

# IN TIME

NEWSLETTER | ISSUE 01.2017



## SYSTEMIC PROJECTMANAGEMENT MEETS LEADERSHIP

**Successful people have one thing in common: they can shape a vision and inspire others to follow it. These days, to make that vision a reality it's no longer enough for executives to 'manage' organisations, processes and teams. It's about leadership. But what exactly is the difference?**

We're far from the first to ask the question. As long ago as 1977, the Harvard Business Review tackled it in an article entitled 'Managers and Leaders – Are They Different?' One way to approach it is by drawing comparisons. Managers are administrators;

leaders are visionaries. Management is the perfect organisation of processes; leadership inspires and motivates those under its guidance. Management operates within hierarchies while leadership is about thinking as a network.

So leaders represent creativity, innovation, meaningful action and proactive co-design. They work in and with teams, communicating at and with all levels and sharing knowledge and information. They allow people sufficient leeway, lead by trust and largely leave it to employees themselves to decide how to meet their objectives. Teams share candid feedback, have intercultural understanding and think globally. They use modern communications technology. Startups as well as companies like Apple, Google or Tesla are testament to the success of this approach, but more traditional firms such as Siemens and GE are also changing their mindset.

So what does this mean for the Schnitzer Group? Since the company was founded in 1992 we have been using "Systemic Projectmanagement" in a context of leadership, processes and structures. Employees regularly put the focus of the Group to the test by revisiting and advancing their own ideas. The most recent of these discussions took place in 2014/2015 and culminated in 'Vision 2020'. The objective? To become a 'campus organisation' – a self-learning organisation that shares knowledge on all areas of the business at home and abroad and so can put together the appropriate team for any customer requirement based on swarm intelligence. Peter Schnitzer, Founder and CEO: "We've succeeded

**Continued on page 3**



Photo: Schnitzer Group



Dear Readers,

When we launched the company in 1992 we could never have imagined the new directions that the automotive industry would take, or how rapidly. Today we provide worldwide consultancy services and automotive expertise for all kinds of applications, as well as for many customers from other industries. But throughout all these changes, people have been the focus of the Schnitzer Group's work, as indeed they are today. When it comes to processes, structures and methods, we're not in the business of optimising abstract plans on a computer: we talk to people. And that's the way we'll continue to operate going forward. Something else that we're still doing a quarter of a century on is producing our "in time" newsletter – yet another anniversary as this is the 25th issue.

Happy reading! Yours

Peter Schnitzer



## RUN THAT BY ME AGAIN: CHRISTIAN MEIER, PROBLEM-SOLVER AND PROCESS CHAMPION

When it comes to processes and process optimisation, Christian Meier is the go-to person at the Schnitzer Group. A qualified vehicle engineer, he joined the company in 2012 and is a specialist in analysing, developing and implementing agile processes. He also has a Masters in Process Management and is a member of the German Project Management Association's 'Agile Management' experts group. A lateral thinker, he likes to ponder outside the proverbial box, a trait highly appreciated by customers with complex technical challenges. And his need for agility doesn't stop when he leaves the office: he has a young daughter, is a fire-fighter and is the organiser of THE-Run, an annual charity race with 300 participants which raises money for a children's hospice.

## HERBERT HOJNICK TO LEAD LRBW WORKING GROUP



The Aerospace Supply Chain Working Group at Forum Luft- und Raumfahrt Baden-Württemberg e. V. (Forum Aerospace Baden-Württemberg e. V.) has a new chairman: Herbert Hojnick, MD of Schnitzer International Swiss GmbH. LRBW, the aerospace industry association in Germany's southwest, is the link between industry, academia, policy-makers and other stakeholders in the sector. Herbert Hojnick's understanding of supply chain requirements is second-to-none, and he will be sharing that expertise with fellow members of the working group.

## ON-SITE KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Schnitzer Group experts have run a three-day seminar at a carmaker's production site to share their practical expertise and experience in plastic injection moulding. Attendees from a variety of specialist departments gathered to learn about the basics of toolmaking, components and the associated process technology in injection moulding machines. Using the active principles of tooling and machinery, the group analysed the rheological properties of various plastics (the way in which they flow and change shape), how to design plastic components correctly, plus common moulding defects in day-to-day production and how to correct them. To round off the seminar, participants were shown a variety of demonstration materials and given a tour of the on-site manufacturing facilities.

## NEW APPS

The popular 'Week Calculator' app is now available for Android alongside the latest version 1.4.0 for iOS. 'Tool Tracker': This is a small but smart app that simplifies on-site tool status tracking. It's currently in its test phase and will be available from the App Store and Google Play by mid-2017.





# AGILITY THROUGH PROCESS

The agile company adjusts its organisational structure flexibly so as to respond quickly to market dynamics. This kind of change means recognising opportunities and exploiting them fast. But how does a company acquire that ability? Based on processes, says Christian Meier, who sees no inherent contradiction between the two.

Even in lean businesses there are plenty of hierarchical control structures that slow decision making and get in the way of clear responses to complex requirements. Such organisations have typically optimised their processes to death or subjected them to formalised standards. But these frameworks are often too rigid to accommodate a rapid response to market changes. This is where agility can help. It's not a particularly new concept – Kanban and Scrum are based on fluid structures. But there are several things to consider unless you want the use of agile methods to fall flat on its face, especially in technical businesses.

You can't roll out agility 'just like that'. Even if management often wishes otherwise, there's no one-size-fits-all method that can be adopted as is. It's much more a case of overcoming mental inertia and asking: How can I reorganise the company with my existing customers, team and trusted suppliers? Agility is something that has to be reinvented, so to speak, for each company. But in a technical operation, integrating agile processes is extremely helpful in laying the foundations.

This may sound contradictory at first, but the Schnitzer Group team's experience is that it's the key to sustainable agility. Specifically:

- Think of the company as a complete sociological system
- Encourage employees to start 'thinking for themselves' again and communicating with each other
- Develop and implement agile processes to provide metaphorical guide rails for the resulting dynamic
- Give the team as much latitude as possible without losing sight of the project objective

Technically-oriented companies are often subject to a plethora of standards and certifications required by customers and

legislators, which can hinder the development of an agile organisational structure. These additional framework conditions have to be transferred to an agile structure using agile processes and expertise.

Agile processes enable business leaders to develop specialists and encourage teamwork, to do more than mere 'work', and to focus on the customer and on adding value. The Schnitzer Group supports the development and introduction of this model, customising it for the company and building on our long-standing experience of practical project management enhanced by up-to-date agile thinking.

**For more information, visit the blog on our website [www.schnitzer-group.com](http://www.schnitzer-group.com).** 

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1:**

## SYSTEMIC PROJECTMANAGEMENT MEETS LEADERSHIP

in creating an organisation that operates based on genuine team culture, openness, trust, loyalty and togetherness. We strive for an open, liberal, trust-based management style, which means that I ask all my colleagues to show a lot of initiative and, at the same time, give them plenty of freedom to do their job." The Schnitzer

Group's experience and expertise, gleaned both internally as a multinational with more than 50 employees and externally from hundreds of customer projects, makes us an expert team when it comes to combining systemic project management with leadership. 



**Prague, Mexico City, next stop Shanghai: Schnitzer Group Trainer Reinhold Scheiffle is on the road. And he's packing 3,000 dominoes. Attendees at his workshops are using them to experience how synergies come about when we develop technical products and transfer the results.**

# 3,000 DOMINOES FOR MEXICO

New hardware and software is making vehicles smarter and smarter. In turn they're becoming safer and more comfortable to drive, and are paving the way for entirely new concepts such as autonomous driving. But how do you meet the challenge of developing a new technology with existing project teams and structures and within a short timeframe? And as if that weren't enough, how do you make sure that communication between production plants on opposite sides of the world goes to plan?

The Schnitzer Group's answer is to use best practice from IT industry integration projects combined with team-building methodologies. In workshops designed as 'World Cafés', attendees discussed

technical development results as well as what tools they could use to optimise team structure requirements, communication and cooperation between German and international project teams.

And the dominoes? Each team used them to build working systems in which all the dominoes had to knock each other over. After intensive discussion the teams defined interfaces to connect the individual systems into a whole. If every last domino fell, the 'integration' was deemed a success. There couldn't be a more striking way to convey the concepts of system integration and intercultural project communication. And with an attendee rating of 1.34 for 'Transferability to everyday work', the workshop was most definitely a hit. ☺



## SCHNITZER GROUP

**Schnitzer Group GmbH & Co. KG**  
Paradiesstrasse 4  
88239 Wangen im Allgäu  
Germany  
Phone +49 7522 7079 69-0

**Schnitzer International Swiss GmbH**  
c/o OBT AG  
Hardturmstrasse 120  
8005 Zurich, Switzerland  
Phone + 41 43 818-2536

**Schnitzer Consulting Shanghai Co. Ltd**  
c/o German Centre, Pudong  
88 Keyuan Road,  
Room 626 – Tower 2  
Zhangjiang High-Tech Park  
201203 Shanghai, China  
Phone + 86 21 2898-6184

**Schnitzer Group USA, Inc.**  
121 West Trade Street, Suite 2850  
Charlotte, NC 28202, USA

info@schnitzer-group.com  
www.schnitzer-group.com

## LEADERSHIP 2020 MEETS PROJECTMANAGEMENT

To celebrate our Weißenburg site's 15th anniversary as well as its 1st in the new, modern office space, the Schnitzer Group invites you to after-work cocktails on 27th April 2017 from 3.30 p.m. at Dettenheimer Straße. Keynote speaker Dr Raimund Siegert from Daimler AG will be presenting 'Leadership 2020 – Culture Change in a Major Corporation'.

**RSVP by 19th April to Ingrid Bartsch on +49 (0) 75 22/70 79 69-27, ingrid.bartsch@schnitzer-group.com. Places are limited.**

