



Press Release

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BURKHARDT+WEBER chosen as innovation champion

Überlingen, Germany – Release the old and venture new steps: Innovative medium-sized companies such as BURKHARDT+WEBER Fertigungssysteme GmbH from Reutlingen are not afraid of change, but see it as an opportunity. The company was thus convincing in the 27th round of the TOP 100 innovation competition. As from June 19, BURKHARDT+WEBER is officially among the TOP 100. In the scientific selection process, the company impressed in size class C (more than 200 employees), especially in the categories "Innovation-promoting top management" and "Innovative processes and organisation".

The machine tool manufacturer from Reutlingen has adopted modern decision-making processes: flat hierarchies and employees who actively participate in processes are now important. For example, the product development team decides together how a new idea is to be technically implemented. Although the managers have a say, decisions are made by a majority. "In this manner, people are committed to a decision and bear responsibility," says CEO Olaf Furtmeier, who initiated the change towards an innovation-friendly management culture in the TOP 100 company. The prerequisite for such a working method is to empower the employees accordingly. Many training sessions and discussions were necessary for the transition to this innovative decision-making process.

The top innovator follows a Japanese management culture by implementing an "Obeya Room": All current projects are clearly visualized in this room. A projecting board shows the present status of a project using a traffic light system. If a lot of yellow or red dots appear, it is immediately clear: something must be done. "Our error culture allows mistakes as long as you learn from them," says Olaf Furtmeier. This method of agile working has spread throughout the industry. Companies repeatedly inform themselves about the innovation processes of the Swabians and want to learn from them.

TOP 100: the competition

Since 1993, compamedia has been awarding the TOP 100 seal for special innovative strength and above-average innovation success to medium-sized companies. Since 2002, the scientific management lies with Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Franke. Franke is founder and chairman of the Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration. Mentor of TOP 100 is the science journalist Ranga Yogeshwar. Project partners are the Fraunhofer Society for the Promotion of Applied Research and the BVMW. As media partners, manager magazin, impulse and W&V support the company benchmarking. More information is available at www.top100.de.

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