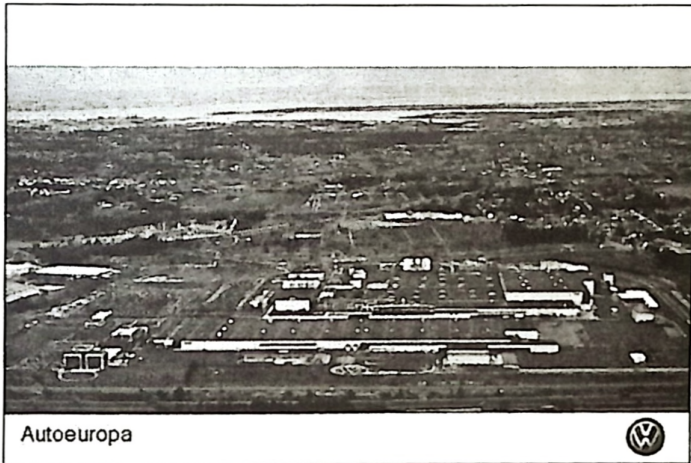


Volkswagen Autoeuropa

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Volkswagen Autoeuropa, its environment and its partners are a model of a new manufacturing philosophy, which sets very high demands on the so-called 'soft factors' or 'soft skills' of every company: Leadership, Motivation, Personnel Development, Work Organization, etc.



Nowadays we complain about the competition on the international markets becoming more and more aggressive, suffering under the pressure of globalization, searching for solutions and still in the hope that the national economy and social politics – the 'father state' – can help at the end.

However this is not new! The last great crisis of the European and American automotive industry happened just 10 years ago, when 'Lean Production' and 'Lean Manufacturing' became keywords in the discussions among automotive managers.

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The theory behind it was thematically focused on the automotive industry; however one could apply the knowledge to industrial manufacturing in general. Not only the production technique was discussed, because it was a kind of manufacturing philosophy, which handled in an integrated way a more intelligent interaction between people and machines.

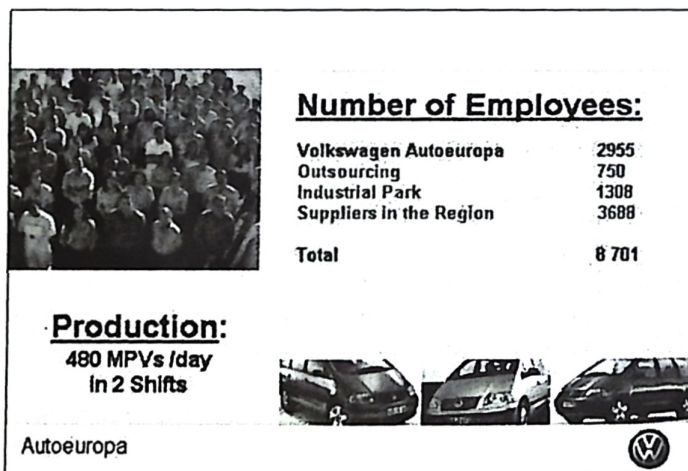
The catchwords hidden behind "lean manufacturing" were 1:1 transferred onto the now ten years old join-venture Autoeuropa.

In a young company as Volkswagen Autoeuropa, concepts that could shake some established organizational structures over the years have been converted without big resistance into a project that was built up on the "green field": Flat Hierarchy, Teamwork, Continuous Improvement (KVP²), Transparency, Open Communication, etc.

Today, ten years later, we can read off that this recipe worked out at Volkswagen Autoeuropa in the effects it caused in employment and how it pushed the Portuguese automotive sector. As far as the suppliers are concerned, the figures are however a little bit misleading. Only 13% of the parts are sourced inside Portugal, but these 13% correspond to more than 50% of the overall value of the product.


Therefore it is clear why we did not only invest in machinery and facilities, but also to a huge extent in people, in their qualification and continuous training.

Volkswagen Autoeuropa employs ca. 3000 people, but it provides work and a secure income to more people, for if considering the suppliers and other partners, almost 9000 people work in the region for Volkswagen Autoeuropa.




Volkswagen Autoeuropa is an engine of the Portuguese Industry and it also plays a very important role in the life of its employees and it goes beyond the financial point of view. A healthy company is made of healthy employees. And for that the Industrial Safety and the Organization of the Work Places play a role as much important as the Structure of the Basic Medical Services. This company's infrastructure is followed with great effort to provide and keep the health and well being, which means the satisfaction of the employee at work.

Company's Medical Services - Goals



- Ensure healthy working conditions
- Provision of high quality health service
- Knowledge about the working places
- Prevention of Professional Diseases
- Avoid relapses
- Continuous follow-up of the Health Liga Status


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The company's Medical Services are not only restricted to the availability of a company's doctor; it also develops a reintegration program after a long term sickness, in which is crucial to consider the working place and its configuration and to involve the management of the company to ensure the high success rates of the program.

Reintegration Program after Sickness Leave

Strategy

- Visits to the working place for risks evaluation;
- Analysis of individual situations;
- Cooperation between Ergonomics, Industrial Safety and Human Resources;
- Meeting with the Departments' Management and the Employees;
- Introduction of individual reintegration plans and Follow-up.




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This Win-Win-Situation is not only shown in the 1st rank Volkswagen Autoeuropa occupies in the Health-Liga of the VW plants but was also put down on paper in an internal survey, which counted with the participation of the whole employees: a great motivation and a big identification with Volkswagen Autoeuropa.

“Technique” must be mastered by people. And this only succeeds if the company’s structure is adequately developed. At the latest on this point we come to the outstanding role of the “soft skills”. And while in the first certification procedures, i.e., of ISO 9000 these aspects were not so deeply evaluated, nowadays the Quality Assurance Systems are looking for a sustainable anchoring of these topics.

Motivation - Survey

The survey with about 200 questions was done on the 7 July 2005. 98% of the employees participated.



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Examples of questions:

You are / You are not satisfied with:

- the performance evaluation system,
- the hygiene and industrial safety conditions in the company,
- the relationship between the colleagues and the management.

Statement	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1. My supervisor is fair	5	15	45	35
2. My supervisor is fair	5	15	45	35
3. My supervisor is fair	5	15	45	35
4. My supervisor is fair	5	15	45	35
5. My supervisor is fair	5	15	45	35
6. My supervisor is fair	5	15	45	35

In conclusion it can be observed that Volkswagen Autoeuropa is focused on a sustainable creation of healthy working conditions and health care of the employees. Regarding the demographically expected care problems, the company can still rely on the current employees' structure. The main aim continues to be the creation of attractive jobs providing the necessary material conditions in order to financially facilitate the individual pension funds.