



zeb

ZEB PERSPECTIVE

The middle makes the difference

Why middle management is the most underrated
success factor for change and performance

EXTRACT

partners for change

Cross-market perspective



Key findings

- 1** Middle management acts as a bridge between the levels of top management and employees. Whether strategy becomes reality depends on how sturdy that bridge is – especially in times of constant change.
- 2** Middle managers operate in a complex field of conflicting expectations. Many among them feel overwhelmed by that and seek stability in the familiar, thereby becoming administrators rather than thought leaders.
- 3** The connection between strategy and day-to-day work gets lost – when the middle layer shows signs of weakness, the entire management system collapses, and organizations become too complex and slow.
- 4** This is particularly critical for regional banks: proximity, trust and reliability are not only customer value propositions but also key elements of their employer brand and employer attractiveness.
- 5** Those who want to further develop their middle management should keep in mind that true impact can only be achieved if attitude, behavior, cooperation and tools are interlinked rather than worked on in isolation.

What's in it for you?

Middle management is the productive center of every organization – the level at which strategic goals are entwined with the reality of day-to-day work. Whether or not changes are understood, accepted and implemented hinges on that management level. In regional banks in particular, where proximity and reliability are core values, middle managers shape how these values are actually put into practice – for customers and employees alike.

At the same time, the pressure on this intermediate function is increasing: The shortage of skilled workers, extensive strategy processes, concurrent projects and limited availabilities mean that many managers increasingly have to mediate between requirements. This often leaves little room for actual leadership work. **If the level of middle management is permanently overloaded, the entire organization loses clarity, speed and the ability to convert insights into action.**

Our white paper shows:

- what successful middle management is all about.
- what happens when the pressure on the intermediate function becomes too high – using the example of regional banks.
- how to generate impact from the center.

The findings are based on **surveys and in-depth interviews with more than 100 middle managers** and provide differentiated insights into the reality, challenges and potential of this central organizational level.

**Full
version
available
in German.**



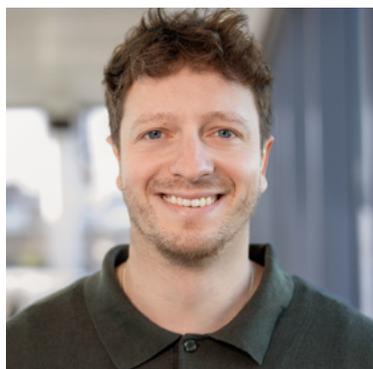
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