of one of the most complex cases would be an American company outsourcing with a Chinese company, a Bulgarian company as well as an Indian company for example. These countries, being extremely distant from each other, having no official language in common, and having opposed cultures present a major risk for the project and require appropriate management (Hijazi, Khmour, & Alarabeyyat, 2012). Local, distributed, and international teams also differ in their ability to attract new talent to the business. Indeed, it is possible that the opportunity to work from home or with foreign countries, and therefore to be part of a geographically distributed team, can attract potential new talents in a company while others will

prefer a defined workspace and a more traditional work environment.

Centralization of employees in one place generates fixed costs for the business that are not present when employees are working at their homes. To offset these expenses, the company made up of local teams can count on collaboration and easier communication between employees, which can speed up the process of identifying problems and therefore reduce the costs associated with the development of the project. Moreover, the teams whose members are centralized in one place benefit from a need for less planning compared to distributed and international teams, a factor also lowering the overall cost of development (Kisielnicki & Misiak, 2017).

Another of the big differences between these three types of teams is in the way to increase productivity. In a local team, it is possible to communicate directly face-to-face, which can reduce problems more quickly and allow a less formal and therefore faster conversation. Aside, international teams can take advantage of being in different time zones to increase the total time worked on the project in a day.

2.14.2. The Advantages of International Teams

For a company as for a team, having a presence abroad allows enjoying many advantages of which we will see some of the many examples in this chapter. First, when a company opens a branch in a foreign country, it increases the number of potential clients with whom she can work. Indeed, unless the geographically distant company offers a unique product, prices much more competitive, or other significant advantages, working with such a company does not represent any advantage and contains many more risks than during work with a local company. Moreover, the opening of a branch abroad offers the possibility of employing local people. The company will then benefit from new job opportunities for new talents who will know the local market and therefore produce suitable products to target country customers and their culture (Andrei, Casu-Pop, Gheorghe, & Boianuiu, 2019). This adaptation to the local market is a key element of the success of a business abroad. To exemplify the need for this adaptation, we can take the case of eBay and its failed attempt to enter the Japanese market. After successfully growing in the United States, eBay decided to go international in many countries, including Japan. At that time, eBay was competing with Yahoo! Japan and their new service Yahoo! Auction.

These two products offered a broadly similar service, namely an auction system on various products. The significant difference between eBay and Yahoo! Japan which is, as its name suggests, a branch of Yahoo! in Japan, is that the latter knew this market perfectly as well as the preferences and habits of its customers. Despite all the means deployed by eBay and its advertising campaign, Yahoo! Japan won the market. It is for this reason that even today, eBay does not have a service in Japan. Then, a team may be confronted with one or more problems that it would not be able to solve. For example, if a company is mandated to create an application using modern technologies, it is possible to colla-

borate with specialists (local or international) outside the company, which would turn a team that was initially local into a distributed team or even international. Moreover, if the addition of external specialists is not enough, it is possible to completely outsource the work to another company.

According to a report by Forester, 26% of the developers questioned answered that their companies usually or all the time outsourced their application maintenance tasks as well as those of user experience design to improve their efficiency as well as only to reduce their costs. Finally, it has been proven time and time again that teams whose members were varied, especially in terms of gender, culture, and experience were more efficient, more focused on customer satisfaction, generally more satisfied at work, and made more innovative decisions and generally made decisions that turned out to be better compared to teams whose members were more similar (Kisielnicki & Misiak, 2017). The positive effects of a diverse team have been identified and proven in numerous surveys and reports, including that carried out by McKinsey & Company, a consulting firm for general management, which won first place in the Vault ranking of the fifty largest firms in the world. In this report, titled “Why diversity matters,” the authors estimate that gender diversity in a company increases the likelihood of surpassing a company whose employees were all the same sex. Concerning ethnic diversity, the authors estimate that the percentage is 35% (Hijazi, Khmour, & Alarabeyyat, 2012).

2.14.3. How to Operate an International Team

International teams have additional properties and risks compared to local teams and therefore require different management. Here we will see the four areas to which special attention should be paid. Firstly, for any project requiring people to carry them out, it is necessary to be able to manage a team as well as the organization of its members in a suitable way. We will therefore see some of the factors that have an important influence on the management of human resources of an international team (Hijazi, Khmour, & Alarabeyyat, 2012). Then, during the planning phase of the project, there are also specificities to which it is important to pay particular attention. These will be discussed in the second part of this chapter. Another vital part of any project, and even more so when using agile methodologies as we saw earlier, is communication between team members. We will therefore discuss how to ensure that communication is optimal despite the distance between the limbs. Finally, to facilitate communication and collaboration between the members of the team it is necessary to use tools. They are the ones who will be the central subject at the end of this part.

2.14.4. Human Resources Management

First, it is essential for global teams that team members, especially those in leadership positions, are aware of the cultural differences between team members and know how to create a working environment in which everyone is comfortable. In addition to cultural differences, managers must be able to discern the dif-

ferent personalities of these people and take them into account when making decisions (Hijazi, Khmour, & Alarabeyyat, 2012).

Then, to simplify communication and its effectiveness, it is advisable to set up a clear hierarchical structure from the start of the project. It is beneficial to do this in all types of projects, but in the context of a project with an international dimension, a clear hierarchy makes it possible to streamline and speed up communications while reducing the probability of the occurrence of certain risks such for example the appearance of tensions within the team because of a conflict.

This brings us to a third crucial point: team dynamics. It is essential to discern the terms of communication and collaboration between team members. Although communication between members is important, the goal is a real collaboration between them and to be able to achieve this goal, it is among other things necessary that there is a prosperous climate in which everyone has the opportunity to express themselves and where, if possible, there is a certain amount of trust between members. To set up this environment, it is advisable to regroup the members of the team in the same geographical location before the start of the project and as regularly as deemed necessary.

As mentioned in the first chapter, the fact that everyone can work autonomously is particularly important when conducting a project with an international team. This autonomy is necessary because, in particular, because of the differences in time zones, it is not conceivable for teams to be in constant communication during the realization of the project. Finally, roles that share dependent tasks should most often possibly be attributed to persons working in the same workplace. For take an example, if a feature can be assigned to a single developer and only one tester, it is strongly advised to entrust the realization of this work to two people nearby. Thanks to this, communication between the two will be faster and more efficient, which will increase the overall productivity of the team.

2.14.5. Planning Management

Time zone differences have already been mentioned several times. Their management is essential when conducting a project with a team scattered around the globe. Thanks to it, it is theoretically possible to progress in the progress of a project 24 hours a day. On the other hand, with the working hours overlapping between the locations being reduced, the collaboration between the two teams will find necessarily deteriorate.

To correctly manage the time differences due to the time zones in which the different members are located, it is advisable to create schedules taking this problem into account. This can be done, for example, by providing each employee with a time conversion table or, if possible, by creating a small application displaying each member's time of day in real time. This planning management is also vital during phases requiring greater collaboration between teams. During the latter, it is necessary to provide time slots during which all

members could work at the same time. This situation appears when meetings for which the attendance of all team members is required (Hijazi, Khmour, & Alarabeyyat, 2012).

Planning must also be done to consider activities that share dependencies. For example, when developing an interface used by two teams sharing the different windows of the application, it is necessary to think about the sequence of the latter before being able to attribute them to a certain team. In addition, to facilitate work with colleagues who are geographically distant, it can be necessary to adapt the working hours of certain teams. Changes in schedules are not welcomed; therefore it is good to ensure the imperative need to implement these changes. Moreover, greater collaboration between the teams is not necessarily necessary during the duration of the project, it is best to limit the duration of these schedule changes. Similarly, momentous changes for a single team are not advised, it is better instead to change the schedules of the teams by only a few hours for which changes are necessary. To get a performing team, it is also vital to make sure not to overload the team with work, especially during unusual hours; the fact of working more does not always correspond with being more productive.

In addition to time zone management, it is necessary to plan an unobstructed vision of the project to ensure that team members clearly understand the goals as well as the needs of the project, both at the level of the client's formal requests, in terms of functionalities for example, and then unformulated requests such as non-functional qualities (QNF). QNFs are used to determine how the system is supposed to be rather than what it is supposed to do. To ensure that we provide a solution with which the customer will be satisfied, it is necessary to be extremely attentive to the QNF. These can be of diverse types. For example, there are QNFs concerning the accessibility of the system, its availability, its security, its reliability, its robustness, etc. (Hijazi, Khmour, & Alarabeyyat, 2012).

To take an example, consider the availability of the system. If during an appointment with the customer he tells us that the system must be available, it is necessary to inquire in precise and measurable terms about the meaning of an available system for the customer. These questions completely modify the structure of the system as well as the means, financial, necessary. For example, a business-critical system that absolutely must be available 24/7, such as an airline's reservation system, will require redundancy in all systems and therefore multiply the project cost. To provide a satisfactory solution to the customer, it is necessary to ensure that the QNFs are identified and implemented correctly. Although this should be done in all projects, working with an international team can pose the additional problem of interpretation. To mitigate this risk, the creation of a vision document containing all the QNFs as well as their description in precise and measurable terms as well as the communication of this document to all team members, in as many languages as possible, becomes a necessity and absolute (Rehman, Nawaz, & Abbas, 2020).

2.14.6. Communications Management

Communication between team members is one of the facets of projects international being the most problematic. Indeed, there are many complications due to the difference in standards, rules, codes as well as languages spoken between the different teams. Additionally, according to Forrester's "Best Practices: Five Strategies For Leading Diverse, Distributed Teams To Success," (Best Practices: Five Strategies to guide diverse and distributed teams to success) even if teams share a language in common, it is possible that the use of expression or even the very understanding of the semantics is different because it is influenced in part by the person's culture. For example, answering "yes" to a question may mean "Yes, I heard", "Yes, I understood" or "Yes, I agree". It is necessary therefore to be careful when communicating between the teams and try to convey the necessary messages with as little ambiguity as possible (Hijazi, Khmour, & Alarabeyyat, 2012).

Moreover, according to the same study, another example where the difference in culture can appear is during communications with older people, having a level higher in the hierarchy or of different sex. For example, some countries like India, South Korea, or Japan have adopted strict hierarchical organizations in which it is extremely frowned upon to challenge the decisions of a member higher in the hierarchy. It is therefore possible that during a video conference with one of these teams, although the answers seem to come from a consensus, they are by far not unanimous within the team (Paasivaara & Lassenius, 2016).

2.14.7. Tools

Collaboration between geographically very distant teams was initially made viable by the development of means of communication, such as the telephone, which allowed two people to communicate instantaneously despite the great distance separating them. This collaboration was then enhanced by the used Internet and the various means of communication made possible such as emails, image exchange, real-time screen sharing and audio and video communication. There are also ways to share files and calendars as well as instant messages.

Determining which tools are useful to the team depends on six factors. Their nature of interactions between team members, the need for the message to be delivered to its recipient instantly, the number of recipients of information, the cost linked to the use of the means of communication, the environment in which the tool would be installed as well as whether the tool will be used by members of the team.

The nature of communication between team members can be of three types. First, interactions can be based on communication interpersonal. In this case, an effective videoconferencing system as well as the purchase of sound capture devices could become a necessity. It is also possible that the interactions between members of a team or between different teams are based on presentations. In this case, the creation or purchase of a real-time, video, or audio-only communication system should be studied. Finally, if the interactions are based on an exchange of documents, a collaborative file creation and sharing system can

prove beneficial to overall team productivity.

The need to be able to communicate instantaneously must also be studied. Historically, being able to communicate instantly was reserved for the wealthy person, the communication costs being extremely high. Today, although connection charges exist, it has globally become significantly more accessible and therefore considerably more common for companies to connect to the telephone network or the Internet to the point that a company that does not communicate instantaneously with its geographically distant customers and potential employees would be exceedingly difficult to sustain. To select the best means of communication, another factor to consider is the number of recipients. Emails, for example, are suitable for a one-to-one conversation as well as, although they will not be the most optimal, for a one-to-many conversation. Moreover, the fact that communication is necessarily synchronous between the interlocutors must be considered. Videoconferencing will be synchronous while emails will not. The cost is also to be considered when choosing a communication tool. A free email client is installed on all devices' modern communication systems and may be sufficient depending on the needs of the company. On the other hand, for a large-scale project, it is possible to develop a substantial custom solution that would represent a project. This solution would be much more expensive but could be profitable in the long term. Finally, it is necessary to ensure that the selected tool can be integrated into the company's work environment and that the team will use the tool, under penalty of paying for a useless or unused tool (Rehman, Nawaz, & Abbas, 2020).

This study adopts a theoretical research approach to investigate the ideal characteristics and maturity level of General Managers (GMs) in large worldwide manufacturing companies. The primary method employed is a comprehensive review and analysis of existing literature, theories, models, and frameworks. A systematic search strategy was implemented to gather relevant sources from reputable databases and libraries. The collected literature was critically analyzed and synthesized to identify common themes, patterns, and gaps related to GM profiles. Analytical techniques, such as thematic analysis and conceptual mapping, were applied to organize and synthesize the information extracted from the literature. Ethical considerations were considered by ensuring proper citation and acknowledgement of sources. The limitations of this approach include the reliance on existing literature and potential biases or gaps in the available research. However, this methodology provides valuable insights into the theoretical understanding of GM characteristics and maturity levels in the context of the challenges anticipated in the coming years of the 21st century.

3. Research Methodology

This study adopts a theoretical research approach to investigate the ideal characteristics and maturity level of General Managers (GMs) in large worldwide manufacturing companies. The primary method employed is a comprehensive review and analysis of existing literature, theories, models, and frameworks. A

systematic search strategy was implemented to gather relevant sources from reputable databases and libraries. The collected literature was critically analyzed and synthesized to identify common themes, patterns, and gaps related to GM profiles. Analytical techniques, such as thematic analysis and conceptual mapping, were applied to organize and synthesize the information extracted from the literature. Ethical considerations were considered by ensuring proper citation and acknowledgement of sources. The limitations of this approach include the reliance on existing literature and potential biases or gaps in the available research. However, this methodology provides valuable insights into the theoretical understanding of GM characteristics and maturity levels in the context of the challenges anticipated in the coming years of the 21st century.

3.1. Research Design

Qualitative data analysis—the best known of which is Content Analysis – is the most widely used method for studying qualitative interviews or observations (Krippendorff, 2003). It consists of transcribing qualitative data, adopting an analysis grid, coding the information collected and processing it. The analysis describes the survey material and explores its meaning. This part deepens the main stages of Content Analysis.

3.2. Area of Study

The area of this study revolves around the ideal characteristics and maturity level of General Managers (GMs) in large worldwide manufacturing companies that enable them to effectively address the challenges anticipated in the coming years of the 21st century.

3.3. The Population of the Study

This study will be conducted under a qualitative approach, systematic bibliographic search, and content analysis. Twenty articles published between 2020 and 2021 will be selected. The results of leadership styles would be analyzed, and leaders will be labelled against them such as authoritative, autocratic, pacesetter, democratic, coaching, affiliative, etc. Research problems will be raised to guide future investigations on the subject, divided into levels of analysis (individual, group, and organizational).

Qualitative data comes in the form of texts (words, sentences, expression of language), images (collages, photos, video film) or symbolic information (gestures, tone of voice, impressions, etc.). They may correspond to a transcript of an interview, field observation notes, written documents of various kinds (stories, reports, answers to questions), images in the form of photo reports, audio or video, informal case study material, monographs, various materials (information in any form whatsoever: leaflet, advertisements, packaging) or already published texts (press articles, scientific journals, government reports, etc.). According to the objectives of the study, these data are intended, once analyzed, to

document, describe and evaluate in detail a situation, a phenomenon, or a decision, to compare, to relate and to explain the causes, to predict behaviours and factors of success and failure.

3.4. Sample and Sampling Techniques

If we now look at publications on leaders and/or managers, based on a literature review that we conducted on fourteen journals and 130 scientific articles, Here again, we can observe that there is not a shared definition of the profession of manager. we have been able to identify the fact that many articles, admittedly sometimes old for some, use a wide variety of terms to talk about the supervisory function and the job of a manager such as a leader, supervisor, supervision, manager (in Canadian literature), responsible...sometimes mentioning intermediate qualifiers, proximity without always clearly explaining the place occupied in the organization chart or the hierarchy of the organization.

3.5. Method of Data Collection

The analytical stage deepens the basic ideas (the sub-categories). It intervenes after the coding to study the associations of ideas that they contain. It resumes the examination of the data, the sentences, the parts of sentences and the ideas they evoke. He notes the convergent positions and the divergent positions, sub-categories by subcategories.

In the second phase, the synthetic stage studies the key ideas and central categories (also called concepts, variables, and constructs). It is also a process of classifying their characteristics (the components to be explained), their causes (the explanatory components), their context (the standard situational components and the time components) and the consequences that flow from them. The objective is to select the key dimensions by reducing the mass of information (the sub-categories), linking the specific to the general, merging the variables that have differences in form, organizing the basic data and breaking it down. Stay as close as possible to the words and phrases of the interviewees.

Then, the third stage is a stage of research on explanatory factors and validation of relationships. It investigates whether the different components (categories) vary in the same direction (positive relationships) or the opposite direction (negative relationships). It determines whether the influence is exerted uniquely (from one to the other) or reciprocally (from one to the other in both directions). It analyzes whether the explanatory components have the same weight (additive effect), whether they occur at the same time and are interconnected (interactive effect), whether they function as intermediaries (mediator effect) or whether they increase or decrease their role (moderator effect). If the approach is inductive, all these data are operationalized from the dimensions explored in the field.

Finally, the last stage is the stage of evaluating the key ideas and the factors that influence them. It can be conducted from the survey by operationalizing the

data using the dimensions explored (inductive method). It can be developed from the initial hypotheses (the leads evaluated and/or the research hypotheses) by confirming them or rejecting them depending on whether they approach reality on the ground (deductive method).

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

Factual interpretation is the logical continuation of content analysis (Wolcott 1994). It determines in writing what is understood from the data and what it means. She comments on the results (the point of view of the interviewees) according to the questions asked by the survey. It conducts a diagnosis of the information analyzed and classifies it by identifying the pluses and minuses, the strong points, and the weak points, and the verified or non-validated hypotheses (Buber, Gardner, & Richards, 2004). Subjective interpretation is based on the intervention of the study manager or researcher who becomes an integral part of the results in the same way as the data. Its subjectivity serves to improve the understanding of the facts and to tell “the truth.” His method proceeds in the reverse of factual interpretation. The creative interpretation assumes that the survey provides incomplete material (e.g. consumers cannot put themselves in the place of advertisers), that arbitration is necessary to translate the conclusions and that the analyst must find the keys. Subjective interpretation follows a 2-phase process, a data deconstruction phase, followed by a results reconstruction phase.

Reconstruction of the results, reasoning, and argumentation on the results once the results have been interpreted, the solutions appear with their limits and their feasibility. Several scenarios are possible. First, the situations can be clear, and all points of view can agree: the choices of the study (e.g. what the interviewees say) and the orientations of the survey (e.g. its objectives). The conclusion in this context is obvious since everyone agrees on their acceptance. Sometimes the information collected (e.g. the point of view of the survey) is in contradiction with the hypotheses of the study (e.g. the will of the company, or the verification of the research hypotheses). The study can then recommend refuting the hypotheses or adapting them to different facets of reality (e.g. reusing the results for specific cases or segmenting respondents and targets).

3.7. Ethical Consideration

Retrospective studies concern any study for which the data analyzed is already available at the time of approval by the ethics committee. These are analyses of the research records. In this case, no other data is acquired prospectively. This type of study does not require insurance and if the consent of the participant whose data is being processed is too difficult to obtain, an exception to the obligation to obtain consent may be granted by the ethics committee.

4. Discussion and Analysis

In the previous chapters, we have covered the topics of introduction, literature

review and research methodologies in an isolated and highly theoretical way. In this chapter, we are going to combine all of them and discuss the different challenges posed by the work environment to general managers and how it is possible to encounter these challenges.

4.1. 21st-Century Challenges and Dynamics of Work for General Managers

According to Shankarmani, Pawar, Mantha, and Babu (2012), the following major challenges are being faced by general managers and their counter strategies help them to overcome them.

4.2. Pressure on the Team

When managing a team, there are numerous sources of pressure that must be identified and monitored throughout the project to maintain efficient teamwork. The pressure resulting from the choice of methodology, although it may initially appear negligible, is a major element to consider, especially during the project's initial phases and development. As previously mentioned, waterfall methodologies required significant supervision from the hierarchical superiors of the employees involved in the application. The superiors could exercise their power to remonstrate with the employees, exerting external pressure on the team. It is important to note that the hierarchical superior is not considered equal to the employees in purely hierarchical terms.

Agile methodologies, in addition to the novelties observed previously, have altered how pressure is exerted on employees. In agile methodologies, supervision is less intense. This, combined with the short iteration time, necessitates each member's ability to work autonomously. As discussed earlier, iteration durations are fixed, and tasks are selected to efficiently utilize the available time. These tasks are estimated in terms of the time required to complete them by various experts who agree on the estimates. In most cases, non-completion or incomplete fulfillment of a task implies failure on the part of the person responsible. In the case of agile methodologies, pressure is exerted by peers rather than the hierarchy.

This distinction, although seemingly subtle in some cases, can be amplified in certain cultures. Collectivist societies, exemplified by Japan, Korea, and China, place emphasis on collective effort and group belonging. Conversely, more individualistic countries such as Canada, Western Europe, and the United States of America prioritize personal achievement. Consequently, agile methodologies, while more effective when applied to teams in collectivist cultures, may generate more pressure compared to traditional methodologies

4.3. The Risks of Agile and Traditional Methodologies

According to the CHAOS report, a survey conducted annually by the Standish Group, in 1995 only 16% of IT projects were successful while almost double (31%) were cancelled and more than half (53%) were called into question, for

example, due to a significant delay or a greater than expected cost. At that time, the Waterfall methodology, formally described for the first time in the seventies by Winston W. Royce, was one of the only and the main ones to be used for the development of computer projects. Initially used in construction and product manufacturing, it became clear that the Waterfall methodology was not suitable for all types of projects. Thus, the traditional iterative and agile models were designed to increase the percentage of successful projects.

The CHAOS report conducted in 2015 shows a significant improvement. Twenty-nine percent of projects are completed on time, in hours, and with a satisfactory result while only 19% are completely cancelled. The percentage of projects questioned remains the same at 52%. This improvement is more impressive if we compare the projects conducted using an agile methodology with those conducted with the Waterfall method. Thus, of all projects combined, with the use of an agile methodology, 39% are successful (compared to 11% using the Waterfall methodology), 52% are called into question (compared to 60%) and 9% are cancelled (Boehm & Turner, 2003). Nevertheless, it would be wrong to think that the use of agile methodology should be systematic. As mentioned earlier, their use induces higher costs and requires greater customer involvement as well as longer total development times (Johnson, 2018).

4.4. The Importance of Video in Communications

Interpersonal communication is an exchange of information during which each of the people involved is both a sender and a receiver. This exchange can be verbal, non-verbal and can be influenced by the environment in which it takes place. According to Professor Albert Mehrabian who published two studies in 1967, during the expression of feelings or states of mind, only 7% of communication is verbal. The latter represents the words and their use to convey the information to the person with whom you are communicating. On the other hand, the intonation of the voice, the rate of speech as well as the sound level with which a person expresses himself are examples of the part of communication called a voice. The latter is responsible for 38% of all communication between two people. Finally, the remaining 55% are visual. For example, body language and facial expressions are examples of the visual part of communication. These figures, although criticized because of certain environmental parameters of the experiment, show all the same the certain importance of vocal and non-verbal communication. Therefore, and even more in an intercultural context in which, as we have already seen, communication is made more complicated, we can notice the importance of video when communicating between people. Videoconferencing should therefore be favoured as much as possible over audio-only communication to minimize the risk of misunderstanding and to improve communication in general.

Economic, political, technological, and social transformations increasingly lead companies to improve their planning and management processes at the

current juncture. These changes ended up becoming part of the routine of companies, and, therefore, changing and adapting will be a constant. Therefore, a modern organization and competitive must have a daring profile and be willing to surprise the market with innovation. In this context, administrators strive to support business activities through strategic planning, which seeks to meet the needs of organizations for an uncertain future, allowing them to effectively face the challenges of this globalized economy we live in today.

Planning is important because it contributes to the success of the business and provides some control over the future, while leadership, most of the time, makes improvements in productivity, quality, and results. Planning and leadership effectively have the purpose of providing the company with an analysis of its environment, allowing the knowledge of its opportunities and threats, its strengths and weaknesses and the fulfilment of its mission, thus establishing the course in which it must follow.

As the business scenario is constantly changing, due to the fluctuation of globalized economies, the business strategies outlined during this planning must consider this dynamism. When small and medium-sized companies are observed, the belief is that in these types of organizations, it is not necessary to insert a planning strategic. Usually, the entrepreneurs that make up this category direct their strategies to the tasks in the short term, leaving aside the medium and long term. Thus, this research aims to identify the importance of leadership influence for small and medium-sized companies to achieve competitiveness in the market, seeking ways to develop and implement a strategic plan, understanding which factors influence such planning and make companies obtain a better positioning not market.

4.5. Strategic Planning

Nowadays, small and medium-sized companies represent most companies and account for a good part of the economy and job vacancies in the country. In a market with the diversification of companies, one can verify an extremely competitive environment, in which only companies survive better structured and prepared. According to [Silva et al. \(2020\)](#): Strategic Planning can be defined as a management process aimed at creating the adequacy of the company's objectives and resources for changes in market opportunities. Strategic planning directs the company's actions in search of results, profits, growth, and development that ensure its success.

On the other hand, part of these companies closes their doors, for not being able to compete with the competition, nor to stabilize in this competitive scenario and mutant due to lack of planning. As a result, companies are increasingly in need of subsidies and tools that help them, not only to survive but that make it possible to place them in a prominent position against competitors. Among the most used tools, strategic planning stands out, and for its implementation efficient and strategic leadership is essential. For [Chiavenato \(2004: p. 280\)](#), "Stra-

tegic leadership is fundamental in defining the strategic intent, the mission organization and the organization's vision of the future". It is through strategic planning that the manager and his team define the objectives that will settle the organization, and with that, take the company to a competitive level. According to [Chiavenato \(2004: p. 25\)](#), "It is the strategic planning process that will lead them in the development and formulation of strategies that ensure their evolution continuous and sustainable". As for [Pereira \(2011: p. 40\)](#): Strategic planning is a process that consists of the systematic analysis of the organization's strengths (competencies) and weaknesses (incompetence), and the opportunities and threats of the external environment, to formulate strategies and strategic actions to increase competitiveness and its level of resolution.

According to [Andion and Fava \(2002: p. 27\)](#), "The purpose of planning is to provide managers and their teams a tool that provides them with information to make decisions decision, helping them to act proactively, anticipating changes that occur in the market in which they operate". [Mcgee and Prusak \(1994: p. 9\)](#) "Business strategy can be treated as a problem that is divided into three parts. Companies need to develop strategies, translate them into daily activities and ensure constant and effective integration between the definition and action." Good organizational management in small businesses is a determining factor for their survival and the planning strategy is a fundamental management tool for the success of the organization, and that can be implemented simply. The owners usually manage small and medium-sized companies themselves, where only they make all the decisions without even exchanging ideas with the team. It is a way of working that means that many businesses do not evolve or remain in the Marketplace. It is inferred, therefore, that many managers have no business knowledge and continue to administer as in the last century, in an antiquated and patriarchal way.

Historical factors of relevant impact are still vigorously found in the way of managing people in organizational life. The influence of the traditional leadership model spanned centuries and culminated in the current difficulty of developing both the autonomy of worker thinking and action and the resistant and defensive behaviours of a good portion of leaders. According to [Monteiro and Barbosa \(2011: p. 47\)](#), the lack of preparation of managers responsible for the administration of small businesses means that they are not taken decisions in a tangible way, but by the knowledge acquired in the experience and observation of the owner over time. "Thus, inadequate information will lead to conclusions mistakes and, consequently, generating losses that exclude companies from the market." As for [Souza and Qualharini \(2007: p. 9\)](#): "The vast majority of Small businesses tend to ignore the need and benefits of supporting their processes decision-makers in support of Strategic Planning essentially because they believe they are incapable of to absorb more of this activity".

4.6. Leadership

Small and medium-sized enterprises are of great importance to the country's

economy, because they are responsible for a good part of the production and employment generation, in this way, are deserving special consideration and attention on the part of governments, the economy, businesses and also from scholars of researchers on the subject for having characteristics different from those of large companies, this segment faces difficulties and challenges specific. The way of managing companies has undergone major changes in recent times. Centralized and one-way management made room for management carried out in partnership. In this change, several positions and functions emerged whose main objective is to contribute assertively towards this new management model. According to Hunter (2004: p. 28), “leadership is the ability to influence people to work enthusiastically towards achieving objectives identified as being for the common good”.

The need to create and offer new products and services causes changes that end up demanding new ways of working, new businesses, new skills, and a new vision of leadership. As a result, the way to manage companies has undergone significant changes in recent times, what used to be centralized management, now it is open to a more participative management. In the words of Asensi (2014: p. 52), “The greater your ability to identify changes and anticipate them, the more likely you are to efficiently establish adaptation to the new social, political, economic, etc. reality”. Anyone who remains stagnant in conformism providing services and products that are not sensitive to change is doomed to failure. Never has so much attention been paid to the work of leaders as today, and this is owing, in large part, to a better knowledge of the importance of its function both within and outside the organization. A leader, in addition to promoting the company’s objectives and goals and its continuous evolution, needs to be deeply committed to driving the development of the people who are part of your team.

Leaders have fundamental importance in the conduction of the implementation of strategic planning, especially concerning influencing and motivating collaborators. Therefore, they must leave their rooms and be together with their teams to achieve the objectives established in the strategic planning. During this process, various forms and models of leadership emerged, some of them more participatory, and others only evolved a little, however, what we can see is that the leadership theme left its comfort zone where the concept was “I command, and you obey” for a broader discussion. Marques (2018) cites some leadership models that are currently being applied:

- 1) Autocratic Leadership (Focus on the Boss): In this style, the leader is the focus of all attention and choices. As a result, authority is centralized, and the lead is given extraordinarily little opportunity to contribute. With the traits of a boss, this manager gives his staff short leashes, passionately demands results, presses, ignores their recommendations and forbids them from interfering with or objecting to their behavior.

- 2) Democratic Leader (concentration on the leader and the Team): This Leader takes a different path than the previous one since it manages democrati-

cally, including its followers in choices and requiring them to actively contribute to the development of solutions and outcomes.

3) The Liberal Leader (Team Focus): Liberal leadership is the absolute opposite of autocratic since it upholds the team's complete independence and lets it choose on its own what the best methods and solutions are for solving the organization's challenges.

4) Situational Leader (Focus on Situations and Professional Maturity Level): This leadership style is used depending on both the situations that are given to the organisations and the professional maturity level of the company's employees.

5) Leader Coach (People and Results Focus): More than anybody, a leader with coaching abilities understands that people make up companies. Contrary to widespread belief, its primary goal is to discover, develop, and grow your team of experts following their competencies rather than just achieving increased outcomes for the organisations.

In addition to these leadership models, we can cite other concepts that have been presented, among them, according to Coimbra (2008), "Leader of the Rear, reserved, he remains in the background, allowing his most skilled collaborators to take the lead, being decisively accompanied by the leader without realizing that, at the all along the way are being led from the rear." For Guimaraes (2018), a new model for modern times is "Positive Leadership, Being a positive leader means cultivating a positive climate, developing relationships positively, maintaining positive communication and, finally, creating in each of the subordinates a perception of a positive sense and meaning of their work". In this sense "a leader transmits positivity, even in not so favourable situations, encouraging the team to move forward. He is always attentive to the way he treats people that surround you".

For the entire organization to be prosperous and obtain the desired results, it is necessary to rely on efficient leadership that serves as an inspiration for the entire team, transforming the way each employee develops their tasks and achieves goals as one all. According to Maxwell (2011), "Good leaders take others to the top with them. Promoting the rise of others is a fundamental requirement for effective leadership." For the company to have results, it is necessary first that strategic planning has effective strategic leadership. In this way, your implementation and execution will be done exceptionally. Furthermore, its leadership must first everything to have a "vision of the future" and know that this domain is essential for the performance of the company.

Strategic leadership means the ability to anticipate, envision and maintain flexibility, and knowing how to delegate powers to create strategic changes whenever necessary. Strategic leadership implies managing the organization's resources through people, managing the entire organization and not just a functional unit, and dealing with the increasingly rapid and profound change that characterizes the current competitive landscape. With so many difficulties, pressures, challenges, and market competitiveness, for a suitable number of manag-

ers is still a challenge to think of a more humanized leadership model and participatory and that is not only focused on achieving objectives and goals.

In the current scenario, with continuous changes, the ways of leading are also in constant evolution and one of the philosophies followed is that of Welch, which emphasizes that any person can become a leader if he is motivated and stimulated. With this, the small and medium-sized business owners, most of the time centralizers, could benefit from this philosophy and evolve as managers. From your small team, may arise a great leader. This research reflects on the role of the top manager in the implementation of strategies.

The selection of an approach to strategy implementation and the evaluation of results and vertical integration are crucial aspects. Of course, we are in a society dominated by organizations, large or small, for-profit, or not, in which people work together to achieve goals that would otherwise be impossible to achieve if people worked in isolation. Among these organizations, the company is, without doubt, one of the most important and with the greatest percussions in our lives. However, not all business initiatives succeed.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In this top manager's approach to the implementation of strategies, two aspects stand out that deserve to be highlighted: the first is that the future of organizations is influenced by the strategy and the second is that the processes of defining objectives, means and ways to achieve them, as well as their implementation in practice, cannot be disconnected, rather, they should be thought of as a set of integrated and coherent processes. The study conducted by Kaplan and Norton, in 2006, made it possible to conclude that companies have management systems capable of integrating strategic planning and operational execution, which implies a review, modification and coordination of existing processes in organizations.

5.1. Policy Suggestions and Implications

A high-level management role involves the ability to know, develop alternatives and respond to demands, needs and community support—public and clientele (strategy). Acting according to steps of a calculated rational action (rationality administrative); Constantly reactivating and rebuilding the idea of mission and objectives commonalities, leading people to the desired cooperative action (leadership and interpersonal), making decisions, interacting with groups and individuals, solving problems and conflicts as they arise (organizational decision-making). The importance of knowledge on the part of the leader of the formal and predictable dimensions of the process of organizational decision-making, focusing on the forms of division and specialization of work, as well as how to distribute power and authority to better utilize available resources; The way to capture, process and analyze external and internal information to better act in the policy formulation, organizational strategies and problem-solving; at alternatives for defining interdependent sequential processes that lead to the achievement

of results, in order to act in coordination and control; the behavioral forms human beings—individual and group—that establish themselves in a work organization, to knowing which managerial actions produce more adequate behavioral responses (Chandler, 1998).

The knowledge of the informal dimension of the organizational environment is also a condition for Effective leaders can: to know the human and organizational limits of rationality administrative to know how to consider them in decision-making; learn to evaluate and act based on ambiguous, imprecise and poorly analyzed information, in order to better face the risks and uncertainties inherent to organizational planning; acquire great capacity anticipation to the non-routine, to maintain the coherence of organizational action in the occurrence of emergencies and unforeseen events; continuously develop skills interpersonal skills to ensure greater efficiency, loyalty and human satisfaction at work, achieving a better balance in the individual contribution/reward system. To define the role of the administrator, we can make an analogy to the role of the general practitioner. This is the role of the administrator as general manager: Identify symptoms in any situation; diagnose the problem or the cause of the problem.

Be prepared to allow receivers to adopt the final strategy (the strategy adopted by an individual may more easily be called by him his strategy. The property is equivalent to internalization, that is, it is self-sufficient); be prepared to accept a less-than-optimal strategy to accomplish something, rather than anything. Senior managers typically think that managers of Intermediate levels: Ignore or passively resist new initiatives from the high administration; They value diversity and working in multicultural teams as a basic forum within which they realize their personal, professional and organizational objectives; flow with change as an opportunity and feel comfortable with surprises and ambiguities; seek continually be open to themselves and others, rethinking limits, finding new meanings and changing its direction and conduct. Personal characteristics are associated with mentalities, showing how one influences the other and vice versa: Knowledge—needs to be broad and deep, covering technical and business aspects and contributing to effectively managing the competitive process.

5.2. Selection of an Approach for Implementation

One of the most important moments of the whole planning process is the implementation of the strategy, as it is at this stage that planning will take place. Studies Recent studies suggest that only 10% of formulated strategies are implemented. Managers seek to solve this problem by expanding control, seeking to manage the organizational culture, or even putting the blame on the performers, claiming that they are unable to put into practice what has been formulated. However, the real problem may be beyond: the separation between formulation and implementation, in the dissociation between thinking and acting. For a long time understood as a top-down process, formally defined by the top management, and passed on to the other levels, planning is seen and practiced today, in

many companies, as a continuous process of reflection on where you want to go (goals) and how to get there (strategy). In such cases, planning is no longer an exclusive function of a department of the company, becoming an assignment of all levels (strategic, tactical, and operational). On the other hand, the distance between these levels also decreases, that is, the formulation and implementation of the strategy becomes increasingly interdependent.

Currently, it is difficult for formulation to occur completely decoupled from implementation. Many times, it is in the very development of the company's management that managers and their teams define and implement strategies, seeking to learn from the mistakes made. The day-to-day business planning is also a learning process continuous process, where formulation and implementation become indistinguishable. In that regard, it seems fundamental that the manager can deal with this "unpredictable" side of the planning process, being flexible and able to carry out the necessary course changes to the implementation of the strategy. Thus, it is important to consider that strategies can emerge from most strangers and people you did not expect. The role of leadership, according to this conception, is not just about preconceived strategies, but about managing the learning process strategy, whereby new strategies can emerge. Planning is today more than ever necessary for the management of the company. However, to put it into practice effectively, the manager must know well each of its elements, its functions, and its limits. You must know how to use your instruments well and be flexible enough to realize that planning is not always the opposite of doing.

5.3. Evaluation of Results

The current thinking of most executives—those who wield great power in decision-making in companies—does not put aside the past. That is the attentive look at experiences that over time have been sources of transformation both positively and negatively, the impacts and consequences of changes in the various scenarios economic, political, and social where companies are inserted are still considered by managers of many institutions as a rich source of information and comparisons with the current scenery. Such information is also especially useful material, becoming, in a way, a tool for the unfolding of actions that will guide the creation of the scope of company strategies, when we started talking about strategic planning and more precisely the formulation of the strategy. Strategically bringing together key people around a table in a closed room to thoroughly discuss, plan and raise all this information is an activity that, despite being tiring and exhausting, is essential to chart new directions considering the new challenges that permeate the field of ideas.

However, all this philosophy, all this outcropping of theory placed at the service of a good greater than the company's success, guaranteeing the return to stakeholders and other investments, can cause major problems when discussing only strategic planning and forgetting about implementation processes. Some

studies indicate that the percentage of companies that define their strategies and elaborate the planning to reach their macro environment has been growing continuously. On the other hand, when it comes to implementation, the scenario does not seem so pleasant how much should it be? Implementing the strategy then becomes a nightmare for large corporations in the constant search for success or even to maintain their status, in which they are faced with the competitiveness of the market.

5.4. Vertical Integration

In microeconomics or strategic management, vertical integration is a conception of business organization and control. Vertically integrated companies are united through a hierarchy and share a common owner. Typically, each member of the hierarchy produces a different product, and the combined products satisfy a need. At the production of a particular product, vertical integration occurs when a company, starts to control upstream or downstream operations. For example, when a company distribution starts producing the products it sells, it vertically integrates operations upstream. Vertical integration can occur through a merger or acquisition. The purpose of vertical integration is strategic and can be justified for several reasons: synergies, control of distribution chains or proximity to the market.

5.5. Types of Varieties

- Upstream vertical integration (backwards or eastward)—The company assembles (or acquires) subsidiaries that produce components (inputs) of its products. For example, an automobile company may also own a tire factory, glass, or metal. The control of these suppliers intends to create a stable supply of the components and ensure consistent quality of the final product.
- Downstream vertical integration (forward or westward)—The company assembles (or acquires) subsidiaries that distribute or sell products to consumers or that incorporate into their production process. For example, The French company BRVP, a producer of software, bought the company MediaGold (today Avanquest), a company dedicated to the retail resale of independent software brands. Another example: is a company film production company that buys a company that operates movie theatre chains.

5.6. Leadership and Strategy

Although the company may have a life of its own, its current health and what it will be in the future depend on the individuals who generate its activities, especially managers since they are the ones who coordinate, evaluate and plan both the organization's objectives, as the work of other people in the organization at the most varied levels (Chandler, 1998). However, knowing how to lead people, and influencing them to give their best to the organization is not something easy to achieve. This will depend on certain characteristics of visible leadership spirit,

but not all people or managers have, although they can be developed over time.

And yet, with so many forces working against the exercise of choices and excluding options in organizations, the existence of an intellectual framework to guide the strategic process is an essential counterweight, requiring strong leaders willing to make choices (Porter, 1999). Thus, the strategic leader must assume the vanguard position influencing people to make decisions that help organizations, personally guiding changes and communicating their reasons to ensure the future viability of the organization (Rowe, 2002). Regarding the organization's strategic changes, that is, those changes that impact the organization and support the achievement of long-term goals, the presence of the leader will be even more important, and can make all the difference. This is because in an environment of uncertainty such as when strategic changes occur, its process and content cannot be explained only by the mutations that occur in the environment, but by the association between external environmental pressure and concomitant internal change, which implies a process of ideological and political change that can be driven by the leadership present in the organization (Pettigrew, 1987).

The same is reinforced when the author also adds that an important attribute of the leader's action in strategic change is the need to modify the structural context in which strategic changes occur, generating permanent and temporary changes, and motivating the energy and commitment of those involved working groups. Because of the above, one can see the relevance that the figure of the leader has, which is a factor capable of making all the difference to the organization's strategy, whether for its formulation and practice or the needs of changes, and subsequent success of the strategy.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

- Andion, M. C., & Fava, R. (2002). Strategic Planning. *Business Management Collection*, 2, 27-38.
- Andrei, B.-A., Casu-Pop, A.-C., Gheorghe, S.-C., & Boianuiu, C.-A. (2019). A Study on Using Waterfall and Agile Methods in Software Project Management. *Journal of Information Systems & Operations Management*, 125-135.
- Asensi, P. (2014). *Keep Calm and ... Lead!* Asensi Books.
- Boehm, B., & Turner, R. (2003). Using Risk to Balance Agile and Plan-Driven Methods. *Computer*, 36, 57-66. <https://doi.org/10.1109/MC.2003.1204376>
- Buber, R., Gadner, J., & Richards, L. (2004). *Applying Qualitative Methods to Marketing Management Research*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chandler, A. D. (1998). Introduction to Strategy and Structure. In *Essays for a Historical Theory of Big Business* (pp. 119-140). Fundação Getúlio Vargas.
- Chiavenato, I. (2004). *People Management*. Elsevier.

- Coimbra, P. (2008). *New Leadership Models* (p. 501). Management Network.
- Elbanna, A., & Sarker, S. (2015). Risks of Agile Software Development: Learning from Adopters. *IEEE Software*, *33*, 72-79. <https://doi.org/10.1109/MS.2015.150>
- Guimaraes, G. (2018). *Positive Leadership: A New Leadership Model for These New Times*.
- Hambrick, D., & Pettigrew, A. (2001). Upper Echelons: Donald Hambrick on Executives and Strategy. *Academy of Management Executive*, *15*, 36-44. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AME.2001.26205859>
- Hamel, G. (1996). Strategy as Revolution. *Harvard Business Review*, July-August.
- Hijazi, H., Khmour, T., & Alarabeyyat, A. (2012). A Review of Risk Management in Different Software Development Methodologies. *International Journal of Computer Applications*, *45*, 8-12.
- Hunter, J. C. (2004). *The Monk and the Executive: A Story of the Essence of Leadership*. Sextant.
- Johnson, J. (2018). *CHAOS Report: Decision Latency Theory: It Is All about the Interval*. Lulu.com.
- Kisielnicki, J., & Misiak, A. M. (2017). Effectiveness of Agile Compared to Waterfall Implementation Methods in IT Projects: Analysis Based on Business Intelligence Projects. *Foundations of Management*, *9*, 273-286. <https://doi.org/10.1515/fman-2017-0021>
- Krippendorff, K. (2003). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology* (2nd ed., 440 p.). Sage Publications.
- Marques, R. (2018). *Types of Leadership: Learn about Some Models*.
- Maxwell, C. (2011). *The Golden Book of Leadership: Today's Greatest Leader Coach Presents the Great Leadership Lessons He Has Learned from Life* (2nd ed.). Thomas Nelson Brazil.
- McGee, J., & Prusak, L. (1994). *Strategic Information Management: Increase Your Company's Competitiveness and Efficiency by Using Information as a Strategic Tool*. Campus.
- Mintzberg, H. (1998). Strategy-Making in Three Modes. *California Management Review*, *16*, 44-53. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41164491>
- Monteiro, M., & Barbosa, D. (2011). Corporate Controller: Economic Management for Micro and Small Companies. *Micro and Small Business Magazine, Campo Limpo Paulista*, *5*, 38-59.
- Paasivaara, M., & Lassenius, C. (2016). Scaling Scrum in a Large Globally Distributed Organization: A Case Study. In *2016 IEEE 11th International Conference on Global Software Engineering (ICGSE)* (pp. 74-83). IEEE. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICGSE.2016.34>
- Pereira, M. F. (2011). The Influence of Leadership, Culture, Structure, and Organizational Communication in the Implementation Process of Strategic Planning. *Cadernos EBAPE.BR*, *9*, 1045-1066.
- Pettigrew, A. M. (1987). Context and Action in Transformation of the Firm. *Journal of Management Studies*, *24*, 649-670. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.1987.tb00467.x>
- Porter, M. E. (1999). *Competition: Essential Competitive Strategies* (14th ed.). Elsevier.
- Rehman, A. U., Nawaz, A., & Abbas, M. (2020). *Role of Project Management in Virtual Teams Success*.
- Robbins, S. P. (2009). *Foundations of Organizational Behavior* (8th ed.). Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Rowe, W. G. (2002). Strategic Leadership and Value Creation. *Journal of Business Ad-*

ministration, 42.

- Shankarmani, R., Pawar, R., Mantha, S. S., & Babu, V. (2012). Agile Methodology Adoption: Benefits and Constraints. *International Journal of Computer Applications*, 58, 31-37. <https://doi.org/10.5120/9361-3698>
- Silva, M. E., Sousa-Filho, J. M. D., Yamim, A. P., & Diógenes, A. P. (2020). Exploring Nuances of Green Skepticism in Different Economies. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 38, 449-463. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-10-2018-0435>
- Souza, W., & Qualharini, E. (2007). Strategic Planning in Micro and Small Companies. In *III Workshop Integrated Management: Risks and Challenges*. Senac University Center.
- Van Casteren, W. (2017). *The Waterfall Model and the Agile Methodologies: A Comparison by Project Characteristics*.
- Whittington, R. (2006). Strategy after Modernism: Recovering the Practice. *RAE—Journal of Business Administration*, 44, 44-53.
- Wolcott, H. F. (1994). *Transforming Qualitative Data: Description, Analysis, and Interpretation*. Sage.