

SUMMARY – 8th WAVE Conference
January 31st, 2017
FER - Fédération des Entreprises Romandes, Geneva

“What is the future of jobs?
Which jobs have a future?”

Challenges and opportunities in the digital revolution

An impressive panel with six speakers was invited to share their thoughts and opinions about the risks and opportunities of the digital revolution and industry 4.0, followed by a Question and Answer session.

We were delighted to have the following speakers:

- Dr Mathias **Kaiserswerth** - Senior Consultant Headlights Group AG
- Haig Alexander **Peter** – Senior Executive Consultant, IBM Research THINKLab Zurich
- Jean-Luc **Favre** - Managing Director ABB Secheron Ltd
- Myriam **Denk** - Human Capital Lead, Deloitte
- Prof. Christian **Hildebrand** - Professor of Marketing Analytics, UNIGE
- Shanti **Flynn** – Chief Human Resources Officer, Adecco

The debate was moderated by Muriel **Gabus-Siki** – Independent Journalist.

Valentina Gizzi, President of the CWF opened this 8th Wave conference and welcomed the record number of 280 participants of which 42 men! A tremendous recognition for both our members and our sponsors, as well as for our keynote speakers who presented us their research and views on the following issues:

The digital Revolution and Industry 4.0 Digitalisation turns everything upside down

The perfect storm has arrived according to Dr Mathias Kaiserswerth. The digital revolution over the last decade has brought us significant changes in many areas as: Mobile computing, Cloud computing, Internet of things, and Social media. An amazing figure is 85% of software is developed in the cloud. Today there are more people in the world with cell phones, than people with access to running water!

This fast development causes industrial disruption and we see the arrival of companies like Airbnb, Uber or Alibaba who, via Internet, react with great speed to any customer change, while having no assets.

Cognitive computing

The era of cognitive computing, the capability to understand personal language and to learn will allow the management of information surcharge. As Haig Alexander Peter mentioned, we should focus on the ‘making’ of an Expert who understands, reasons, learns and interacts. Data-driven knowledge is highly required nowadays. In healthcare, an oncologist would need

160 hours of reading per week in order to remain updated. Only Artificial Intelligence will allow the reading and summarizing of all this information. Hence, the combination of Human and Machine gives the best cognitive knowledge. The future of technology is brain-inspired systems. We have to rethink what is possible.

Industry 4.0

Automation and Internet. Industry 4.0 is here: after mechanization, industrialization and automation, the 4th industrial revolution will make our industry 'clever' and 'connected', which will transform jobs and operations. As Jean-Luc Favre said, it affects all the elements of the value chain. Not only is it supporting the improvement of productivity and quality, it will have an impact on our daily life in many areas. Not only on manufacturing, but also on our society, jobs and value creation. As an example, he cited the project of e-buses which ABB is currently testing with the TPG (Transports Publics Genevois). Technology should help us to invent.

Implications for the workplace

How is our future workplace going to look? In a way, people are less productive than in the past: there are too many 'things', too many distractions around us. As Myriam Denk said, people will work more on project work, in different work places. Learning will be primarily done on the job. A successful workplace strategy will require multiple functions to work together: Talent, Technology, Place (home or mobile office), Space (Helpdesk, co-working, analytics).

Implications for Society / Individuals

Self-tracking and quantification are part of this evolution. However, as Prof. Christian Hildebrand confirmed, recent research has revealed the paradox that individuals are not necessarily happier when they are asked to track their activity. This raises questions for both society and the business. What will the psychological effects be? With future new business models, we will need (re)defined corporate skills and talents, and last but not least, the legal issue of data ownership.

Implications for jobs

What will the jobs look like in the future with this growing sophistication of automation? According to Shanti Flynn, 60% of young people entering the job market in 2025 will perform jobs that don't exist today! The digital revolution will create new jobs, even though robots appear, but they need to be maintained. We will all be concerned by the megatrends. People skills on all levels and for all jobs will also be important, and not only technical skills. A dermatologist should fear more for his job than a nurse, she said because image digitalization will improve the efficiency of screening skin disease, while the caring for patients will continue to require a human touch.

The main threat for women is their low appetite for technical education. Girls need to study more scientific subjects. We have to motivate (our) girls as of the age of 12 to be interested in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), if they do not want to be left out of the future of jobs.

The gender parity in participation and pay is still an issue across different industry sectors in most countries.

An animated debate between the panellists and the public was led by Muriel Gabus-Siki and highlighted some further points.

Our panellists agreed that although employees are overwhelmed with technology, millennials already see this differently.

Switzerland is still behind in the digital revolution and according to Dr Matthias Kaiserswerth, despite the fact that Switzerland is one of the countries with the highest number of computers per capita, it lacks good use of it and good IT professionals.

A general panel advice to the new generations is to always adapt and learn. Embrace the change, leverage the knowledge with the people around you and take ownership of your knowledge and future. Women must ask themselves constantly 'What can I do better?' and 'What more can I learn?'.

Matthias Kaiserswerth also insisted on the importance of getting girls involved in technical studies, even before the age of 12. In China or India, because of the need to succeed in a very competitive environment, it is normal for girls to study technology; in Switzerland and western Europe, we are probably a bit more spoiled, the same urgency for girls is not there.

It was recognised that women should pursue and persevere in this direction, even if they are not 100% sure. Studies show that men have a more "can-do" attitude and this helps them progress faster.

All agreed that legislation is still well behind, legal ownership of data needs to be discussed.

Health in the job place is very important and should not be overseen.

We need leaders who are open to change.

Closing remarks

Federica Stoppa, WAVE Project Leader, concluded the conference and thanked the panellists and the moderator with a present offered by one of our sponsors. She acknowledged the contributions of the various partners to the success of the conference. She thanked her WAVE project team for the great job they did together in organising this 8th edition. She finally thanked the audience and invited them all to join in a networking cocktail, which was as animated as the conference.

Thank you notes

We would like to thank all our individual and corporate members for their support and trust in our shared mission: "connecting and advancing women in business".

The CWF is all of us! It is what makes our network one of the highest profile and renowned platforms for professional women in the Lake Geneva Region.

Corporate Members:



WAVE Partners:



for providing various printed material.



for offering the WAVE brochure design and bags to all participants.



for offering sponsored presents to all participants.



for offering a Montblanc pen to the speakers and moderator.

Our media partner:



We look forward to seeing you at the WAVE 2018 and at any future CWF event. Please consult our activities agenda for more details on: www.cwf.ch.

On behalf of the CWF Committee 2015-2017,
Valentina Gizzi, President (president@cwf.ch)
Federica Stoppa, WAVE 2018 Project Leader