

News and interesting information about our GAUDLITZ team and all locations!

Fresh wind for the top-level management: Reiner Leifhelm takes over group-wide responsibility as CFO.

We have celebrated: a colorful review of our anniversary celebration with the entire GAUDLITZ family.

Please take a look at tomorrow's champions. Our new junior employees are in the starting blocks.



*Niels Roelofsen,
Group CEO GAUDLITZ GmbH*

Year after year...

...we prove to our customers, partners, colleagues – and not least ourselves – that we are on the right path. Especially this year!

An exciting, but also intensive anniversary year is behind us. It was a year in which we continued our successful growth course and were once again in the black. It was a year with an emotional and unforgettable anniversary celebration, and a year in which we pressed ahead with important investment projects. But it was also a decisive year in which we were able to acquire many professionals for our “group ship”. Our presence at university graduate trade fairs is showing an initial impact. Numerous key positions could be filled with talented staff. This fresh wind and momentum embraces every area of our company. I am particularly pleased that the pursued realignment has also been well-received in the perception of the market and with our customers. Signs wholeheartedly point to quality leadership. Let’s continue this path together!

In this third edition of our GAUDLITZ Inside Journal we proudly look back at our anniversary year, welcome our new key players and show how we have acquired our unique position with generations of plastics specialists – in a team! Thanks to their dedication and commitment we managed to consistently continue the pursued growth course. For that I would like to thank you on behalf of the entire group management.

I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I look forward to getting started again with you in 2018. ●



Perfectly in shape with the latest wire cutting technology.

Our tools are the key for the part quality of our customers. In order for it to stay this way, we continually invest in new tool manufacturing technologies

The multistage investment plan in the tool manufacturing sector continues to bear fruit. In the process, the investment in the new milling and erosion systems last year was only the starting signal. In 2017 we also took the next step and invested nearly a million euros in a new wire cutting electrical discharge machining (EDM) center from the company Sodick.

A pivotal argument for the new acquisition was the optimization of time, costs and service, entirely in line with the customer requirement. For instance, the use of the most modern automation technology enables the set-up of several workpieces and production around the clock. The respective set-up times will be considerably shortened.

“Our new wire EDM center enormously influences the upstream and downstream processes, and is an important component in the entire production chain. Moreover, we create a higher level of comfort among the employees and particularly delegate a great deal of responsibility to our young colleagues”, explains Jens Pankow, our deputy Head of Tool shop.

The center has been in full operation since July 2017. Even now the first synergies are becoming apparent and confirm us on our pursued path. The optimization of capacity planning and lead times are on the agenda in the coming year. ●

Our new man for the world of numbers: welcome to the team Mr. Leifhelm!

Reiner Leifhelm has been the new Chief Financial Officer (Group) at GAUDLITZ since September, and effective immediately he will reinforce the top-level management of the group – with a great deal of experience!

He knows the business like hardly any other person. Born in the city of Marl in North Rhine-Westphalia, the 57-year-old MBA graduate started his career as an officer in the German Armed Forces. In 1992 he switched to the industrial sector to join REHAU AG + Co. in Upper Franconia. In a career spanning over 20 years he held numerous positions at home and abroad, including positions as Controlling Manager in England, CFO North America and CFO of the automotive division. In 2014 he switched to the French automotive supplier Faurecia as Global Business Unit Controller of the clean mobility division for customers such as VW, Daimler and BMW. After three years, Reiner Leifhelm has now moved back to his second home:

“I wanted to come back to Upper Franconia and fulfill my great career wish: a position as CFO in a medium-sized enterprise.”

When our Group CEO Niels Roelofsen made him an offer in the summer, Reiner Leifhelm did not hesitate for a second: “The international work in the automotive supplier business has become a real passion for me over the years. GAUDLITZ offered me precisely this challenge. They have enormous technical know-how in precision injection molding, a pioneering international orientation and a well thought-out growth strategy. This made the switch so perfect for me. Now I look forward to tackling the upcoming challenges and implementing our goals together with my new colleagues.”

Effective immediately, the likeable “go-getter” and passionate motorcyclist is taking over the group-wide responsibility for the purchasing, logistics, finance, controlling and IT departments. Initial measures have already been introduced and show the desired positive effect. ●





Globetrotter, team player and sales professional – our new Chief Sales Officer (Group) Thomas Pick!

Thomas Pick (40) was already able to gain international experience in South Africa during his course of study in industrial engineering. Since that time his experience abroad and loyalty to the automotive industry has been a recurrent theme in his résumé.

He started his career in sales with the Dr. Schneider corporate group. A short time later he accompanied the corporate group during its expansion in the USA. Among other things, after six years abroad and being self-employed, Thomas Pick got involved with Johnson Controls and was lastly responsible for the global customer GM as Sales Manager with the Woco Group.

Since November 1, he has taken on a central function in the sales management with responsibility for the group-wide project management and sales at all three locations. “After I was allowed to experience the most varying positions at home and abroad in the past 15 years, I wanted to return to my home region. After a discussion with Mr. Roelofson about the future corporate orientation I knew: here I can autonomously implement my ideas and experiences.”

The cosmopolitan native of Upper Franconia knows the requirements of the automotive industry like hardly any other person: “The trend towards the external shift of development competence and product depth offers many opportunities. That is why we must present ourselves as a global and strategic partner in the market.” He also has a specific plan as far as the orientation of his team. “We will interconnect our worldwide locations even better in order to work even more globally.”

He particularly emphasizes how openly and warmly he was welcomed in the team, and we literally helped him to “orientate himself”. “After all, I can even find meeting room 7 on my own”, says the sales pro with a grin. ●



When a slogan captivates!

Our provocative slogan becomes the student motto of the 10th Coburg Campus Career Fair.

In case the students at Coburg University did not know our company yet – now they do! True to our motto, on November 16 we presented ourselves at the campus of the Coburg University of Applied Sciences and Arts together with over 80 regional and supra-regional companies. Here we met precisely our target group: inquisitive freshmen in search of basic internships up to fledgling graduates on a career entry mission. In addition to our numerous exciting career opportunities, a single slogan was enough to inspire university graduates at our booth. The proof: numerous applications from student trainees, career entrants as well as host of requests for thesis papers. The slogan is also on everyone's lips in the German social media student platform "Jodel" (Yodel). ●



Successful step in the realm of a medium-sized enterprise

Jessica Ferrigno has been the new Head of Human Resources since August and relies on an active exchange of ideas.

The native of Lichtenfels with Sicilian roots has left for new challenges after nine years with automotive supplier Brose and is taking the deliberate step from a large international group into a medium-sized enterprise. With her international experience in recruiting and global mobility management she has strengthened our human resources team since August. At the same time, Jessica Ferrigno (31) particularly looks forward to the new challenges and the diversified range of tasks in an international group. An important concern for her in this connection is to support the exchange of ideas among young and experienced employees, to press ahead with the topic of digitization in human resources management and to promote the international exchange of employees as well as cross-site cooperation. ●



Coming home with the W!

Team GAUDLITZ takes the cup back to Coburg.

A well-coordinated team doesn't need a long preparation period. Accordingly, our 25 GAUDLITZ footballers – accompanied by five loud-voiced away supporters and with the blessing of the GM – set out for Hamburg. The goal: the major company football tournament sponsored by H&R on the HSV (Hamburg Sports Club) club grounds. The mission: quite clearly the title defense. And to do it with three strong-kicking GAUDLITZ teams: “Fit”, “Azubi” (“Trainees”) and “Hobby”, whereby the latter actually competed under the motto “participation is everything”.

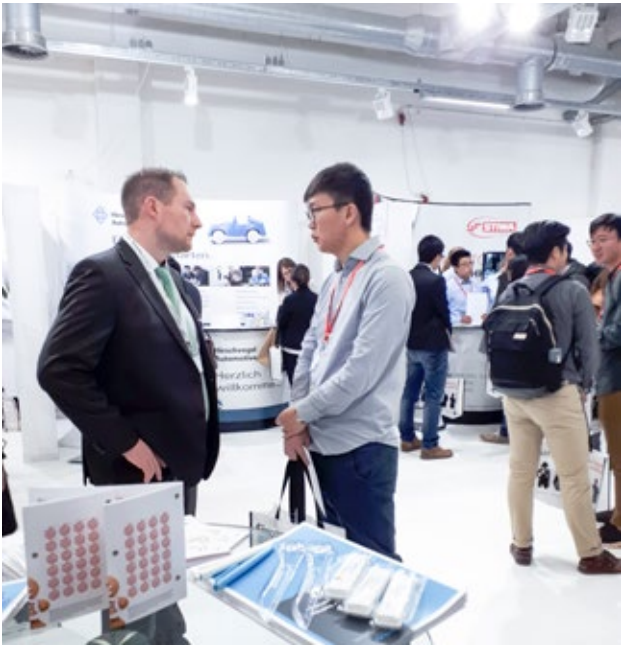
Tiny eyes, great sport!

Naturally the Hamburg weather lived up to its name on this Saturday afternoon. It's a good thing that our teams were able to get accustomed to the stormy climate on the notorious “Reeperbahn” (pub street in Hamburg) beforehand. Appropriately rested, the first major highlight – changing clothes in the official HSV dressing room for

guests – awaited us on the very next day at noon. The long-awaited kickoff in our new jerseys sponsored by Mr. Roelofsen took place afterwards. Following in the footsteps of legendary German footballer Uwe Seeler, our two teams “Fit” and “Azubi” conjured their way through the intermediate round with numerous combinations and goals. Unfortunately, bad luck in the drawing prevented a pure Coburg finale. And so, our teams already had to compete against each other in the semifinal game. Team “Fit” sovereignly entered the finale against Team Schindler after a 4:0 victory over our “Trainees”. After a heart-stopping fight and due to better stamina in the end, our team won the game with a well-deserved score of 2:0 and took the cup back to Coburg once again. Our “Azubi” team also delighted fans all across the board and garnered a very good third place in the third place playoff game. They were just “barely” followed by team “Hobby”, which finished eighth.

Showdown at the closing party

At the ensuing “championship celebration” in the HSV VIP area and the subsequent visit to the “Kiez” (pub street in Hamburg) neighborhood our heroes celebrated into the early hours of the morning. Michael Schmid, who was meanwhile out of the lineup due to a knee injury, was able to join the party again. Thanks to our success, Coburg is the official venue of the tournament next year. We are already looking forward to a real home game and a commanding title defense! ●



Exhibition for the Chinese market.

GAUDLITZ presents itself at the SinoJobs 2017 in Munich, together with 180 companies and 14,000 candidates.

In competition with major automotive manufacturers we presented ourselves in mid-November at this year's SinoJobs fair in Munich. SinoJobs is one of the most prestigious job fairs in Europe for recruitment of professionals for the Chinese market.

It appears that the trend towards medium-sized enterprises has also arrived here. We were able to inspire numerous professionally experienced and highly qualified candidates for our location in Wuxi. The first applications and follow-up interviews are already in progress, and the prospects are very promising. We are excited to find out who will support us in the future at our site in Wuxi, and at this point we wish all applicants good luck! ●



Experience as a recipe for success.

With 20 years of automotive expertise, Leon Li has strengthened our sales team in Wuxi since October.

He speaks and understands the language of our automotive customers. Li grew up in the city of Guilin in the southeast Chinese province of Guangxi. He earned his degree in marketing at the renowned Guangzhou Education Institute in 1995. Following that he started his career – in the meantime over 20 years – in the tier 1 and tier 2 supplier sector of the automotive industry. Here the likeable family man gained valuable experience and looked after key customers such as VW, Ford, Bosch and ZF. Starting in mid-October he has supported our team in Wuxi as Key Account Manager. In doing so, Mr. Li looks forward to “all sorts of demanding and high-growth projects with our determined and effective team”. ●



Two young injection molding experts went on a tour in China to expand their horizons.

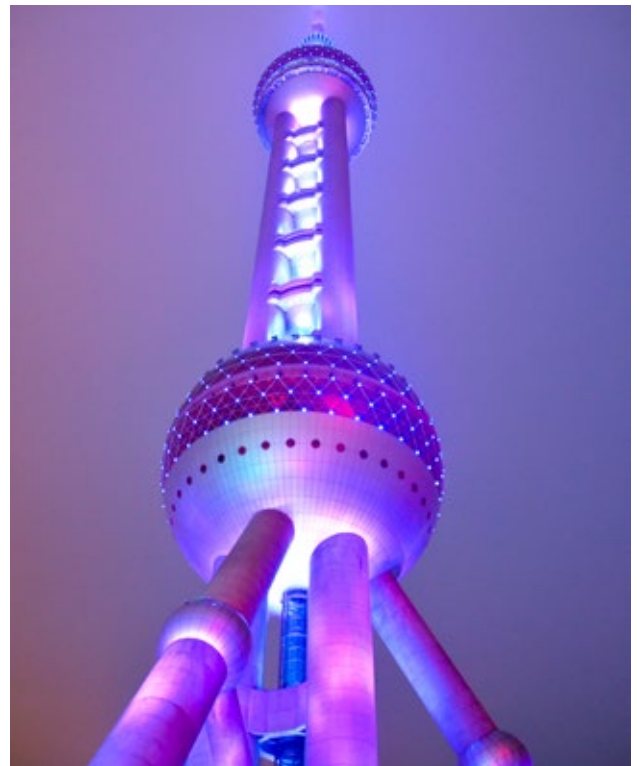
Millions of people, jetlag after a 10-hour flight and lots of rice: why it is worthwhile to plunge in at the deep end as a young person.

Process Engineers Lukas Wawrzinek (23) and Kevin Polanski (24) have been employed at GAUDLITZ since 2010. They both started their training together seven years ago. Today they both work in the same department.

In the middle of the year we received an inquiry from our plant operation in Wuxi – over 8,500 kilometers away – regarding motivated employees to provide support for three to four weeks. No sooner said than done! After a brief consultation with the human resources department our two junior employees set out for the Middle Kingdom in the beginning of September. The motto: “gonna work out somehow”; the flight time: 10 hours. And incidentally, it was the first flying experience ever! The adventure could begin.

After experiencing the first jetlag in their lives the two men were personally greeted and welcomed in China. After a short amount of time, they were already able to demonstrate their skills in our Chinese plant. In addition to their usual main activity, the duo was given the task to implement process optimizations of specific parts and to rectify cycle times.

At the same time, Lukas and Kevin were able to collaborate in new, exciting projects and contribute their own ideas here. While working, they were able to become acquainted with colleagues and their way of working in Wuxi. “The colleagues did not have sound training like we do in Germany, but their know-how and dedication is quite considerable”, said Lukas in the interview. The language barrier was

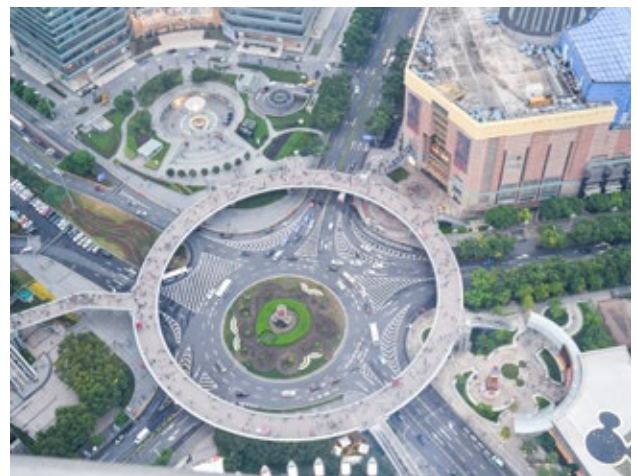


a major challenge, but both men grinningly agreed: “we probably would have been stymied without the Google translator”. In addition, other challenges were a time change of seven hours, an entirely new culture of dining as well as customs which are rather unusual for Europeans. Since English menus do not exist in many restaurants, the two men had to orient themselves to the accompanying images.

“That was extremely exciting, and regardless of what was on the plate, there was always rice.”

Lukas Wawrzinek

In their free time the two men drove with a colleague to the lively Shanghai over the weekend. It was a unique cultural and professional adventure that the two men will definitely not forget so quickly. “Coburg and Wuxi are two completely different cities, but each city also features fascinating worlds in their own right. It was a great experience to get away from everyday life and to expand one’s own horizon. We will gladly come back at any time” said our two globe-trotters. ●





Reinforcement for our key customers.

Since September 1 our sales activities in the Czech Republic have been running at full speed.

And this is not least thanks to our new staff member František Řepa. Since September the 41-year-old Czech has been supporting the sales department at the plant in Dačice. Based on his many years of experience in purchasing and as a Sales Manager with a Czech automotive supplier, he makes an important contribution in the acquisition and support of international major customers. The likeable sales professional from Jindřichův Hradec already feels acknowledged after a short familiarization phase: "The company's technical know-how in the field of precision injection molding is enormous, and the new colleagues in Coburg and Dačice truly make a very competent impression." ●





More capacities and flexibility for major international projects.

The plant expansion in Dačice has been successfully completed. Now the signs are pointing towards growth, together with our global customers.

1,619 meters of laid electrical cables, 450 meters of water pipes and 300 m³ of installed cement – after a seven-month construction phase and a total investment of about 1 million euros we have more than doubled the production area at our Czech site. Our plant expansion is a groundbreaking door opener towards Eastern Europe, but also an enormously important step in order to operate even more flexible and scalable for our customers.

Alone for the constantly increasing quantities of our customers AMK we needed two new 500-ton machines. These machines were successfully put into operation past summer in the overall nearly 1,200 m² production area. Added to this are numerous preparation and processing machines such as drying units, tempering units and a CNS measuring device which expand our on-site production possibilities. ●



2,038 m² total area

1,193 m² production area

70 m² office space

40 m² quality assurance

700 m² warehouse & logistics





There are such days when a microphone may malfunction.

It is well known that we GAUDLITZ staff members know how to celebrate, especially in the circle of the entire family. On a summery Saturday afternoon in July the company management invited everyone to the GAUDLITZ Family Day on the occasion of our 80-year company anniversary. It was a celebration for old and young, a celebration of appreciation and a celebration with an optimistic spirit.

Everybody came: employees, family members, retirees, guests of honor and invited representatives of the press and political realm. Even our team delegation from Wuxi – which definitely had the longest journey here with a linear distance of 8,582 kilometers – followed the call of the corporate family!

The action started at 2:00 in the afternoon when the first of over 550 guests already flocked to the event site in the inner courtyard. They were personally welcomed on site in the reception area by our Group CEO Niels Roelofsen.

After that most of the guests immediately went to our numerous food trucks, which offered delicious burgers, chicken, cocktails and cool beverages. Then the official ceremony started after everyone had refreshed themselves. Our Group CEO – who also could not be flustered by a minor microphone mishap – led the series of speakers. He was followed by Niels H. Hansen (the CEO and Chairman of the Executive Board of our parent company), Mr. Norbert Tessmer (Coburg Mayor) and Michael Busch (District Commissioner of Coburg). Friedrich Herdan (President of the Coburg Chamber of Industry and Commerce) and Patrick Püttner (Upper Franconia General Manager of the Bavarian Employers' Associations for the Metalworking and Electrical Industries [bayme vbm]) also rose to speak.

Following this, "Leinado the Jongleur" delighted the crowd with his breathtaking stunts and a real fire torch spectacle. Our GAUDLITZ youngsters were also not bored at any time – regardless of whether it was jumping on the inflatable castle, face painting for kids, airbrush tattooing or enjoying a delicious, freshly mixed cocktail for kids.

At 5:00 in the evening it was time to "party on" with the Upper Franconian cult band "Geile Zeit", which really fired up our guests! Together we celebrated and danced into the night. It goes without saying that the lines of people standing in front of the "free beer" stations became longer and longer, and that many language barriers were skillfully bypassed with a loud-voice "cheers" or selfie.

At this juncture it is time to express great thanks to our organizing team, which produced the entire event virtually out of thin air during daily operations. Last but not least, we would naturally also like to thank all of our employees and guests who made this celebration so unforgettable for us. The most beautiful pictures will find a proper place in our GAUDLITZ family album. The numerous reunions with some of our esteemed companions – genuine iconic figures from the past 80 years who are an important part in the development of our GAUDLITZ family – will particularly remain in our memory.

We are already looking forward to a continuation! 🍷











Team play of generations

Two of our longest-serving employees hand over the scepter to junior employees.

With a total of 96 years of company service they are two genuine GAUDLITZ stalwarts: Richard Dellert – who has already enhanced our company for 49 years as a milling professional – and Erwin Brückner, one of the first GAUDLITZ electrical discharge machining (EDM) specialists by trade. They are passing the baton on to the next generation and demonstrate how good experience and youthful curiosity go together. In two generational teams with our trainees Simon Raab (18) and Dominik Krautwurst (19) they completed a real handover marathon in recent weeks and months.

After a short time, it became apparent how both sides can benefit from each other. For example, Mr. Dellert and Mr. Brückner rave about how easily the trainees deal with new technologies. “It is quite impressive when one sees the keen perception and speed with which Dominik writes, understands programs, and the alacrity with which Simon makes the adjustments of setup parameters by means of modern technologies.”

On the other hand, our two junior employees cannot get enough of the valuable tips: “The experiences of both colleagues are gigantic. They show us how one approaches a topic and that particularly on an old, non-digitized machine, the basic principles can be understood much quicker and better. They already think two steps ahead and consider how their task influences the next process step. You cannot learn that in school, but only with years of professional experience.”

The example of increasing requirements in the automotive industry clearly shows how complex the ramifications are and will be for the fields of milling and EDM. But together with his colleagues, Mr. Dellert is absolutely certain “that our young rebels will master these tasks with flying colors and in a team”. Richard Dellert has been enjoying his well-deserved retirement since October 2017. At this point we would also like to express our thanks for his unprecedented loyalty and wish him all the best for his future. ●





Please take a look at tomorrow's champions.

Our new trainees inspire the entire company with their enthusiasm. Propulsive force for the next 80 years!

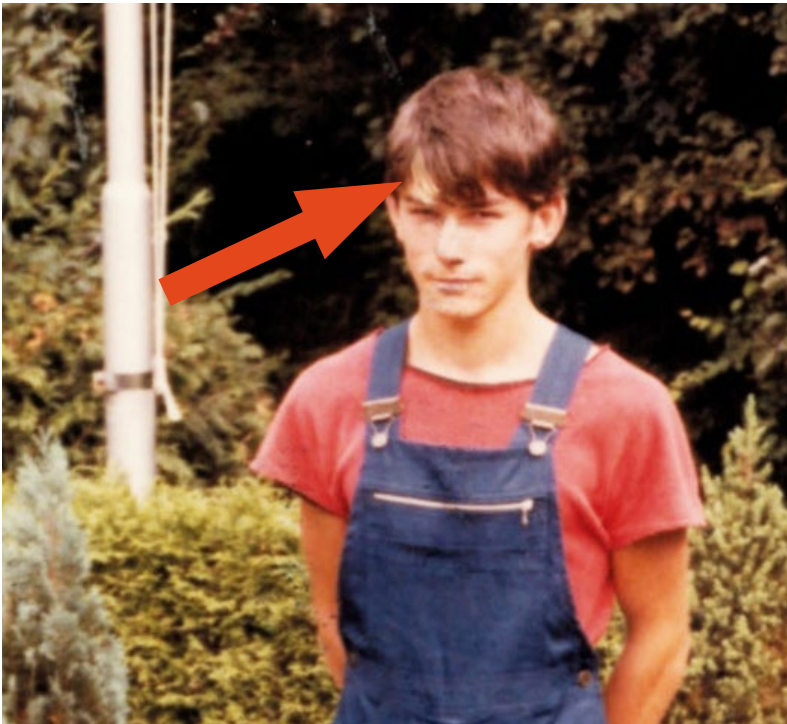
Much has changed in the course of our 80-year corporate history: new technologies, new exciting professions, new markets and potentials – but not the enthusiasm of young people for technology and groundbreaking, courageous ideas.

Six new plastic pioneers are attempting to write their own success story at GAUDLITZ with our new anniversary year. And they are doing so with vigor and zest for action that delights even experienced HR managers. They are representative of already 63 generations of trainees who have constantly rejuvenated and brought our company forward.

On our exciting path from the first thermoset component up to complex system components we have already accompanied over 700

trainees in their successful career entry in the past 80 years. These trainees are young, talented personalities, of whom many have remained loyal to our company for decades.

“Over the years we have established a practical training program that always has an eye toward digitization, the development of production possibilities and naturally the individual strengths of our trainees”, says Training Supervisor Thomas Durst. With promising occupational profiles, international perspectives and lots of participation opportunities we try to win over young people for our mission on a long-term basis: to build the world's best and most precise plastic systems. This also includes the fact that we speak the language of our young people and draw attention to ourselves with the one or other exceptional initiative. ●



OUR
WINNER
STORY

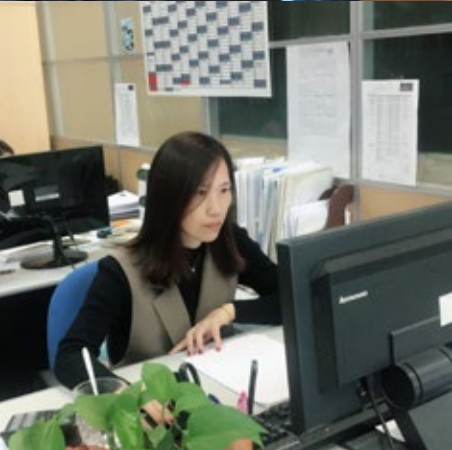
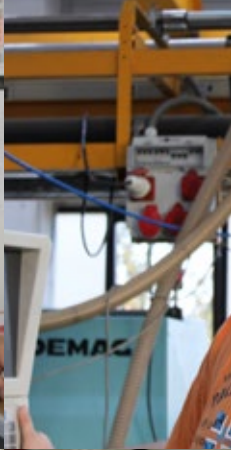
A blond strand becomes an initial spark.

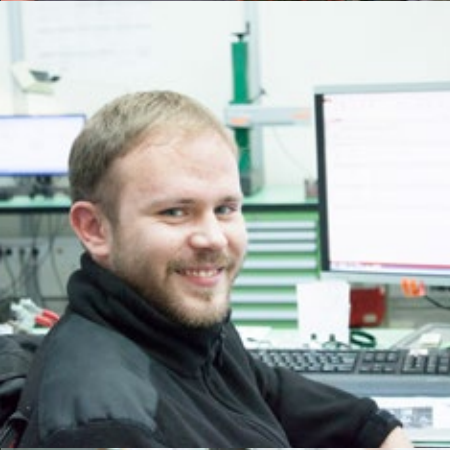
Kurt Oelschlegel speaks about his early days at GAUDLITZ and a formative incident.

In 1984 I was employed in the company for just three weeks and had started my training. Completely in the fashion trend at that time, a blond strand embellished my at that time still black hair. Of course, I didn't think anything of it at that time, but that suddenly changed after an encounter with then owner Karl Gaudlitz. He came up to me in the training workshop, stood in front of me (the man seemed to 2 meters tall and was powerfully built) and said: "I don't want that. This is not acceptable at GAUDLITZ!" About 15 minutes later the then HR Manager stood in front of me and asked me to get rid of the 'scourge' within 48 hours. Nowadays it is hard to imagine what a dressing-down from the corporate founder meant at that time. There was not much to consider. It was time for action. On the very same evening I dyed my hair completely dark again.

What is interesting about this story? In my early years at that time, I immediately understood that there are clear "rules" in a company. This incident not only "always" accompanies me professionally, but also on my entire journey through life to this day! Whether in a company, in the army, during sports and in the family – it had a formative influence on me and taught me one thing: rules are not a joke; they are part of life and have to be followed!

I am a family man, coach in a sports club, supervisor of various employees and a training supervisor at GAUDLITZ. I try to pass on this message with my minor youthful fashion indiscretion to all people I have anything to do with and I am allowed to accompany. ●





Our employee anniversaries

We would like to thank our employees celebrating anniversaries for so much loyalty!

One more thing...

“Plan your dive and dive your plan.”

Entirely in keeping with an often-quoted favorite guideline from our Group CEO, which originates from the diving sport, we have also written quite a few things on the agenda for 2018. We look forward to getting started and “start diving” together with you in the New Year. ●

Innovation management

Our newly staffed and augmented innovation management department is working on the complete automation of the simplex system as well as the optimization of our production processes in the first half of the year.

Further investments in tool manufacturing

With reinforcement in the technical management through Dr. Franz Kind we will focus on the areas tool shop and design – specifically the optimization of capacity planning, production costs and lead times.

Mission NAFTA

Thanks to our involvement in the NAFTA region, a joint venture with our Canadian partners is already planned for the first half of the year 2018. Registration will take place in the USA.

Information technology

The topic of standardization, networking and digitization ranks foremost for our IT department. Corporate locations shall be better linked, communication arranged more efficiently and safety will be increased.

Structural expansion

The planning and reconstruction measures for the new sales and measuring center premises are running at full speed. The parking area of the tool manufacturing area will also be repaved and surfaced.

New employee ID cards

Every employee will receive a new employee ID card with a photograph in 2018. As a result, we will make identification easier, improve security on the factory premises and combine the use of time clock and canteen card.

MOTIV(E)ation

Team GAUDLITZ in the footsteps of Uwe Seeler: even if we have not always hit the empty goal, in terms of atmosphere it was an absolute hit.

The motivation image of the edition with our sporting aces at the H&R Cup award ceremony!

