



e-Leadership skills: Spain's route to successful e-leadership

The skills needed for rapid growth of SMEs and start-ups: a view from Spain

Madrid 27 April 2015 At the successful European Commission event 'Are you leading us into the Digital Economy? The skills needed for rapid growth of SMEs and start-ups' on 27 April 2015 at the IE Business School in Madrid it was underlined that "e-Leadership is of crucial importance for companies – especially SMEs and start-ups - and industry to excel in their business operation. For effective e-leadership, the skills required are seen as those which enable people with very strong ICT skills to lead qualified staff from ICT and other disciplines towards identifying and designing business models and exploiting key innovation opportunities." Experts pointed to the focus on e-Leadership to address this and that a company's success is defined as making best use of developments in ICT and delivering value to their organisations. Demand is growing throughout European industry to improve the quality of e-leadership, covering organisation leadership in ICT innovation to deliver business value.

The European Commission started with an e-leadership initiative on 2103. With a further initiative on 'e-leadership Skills for SMEs' which started in 2014 the Commission is now targeting SMEs and start-ups.

At the event which was co-organised by Empirica, IE Business School, Andalucía Emprende, Amvos Consulting, Bilbao Ekintza – Bilbao Council, Google Spain, Center for Innovation in the Public Sector IE-PwC , IE International Centre for Entrepreneurial Management, Ministry of Finance and Public Administration (Spain), Spanish Council of Deans of Informatics (CODDII), Universitat Politècnica de València, Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness, SERMAS (Servicio Madrileño de Salud) – Community of Madrid, Techedge, Ticketbis, National University of Distance Education (UNED) and Wayra Madrid, Spanish experts sent clear signals that there is a growing and critical lack of e-leaders in the economy, that is, individuals who are at the same time ICT savvy, business savvy and have the ability and skills to lead multi-disciplinary teams across functional and geographical boundaries.

Public sector examples on activities supporting e-skills and e-leadership skills development as well as digital entrepreneurship were presented. SMEs and start-ups presented their cases and demonstrated how the availability of the right skills – e-leadership-type skills – made their organisations a success in the market, while a Venture Capital management company, managing various Venture Capital funds on behalf of corporate investors put a strong emphasis on skills the teams of applicants have to come up with as one of the key investment criteria.

Universities, training and scholarship providers demonstrated how they are already today and in the future planning to develop and deliver programmes and courses to improve the quality of e-leadership, covering organisation leadership in ICT innovation to deliver business value.

The European Commission event, to which more than 100 experts registered was hosted by IE Business School. It was targeted at innovative employers especially from SMEs and start-ups, entrepreneurs, current and aspiring e-leaders, professional associations, universities and business schools as well as policy-makers interested in promoting digital innovation and developing appropriate national policies and initiatives of different type and in different policy areas.

Marco Trombetta, Vice-Dean of Research at IE Business School welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of IT and how it has changed the way we live in such a dramatic way.

In her opening presentation **Carmen Vela**, Secretary of State for Research, Development and Innovation in the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness explained that a key challenge for Spain and Europe is the growth and internationalization of their SMEs and start-ups. She referred to the European Commission Horizon 2020 programme and the support of the Ministry of Finance and the CDTI to SMEs designed to foster innovation and technological development.

In the panel discussion on e-Leadership in the Spanish Public Sector chaired by **Fernando Aparicio**, Digital Services Director at Amvos Consulting, **Eva Salcedo**, Head of Business Development, Bilbao Ekintza - Bilbao Council presented the entrepreneurial activities promoted by Bilbao Ekintza, the Economy Agency of Bilbao City Council which include internet and digital technology as one of their priorities and two initiatives with a specialization in to e-skills development. This includes the provision of coaching and training on digital entrepreneurship, offering training in areas such as technology strategy, e-commerce, and web design, among other areas and piloting a talent club ("club

del talento”), an initiative offering training in current technological trends, with the participation of APMG, which offers skill certification and members from IE, covering topics such as agile project management, Lean IT and COBIT.

Juan M. Trujillo García, Provincial Director Cordova, Andalucía Emprende presented the entrepreneurial activities promoted by the Andalucía government with initiatives strongly related to e-skills like the "Andalucía Emprende Cooperativa" portal for the development of cooperation projects of entrepreneurs.

Zaida Sampedro, General Director Health Information Systems, Community of Madrid introduced SERMAS (Servicio Madrileño de Salud), a network of 37 hospitals and its activities around electronic prescription which put serious demand on change management and related IT service development for which skills of the type of e-leadership skills are required.

Manuel Ruiz del Corral, Vocal Adviser, Ministry of Finance and Public Administration centered his talk on “Emprende en 3” (Embark in 3), the Spanish government initiative for making the creation of new enterprises more agile and simple and currently is operating in more than 1000 municipalities. It has been granted a “European Enterprise Promotion Award” in the category ‘Improving the business environment’.

In the session on ‘Innovation in the Spanish Public Sector’ **Isabel Linares**, Directora del Centro de Innovación del Sector Público PwC-IE, IE Business School talked about innovation in the public sector needed to make some of the projects and initiatives related to promoting an entrepreneurial spirit in the country a reality. She focused on CORA, the Commission to reform the Public Administrations, an initiative created in October 2012 for producing proposals in order to make Spanish Public Administrations more austere, efficient and effective. This initiative aimed at developing a paperless administration and spreading the use of ICTs to help increase competitiveness and productivity, favoring equal conditions across the country and boosting the economy and consolidating a sustainable model of economic growth. The CORA report (June 2013) produced 222 proposals concerning both the central and regional government. The proposals are grouped into four areas: 1. administrative simplification; 2. Administrative duplication, 3. Shared services; 4. Institutional rationalization. ICTs cut across all four areas and about 50% of the initiatives of CORA are ICT enabled. As a result, the CORA initiative has generated several innovative projects in the public sector, and can be seen as the base for today innovation in the Spanish public sector.

When closing the morning session, **Jordi Sevilla**, former Minister for Public Administration talked about his experience as a former Minister for Public Administration, centering his talk on a key skill for e-leaders in the public and private sectors: change management. He commented on his experience with the launch of a large digital project in the government: the Spanish digital identity card. Resistance from several parts of the government had restricted this project for several years, and required a lot of work to make the project a reality.

In the afternoon session on ‘e-Leadership for SMEs: Success Stories, Training Courses, Programmes, MOOCs’ **José Pablo de Pedro**, CEO, Techedge presented the case of his company. Training is crucial for Techedge. The organization implements policies and practices to enhance and foster e-skills and e-leadership skills. Even more, Techedge launched Realtech Institute of Knowledge (RIK) in 2011, an educational initiative that provides continuous internal training to all their consultants. Its main focus is to drive value with IT.

In the panel Discussion of training providers chaired by **Silvia Leal**, Academic Director Digital Innovation and IT Governance Executive Programme, IE Business School, **Martin Boehm**, Dean of Programs, IE Business School emphasized the importance of digital business and referred to the more than 150 sessions at IE Business School where students are involved with ICT from different perspectives and the importance of including knowledge ‘pills’ on ICT in training.

Covadonga Rodrigo Sanjuan, is Director Technology and Accessibility, UNED, the national university for distance education in Spain that provides e-learning since 2000. UNED delivers MOOCs using the concept of UNED Abierta. She presented the impact of MOOCs for the organization and the critical factors for their implementation. MOOCs require large investments but have the potential to become an innovation in training after several critical issues (including IPR) are solved..

Eduardo Vendrell Vidal, President of the Spanish Council of Deans of Informatics – CODDII and Associate Professor at Universitat Politècnica de València gave a clear message to the audience. According to him “the way to go is changing the way we teach masters degrees. We have to more strongly collaborate with industry”.

Google Activate presented by **Esperanza Ibañez Lozano**, Manager Policies and Public Affairs, Google aims to activate young professionals. They want to activate job generation through training along three strands: get trained in digital skills, entrepreneurship and get ready to find a job. This initiative was launched one year ago and it already has over 241.600 students. Training is imparted face to face as well as online via MOOCs.

In the final panel discussion on “Entrepreneurship” chaired by **Peter Bryant**, Professor of Entrepreneurship at IE Business School, **Paloma Castellanos**, Director, Wayra Madrid presented the Telefónica accelerator Wayra which is seen as a powerful instrument for innovation. Wayra started as a very ambitious project in ICT and in the meantime it can be described as a network of talent based on four main pillars:

- Funding.
- Access to the network of investors.
- Access to the partner’s network.
- Acceleration services.

Daniel Soriano, Director, International Centre for Entrepreneurial Management, IE Business School described Área 31 which is part of IE Business School and it is the entrepreneurship and innovation center carrying out different projects such as the Venture Network, Comprometi 2.0. and Passion > ie. For him a successful entrepreneur but also e-leader will have to come up with the following skills (in addition to technical and business skills) to be successful:

WHICH SKILLS ARE NEEDED?



Jorge Díaz, Vice-President of Product, Ticketbis presented the case of Ticketbis a company which was established a few years ago and since then has grown impressively. For Jorge Díaz, the key to their success is TALENT. They used to talk about a pyramid of three levels: execution level, tactical level and strategy level where the right mix of people will result in a Pyramid of TALENT to be aimed at. Depending on the phase of development of a start-up or SME this mix of skills and the pyramid will look different (see his presentation). Jorge made a clear point when he stated: “Hiring cheap is a total trap”. Companies need to be prepared for high investments in talent. CEOs need to embrace high salaries and devote 60-70% of your time looking for talented people. According to him “The greatest skill that a leader can possess is bringing people that are smarter than you”.

Organisers:



Collaborating organizations:





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Links to European initiatives and reports on e-leadership and e-skills:

- European Conference on Digital and Key Enabling Technologies Skills: <http://leadership2015.eu/conference/>
- e-Skills for Jobs 2015 high level conference under the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union: <http://eskillsforjobs.lv/>
- 7 Regional Cluster Events on 'Are you fit for the Digital Economy? Training and Education Pathways for SMEs and Start-ups' in 2015 in Berlin, Madrid, Helsinki, Lisbon, London, Paris, Prague: <http://eskills-lead.eu>
- 10 Regional Cluster Events on 'New Curricula for e-Leadership - Delivering Skills for an innovative and competitive Europe' in 2014 in Sofia, Reading, Madrid, Milan, Munich, Antwerp, Budapest, Aarhus, Paris and Wroclaw: <http://eskills-guide.eu/home>
- European e-Skills 2014 Conference: e-Leadership and ICT Professionalism: <http://eskills2014conference.eu>
- European Guidelines and Quality Labels for new Curricula Fostering e-Leadership Skills: <http://eskills-guide.eu/home/>
- e-Leadership Skills for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises: <http://eskills-lead.eu/home/>
- e-Skills: The International Dimension and the Impact of Globalisation: <http://www.eskills-international.com/index.html>
- European e-leadership skills conference 2013: <http://www.insead.edu/events/e-leadership-conference/>
- E-Skills for the 21st Century website - DG Enterprise and Industry: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/ict/e-skills/index_en.htm
- Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs website: <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/grand-coalition-digital-jobs-0>
- European e-Competence Framework (e-CF) website: <http://www.ecompetences.eu/>
- CEN Workshop on ICT Skills: <http://www.cen.eu/CEN/sectors/sectors/iss/activity/Pages/wsict-skills.aspx>
- e-Skills for Competitiveness and Innovation: Vision, Roadmap and Foresight Scenarios: <http://eskills-vision.eu/home/>
- Towards a European Quality label for ICT industry training and certification: <http://eskills-quality.eu/home/>
- E-Skills: the international dimension and the impact of globalisation: <http://www.eskills-international.com/>
- European guidelines and quality labels for Curricula for e-leadership skills: <http://eskills-guide.eu/home/>
- Monitoring and benchmarking e-skills policies and partnerships in Europe: <http://eskills-monitor2013.eu/home/>
- Fostering the ICT Profession in Europe: <http://cepis.org/index.jsp?p=827&n=940>
- Professional e-Competence in Europe: <http://cepis.org/index.jsp?p=940&n=2406>
- Monitoring e-skills demand and supply in Europe: <http://www.eskills-monitor.eu/>
- Evaluation of the Implementation of the Communication on e-Skills for the 21st Century: <http://eskills21.eu/>