

Further training at universities - The best investment is the investment in lifelong learning

More than ever before, lifelong learning has become a focus in our careers. Increasing globalization and networking and the step from Industry 3.0, a digital revolution, to Industry 4.0, an intergration of industrial production with modern information and communications technology, require a continuous tailoring of our competences.

In a knowledge-based society, the saying “Well-trained employees are a deciding factor in the success of a company” holds ever greater significance.

Universities and colleges provide significant opportunities for lifelong learning.

Using Technische Universität Dresden and its continuing education arm “Dresden International University” as an example, we will demonstrate the development of a best practice model with which certificate courses in all areas of rail transportation could be implemented for pioneers such as the leading German railway company, Deutsche Bahn AG, as well as companies and railway authorities worldwide.

The presentation introduces :

- ▶ a successful model for knowledge transfer, in which modular courses offered in parallel to professional commitments provide application-oriented and interdisciplinary continued education in the field of rail systems,

- ▶ a successful business model which demonstrates how, through the founding of the non-profit “Dresden International University”, which is responsible for the implementation of the part-time courses, a co-financing of facilities, e.g. laboratories, of the TU Dresden is made possible,

- ▶ the example of a successful cooperation between the Technischer Universität Dresden and the DB Netz AG as well as the DB Engineering & Consulting GmbH to develop a course offering for employees responsible for the planning of the modern European Train Control System ETCS.

Modern universities rest upon 3 pillars : academic education, research, and continuing education.

Due to the proximity between research and continuing education, the course offerings are guaranteed to be up-to-date. Through the specialized knowledge of the trainer, the participants have the opportunity to benefit from the state of the art regarding science and technology in the field.

Furthermore, continued education at universities allows for the influx of ideas and questions from the practical field, thus delivering an education which is truly practically relevant for the students.

The aforementioned best practice model demonstrates the ability of universities to provide lifelong learning for skilled workers and managment to help modernize and ensure the long-term success of their firms.