



Expert Article

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Being qualified, remaining qualified: Employee qualification in the die-casting industry

The EUROGUSS 2018 – International Trade Fair for Die Casting will show innovative solutions for the production and application of die-cast components.

Employee qualification is an important factor for die-casting foundries to safeguard and develop their competitiveness. Numerous possibilities are offered to the companies and their employees to expand their range of competences through educational measures.

A survey conducted in the year 2007 among approximately 450 foundries in the German-speaking area showed that employee qualification is one of the five factors which are the most important for business success [1]. Employee qualification is based on a sound professional education and continuing further education with the final aim to strengthen the own market position.

When selecting further education measures, it is about, on the one hand, securing existing qualifications. For this purpose, events are suitable which, for example, expand the production technology expertise of the employees. On the other hand, each company has to cope with the development of the customer markets, the emergence of new technologies and requirements which are becoming ever more complex. This is a major challenge but also offers possibilities to open up new markets and to create unique selling points which result in customer benefits. For this, there are further education offers specifically foreseen for die-casting foundries but also further education offers open for all industries.

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Identification of competences

In order to select appropriate further education measures for employees, it is necessary to identify the competences of the own company, to define expansion goals on the basis of the analysis results and to evaluate priorities. An essay published in the technical journal "Giesserei-Praxis" provides suggestions. The article describes competence types together with examples and presents a matrix for the execution and evaluation of a competence analysis [2].

Versatile range of offerings

Die-casting foundries and foundries specialized in other casting processes are offered a wide range of further education possibilities. Worth mentioning are, for example, the seminars and courses at the VDG-Akademie for all hierarchy levels and areas of a company. The academy is integrated in the structures of the German Foundrymen's Association (VDG) and the Federal Association of the German Foundry Industry (BDG), is networked with the industry and cooperates with universities, vocational schools and external providers of education courses. The VDG and the BDG together organize further education conferences such as the International German Die Casting Conference which every other year frames the trade fair EUROGUSS. A few months later, VDG, BDG and the Austrian and Swiss trade associations will organize together the Große Gießereitechnische Tagung 2018 (Large Foundry Technology Conference) in Salzburg, Austria. These organizations also support foundries on the subject of education and further education measures [3]. One of the external suppliers of further education seminars for die-casting foundries as well as other industries is the Technical Academy of Esslingen (TAE), Germany. As part of EUROGUSS 2018 the Association of German Engineers (VDI) organizes for the first time several special workshops where Participants have the possibility to get information and to discuss selected topics concerning die casting. Also the Foundry Technology institute (GTA) at the Aalen University of Applied Sciences, Germany, is of great importance. The institute dedicates itself both to teaching and research and maintains close contact with the industry and other research institutions. A main focus of its activities is on die-casting. The GTA has established a good reputation through events such as the Aalener Gießerei-Kolloquium (Aalen Foundry Colloquium) which takes place once a year. Die-casting foundries also receive support from



suppliers. Die-casting machines manufacturers like Bühler and Frech, for example, offer their customers staff training courses. The attendants learn how they can use their machines in an energy-efficient, raw material-efficient and cost-efficient way and make optimum use of their capability. With regard to further education, the specialized media also have an important role. They provide information on the further technical development, scientific findings, industrial matters and events, and cross-sector developments and encourage companies to take measures, if necessary, in order to expand their own competences.

The trade fair EUROGUSS 2018

As the above mentioned study stresses, the personnel qualification is becoming even more important in the future. An insight into the state-of-the-art in die-casting and suggestions as to how die-casting foundries can strengthen and expand their market position will be provided at the trade fair EUROGUSS. The range of information is enriched by the 18th International Die Casting Congress, workshops of the Association of German Engineers (VDI) and the presentation of prize-winning castings of the International Aluminium Die Casting, the Zinc Die Casting and the Magnesium Die Casting Competitions. EUROGUSS 2018 – International Trade Fair for Die Casting: Technology, Processes, Products will take place in Nuremberg, Germany, 16 – 18 January 2018. Information to the programme: www.euroguss.de/programme

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