

From machine operator to manager

Career path: How Klaus Fichtelberger made it at baier & michels (b&m) in Ober-Ramstadt.

When Klaus Fichtelberger finished school in the mid-1990s, he imagined that his former teacher would be proven right. “From Thomas Jühe, I kept hearing the phrase: ‘Klaus, you can do it!’” reports Fichtelberger. The Pfungstadt native found his initial situation difficult with regard to career prospects. “I had an extended secondary school degree, hardly any knowledge of English and, moreover, initially no idea how I could develop myself further.”

Today, Klaus Fichtelberger is a member of the management team at baier & michels (b&m) in Ober-Ramstadt. With 500 employees worldwide, the company, which is part of the Würth Group, develops and fabricates fastening solutions such as high-performance screws and sealing systems for the manufacturing industry, for example for automotive producers. In addition to the b&m units in China and Turkey, Fichtelberger is also responsible for the global IT department.

Open corporate culture offers opportunities

How did this career path become possible? “The first step,” says the now 43-year-old, “was an traineeship at the Röhm company in Darmstadt.” The second step is described by the family man with

a smile as “something you really have to want to do.” In a total of seven years at night school, Klaus Fichtelberger completed middle school – in parallel to his daily job routine – earned his industrial master’s degree (specializing in metal), discovered his affinity for numbers during accounting courses, and added a degree in technical business administration on top of that.

The third important step has been joining b&m. “Compared to many corporations with rigid structures, b&m relies on an open culture

that rewards performance and inventiveness.”

Klaus Fichtelberger started as a machine operator in 2008. In the growing company, it was soon not only his know-how of stamping and forming technology that was in demand. “Customer contacts and procurement management, investment planning and personnel responsibility, I was allowed to organize more and more and gain experience,” he says, adding: “The moments when I realize that Mr. Jühe was actually right are my personal drive.”



Significantly boosted b&m's business in Asia: Klaus Fichtelberger.
Photo: b&m / Rüdiger Dunker