

**School of  
Management and Law**

**Ten success factors for Universities of  
Applied Sciences**

**An analysis of Management Schools**

**A study of the Departement of International Business  
(AIB)**

Christoph Ebnöther

# Management Summary

**Based on the 7 Management Schools which are part of Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS), a comparative study elaborated the critical success factors to build up study-programs, develop suitable management structures and eventually achieving recognition through international accreditations.**

Today, Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) are a well-established part of higher education in Switzerland and successfully complement and extend the dual track educational system. This study is an assessment of the development of their Management Schools.

The study analyses this evolution starting with the first Swiss Federal Law on Universities of Applied Sciences in 1995 and follows this process until the present day situation. Since 2015 when the Higher Education Act came into force, Switzerland has a higher education sector comprised of different but equivalent types of higher education institutions. In this this new competitive environment also Management Schools of UAS have to think about their strategies and position themselves accordingly.

Another challenge is to gain international recognition, which implies to obtain well renown accreditations. Since May 2015, the ZHAW School of Management and Law is the first business school of a Swiss UAS to become accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

This process of transformation of Management Schools is now well documented over this period of time and focuses on five main areas, i.e. Bachelor- and Master programs, continuing education, applied R&D, business services and staffing. The study shows how new solutions to structural problems in the management of such schools have been found and implemented. Comparing the different evolutions of those 7 Management Schools over the past 20 years, critical factors to succeed in this challenging environment have been elaborated. They have been developed in view of the experience of Management Schools but are also of relevant for other schools.

The author, Dr. Christoph Ebnöther, is Senior Lecturer for political sciences at the ZHAW School of Management and Law and *Secretary-General of the Association of Management Schools Switzerland (AMS)*.

The Center for European Business & Affairs at the ZHAW School of Management and Law is currently researching different elements of the UAS success stories in Switzerland and internationally.

For more information please contact: Christoph Ebnöther, [ebch@zhaw.ch](mailto:ebch@zhaw.ch)

*Keywords:* Management Schools, Management, Success Factors, University of Applied Sciences, Higher Education Act