

## Practical learning throughout Europe - with EUCAM

*Thanks to a process-based learning system, 300 jobs were saved at DaimlerChrysler in Mannheim a few years ago, explains Michael Ehrke, responsible for training issues on the Board of Management of IG Metall. "At the time, it became clear that cable production was no longer profitable for the company in Mannheim and we managed to retrain 300 colleagues in engine production within 6 weeks." This was aided by a so-called production learning system (PLS).*

Instead of theoretical instruction in seminars, the employees learnt the new working procedures independently directly at their place of work. This was carried out using computer terminals linked via an Intranet and set up at the users' place of work. This system presents all the production knowledge for an area of production in a learner-orientated manner. The workers can then organise their learning progress independently and flexibly. They are supported by so-called "learning coaches". However, production learning systems are not mainly used in emergency situations.

IG Metall considers PLS to be a very good way of providing the employee training agreed in collective agreements. At the same time it believes that "continuous improvement" (previously known as the "employee suggestion scheme") could be made even more beneficial as the individual employees not only learn to master their area of activity but also learn the other process steps in their group. Ultimately, with PLS this company they could obtain an overview of the entire value added chain.

Since 2005 IG Metall and DaimlerChrysler have made particular efforts to raise PLS to a European level. The Language Technology Centre Ltd (LTC) in London is helping them to overcome the language barriers involved here. This company was founded in 1992 by a German, Adriane Rinsche. Using technology from the UK, the multilingual learning system EUCAM has emerged from the PLS. EUCAM stands for Multilingual Communication in European Car Manufacturing and is an integrated learning system for the entire value added chain. The idea is that a joint learning infrastructure is used in multiple languages. "The potential for multilingualism is intended to improve intercultural collaboration between the various production sites in Europe", explains Adriane Rinsche. "Furthermore, qualifications gained with EUCAM can be compared at European level".

At DaimlerChrysler alone, according to information from IG Metall, translation costs reach 28 million euros a year, the majority of them are in the technology and production area. "If we overcome language barriers with EUCAM we can reduce costs and DaimlerChrysler would benefit greatly from this", according to Michael Ehrke. "Furthermore, I see a very different relationship to further training, both amongst the employers and our people." Finally the managers would then be able to identify precisely how their employees can be additionally qualified specifically to add value as the qualification is orientated towards the process chain.

After the introductory phase, a consortium will be formed to distribute EUCAM to other automotive manufacturers and production plants in various sectors. Alongside DaimlerChrysler, LTC and IG Metall, the European Metalworkers Federation (EMF), the software consultancy Group Infoman, Dekra Akademie, EDAG Hungary Kft and UAB LKSoft Baltic are involved in the development of EUCAM.

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