



**Model training** | Pascal Toussaint (left), an apprentice with ThyssenKrupp Fördertechnik, together with training manager Christian-Peter Zitt. Photo: Rainer Kayzers

## APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING AT THYSSENKRUPP TECHNOLOGIES

### Growing talent from within

ThyssenKrupp Technologies attaches great importance to vocational training. We do a lot to train young people and develop them according to our needs, both at company and segment level.

The new apprenticeship year in Germany began on September 1, 2008. Katja Wieja is on board. She began her apprenticeship at ThyssenKrupp Technologies in Essen – one of six budding industrial clerks at the segment headquarters, where vocational training was re-started in 2005. “Because of our age structure we will be needing more personnel in the coming years. We want to fill the jobs internally,” says Susanne Ernst, training manager at the headquarters. Here as elsewhere among the companies of the segment it is clear that demand-oriented vocational training plays a key role at ThyssenKrupp Technologies. And its importance is set to increase further as skilled workers become scarce due to demographic change in Germany.

#### Team orientation at Polysius

Take Polysius for example: At its headquarters in Beckum 53 young people are currently being trained as industrial clerks, draftspersons, machining mechanics, industrial mechanics, chemical lab assistants and IT specialists. Ludger Ueding, training manager at Polysius: “The overall numbers are growing. Our requirements for technical staff in particular are rising due to the establishment of service centers to provide extended customer services around the world.” The subject of international cooperation is becoming an increasingly important part of

training. “We offer various competence courses on this and start them off with seminars on team orientation.” Foreign placements are also possible. One apprentice is currently posted in South Africa, another in Spain. Take Polysius for example: At its headquarters in Beckum 53 young people are currently being trained as industrial clerks, draftspersons, machining mechanics, industrial mechanics, chemical lab assistants and IT specialists. Ludger Ueding, training manager at Polysius: “The overall numbers are growing. Our requirements for technical staff in particular are rising due to the establishment of service centers to provide extended customer services around the



**Outing** | Team building exercises were part of the Polysius apprentice outing this year. Photo: Hans-Peter Müller

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The training for commercial apprentices also includes spells in the workshops to provide them with a full picture of the business. The program for the second apprenticeship year includes a project in which all apprentices work together to develop a product – from design and prototyping to commercial aspects, market research and sales. The idea is to get to know the Polysius business model and learn about working across organizational boundaries. “On the whole, however, we try to integrate apprentices into their departments quickly so that they can work productively as part of the department after only four weeks,” says Ueding. “We want to make sure that our young people learn in a practical way from the very start and move step by step towards taking responsibility for their work.”

Polysius does a lot to promote technical occupations and present itself as a potential employer in the Beckum region. This includes arranging work placements and working closely with schools. And training doesn’t necessarily have to end with an apprenticeship certificate. “Many of our employees go on to study, and we support them in this,” says Ueding. It’s an area which is to be expanded in the future, for example by offering fellowships and cooperative education courses.

### Close support at ThyssenKrupp Fördertechnik

Post-apprenticeship training plays an important role at ThyssenKrupp Fördertechnik, too. “We support our young employees if they want to improve themselves by going to university, technical college or language classes. Both sides benefit,” says Christian-Peter Zitt, training manager at the Materials Handling division of ThyssenKrupp Fördertechnik in St. Ingbert-Rohrbach. He currently has ten apprentice draftspersons under his wing, and the trend here too is rising. ThyssenKrupp Fördertechnik places great emphasis on comprehensive training. Apprenticeships there run for three-and-a-half years. Their success is reflected in the fact that every year since 1997, with one exception, a finished draftsperson from the company has been named best in the state by the Saarland Chamber of Industry and Commerce.

Zitt also supports ThyssenKrupp Fördertechnik’s commercial apprentices on technical issues. He stresses: “When they graduate, our apprentices know everything about their profession and the departments of our company. They are well prepared and highly motivated.” This is also shown by a very low turnover rate. In the future, Zitt would like to see more cooperation across the segment: “It would be good if we could intensify the exchange of experience. Training is a central issue and the companies of the segment can learn more from each other.”

### Increase diversity

The new trainer taskforce one step in this direction. An apprentice exchange program is also planned, allowing apprentices to get to know the working routines of colleagues in other occupa-

#### “Very satisfied so far”



**Katja Wieja** (21) has been an apprentice with ThyssenKrupp Technologies in Essen since September 2008.

Photo: Rainer Kayzers

“When I was applying for an apprenticeship as an industrial clerk after finishing senior school, ThyssenKrupp Technologies was my preference. I had heard that the training there was very good. I was also attracted by the idea of working for an international company and maybe working abroad one day. Currently I am working in the HR department. After that comes block release at vocational college, and then I’ll move to a different department. The apprenticeship lasts three years. Of course everything is still very new to me but I’m gradually learning the ropes. Things are progressing the way I hoped so I’m very satisfied so far.”

tions. “We want to increase the diversity of the segment. It’s essential nowadays to be able to deal with differences and conflicts,” says Susanne Ernst.

What else do applicants need to offer? As well as their academic qualifications, important criteria when assessing applicants are their motivation and team skills. Apprentices are trained not only in their own subject but also on an interdisciplinary basis. But the key thing is that they reinforce the theoretical knowledge they acquire at vocational school with direct practical experience. Ernst: “The aim is for apprentices to grow in their roles and develop into responsible employees.” One thing’s for sure: Targeted high-level training and development will continue to be a central element in the growth of ThyssenKrupp Technologies in the future. **Stefan Grönke**

### “Stay with the company”



**Pascal Toussaint** (20) has been an apprentice with ThyssenKrupp Fördertechnik in St. Ingbert-Rohrbach since September 2006.  
Photo: **Rainer Kaysers**

“My apprenticeship as a mechanical draftsman still has just over a year to run. When it finishes I’d definitely like to stay with ThyssenKrupp Fördertechnik. I plan to work as a draftsman for a year, then go back to school for more qualifications and then on to university to study mechanical engineering with the support of the company. My apprenticeship is varied, practical and well organized. You get insights into different departments and get to know lots of other colleagues. Any problems are dealt with straight away. You benefit from this quality every day. I’m sure that the things that I’ve learned so far and will learn in the months ahead will be very useful to me in my career.”



**Ready to go** | The apprentices from Lockweiler and Heilbronn made a strong team.  
Photo: **ThyssenKrupp Drauz Nothelfer**

## DRAUZ NOTHELFER

### Confident start to training

The new apprenticeship year saw 33 young people begin their apprenticeship with Drauz Nothelfer at the Heilbronn, Hohenstein-Ernstthal and Lockweiler plants. Another five were taken on as part of a cooperative apprenticeship program.

The apprentices from Lockweiler and Heilbronn met up for an introductory seminar at the youth hostel in Dreisbach, not far from the picturesque Saar valley (the apprentices from Hohenstein were attending a similar event in Zwickau). In addition to a leisure program including hiking, cards and basketball, the seminar took them through important aspects of their apprenticeship and the time after graduation.

After a presentation detailing the organization of the company and the apprenticeship program, invited speakers held talks on the subjects of codetermination, trade unions, collective agreements and pensions. The individual issues were then dealt with in discussion groups, which helped foster a spirit of togetherness.

The highpoint of the seminar was an experiential learning day, which taught the apprentices social skills and bonded them as a group. The seminar finally ended with a safety lesson by the company’s chief safety officer. In the unanimous opinion of all involved it had been a great introduction to the world of work.

**Mathias Wernik, Michael Scherer, Christian Baldauf, Lukas Kaiser**