CROSS GENERATION
DIGITAL LEARNING

Proposition for the manufacturing industry

SUMMARY

The project is a “Learning Journey” aimed at embedding models of thinking and dialog, iterative approaches, and participative problem-solving within the context of digitalization on a deliberately cross-generational basis at the operational levels in the company (machine, desk). To enable a culture of thinking and dialog to become firmly established, sustainable innovations are considered and employees’ knowledge is pooled in a targeted manner. The goal is to bring together new products and digital workflows to meet the customers’ needs while making the most of the company’s tradition and strengths, especially among SMEs.

CURRENT SITUATION

Digital natives and experienced professionals - digital immigrants - with extensive accumulated knowledge have different perspectives and ways of thinking. It is a major challenge to combine these two life situations within the everyday professional context of an SME in order to develop new approaches and digital products sustainably in the company in a way that is adapted to the market requirements. The pace of digitalization and the customer focus in a company must be synchronized in such a way as to preserve the company’s tradition while extending it to embrace digitalization.

SOLUTION

The learning focus is on practical experimentation and on integrating new ideas gained from design thinking, critical thinking, thinking approaches of digital pioneers, and company visits to see projects being implemented in practice. To this end, space needs to be made available for thinking and experimentation, providing a creative, practice-based and targeted foundation for open, solution-oriented dialog. This results in specific concepts for digital implementation in the company as well as action recommendations regarding existing applications. A particularly successful method for implementation in SMEs is "solution focus thinking", which takes the target as its starting point.

The Learning Journey encompasses three learning phases, and has a duration of between 9 and 12 months:

Phase 1: Reverse mentoring, in which digital natives pass on ideas to experienced employees.

Phase 2: Mentoring, in which experienced employees explore younger colleagues’ learning fields and offer them tips for their everyday professional lives.

Phases 1+2 include workshops, networking meetings and coaching sessions on the topics of partnership-based dialog, an open culture of learning and feedback, and approaches to solving problems and generating ideas.

Phase 3: Project development once collaboration and solution thinking have been firmly embedded. Tandems investigate topical issues from the companies to determine their practicability with regard to digitalization. Phase 1 is subdivided into three thinking phases: thinking “out of the box”, followed by design thinking from the customer’s perspective, then rethinking the product solutions taking the target as the starting point. Critical thinking is applied to each individual phase.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

INDUSTRIE 4.0 – FEATURES

Assessment of opportunities to transform analog processes, identification of digital process optimization from an individual customer perspective.

STANDARDIZATION APPROACHES

Learning Journey has a modular structure and individual elements can be standardized.