

# Question to members

## What are the skills needed to be a communications leader today?



“ In today's fast changing markets, the digital environment together with the millennials are shaping the current framework of contemporary communications. This next context requires flexibility, strategic visioning to link multiple dots, qualitative contents production, cross-mediality and quick decision-making. The way people look at the communication changes the rules, overcoming hierarchy and thus breaking some old established rituals. Most importantly, I believe communicators need to give a stronger priority to the human factor: while most of our daily interactions are driven by technology, being able to personally connect with individuals is an essential leadership skill for all of us. For the same reason, inclusiveness is key to actively listen to people's needs and build up the company reputation across numerous stakeholders who quickly change their expectations. Commitment to ethics and to sustainability are also at the core of our professional skills.”

**Marco Magli, Head of Media & External Relations, Avio Aero, GE Aviation business**



“ Leadership, for me, is all about people: empowering people through respect and trust, building strong relationships with colleagues, influencing your superiors, learning from your peers and coaching teams towards shared goals. There's a lot to balance and it is crucial to be an active listener to join up the dots. You have to prove how the right communications can help the business reach its goals and provide value for money. Getting the best out of people takes energy: the reward is people will follow and become ambassadors. The pace of change in today's media landscape is fast. It's an exciting challenge to keep up and an opportunity to try new techniques. It's crucial to have the right people around you, people with strong communications experience and a hunger to keep up so that you can spend less time managing and more time leading.”

**Angela Howarth, Head of Communications, Climate-KIC**



“ When it comes to communication, three skills are essential for me: be personal! Especially in my field of work – hospitality and tourism – the personal touch makes the difference. For business partners, colleagues and especially for our guests here in the house, who all value the direct and personal touch in corporate communications. Moreover: Be as open-minded as possible. Not only dialogues with team members or employees from different departments, but even (better: especially) opposing views help to develop new strategies and valuable communication measures, mainly in the field of intercultural communications, where an open mind and empathy are so essential. And finally: never stop measuring all communication efforts to keep an eye on your goals. Successful communication is target-oriented and high-quality communication for customers you hopefully know very well.”

**Benjamin Zwack, Communications, Hotel Elephant Brixen**