



## Talent development faces new challenges

**The increasing average age in industrialised countries and the need for qualified talent in less developed countries present new challenges for a global player such as Linde.**

### Lifelong learning

The shift in global demographics presents a range of HR management challenges. On the one hand, we face a rapidly ageing population and rising life expectancy in industrialised countries. On the other, we need to systematically tap and develop talent in emerging and developing countries. In many industrialised countries, Germany included, the pool of qualified specialists is dwindling and experts are urgently needed. This is attributable to falling birth rates and reduced investment in education.

There is an acute shortage of engineers in particular. The ability to attract highly qualified engineers is, however, crucial to the long-term success of a technology player such as Linde. We have taken a number of steps across all levels of the education system to actively resolve this shortage. For instance, we have established a number of sponsorships with schools in Germany aimed at raising interest in natural sciences. Looking beyond Germany, we are also actively involved in partnerships with universities and the research community.

Another example of our proactive stance in this area is the active encouragement of learning among older members of staff through the WeGebAu (Weiterbildung Geringqualifizierter und beschäftigter älterer Arbeitnehmer in Unternehmen) programme. We are initially rolling this scheme out in Germany in conjunction with Bildungswerk der bayerischen Wirtschaft, the educational institute of industry and commerce in Bavaria. This move underpins our belief in targeted education opportunities for employees of all ages.

### Global, dedicated talent development

To ensure we can meet our future needs along the full competence chain, we take as global a perspective as possible on talent development. The Junior Circle of our Gases Division, for example, networks talented young employees from around the globe at a regional level. Competence networking complements traditional hierarchical structures, also increasing responsiveness and speed across divisions. Under the umbrella of our People Excellence programme, our various HR development initiatives are designed in a modular fashion to meet the needs of different target groups. We believe in complementing theory with hands-on experience, giving our trainees the best possible springboard for a successful career in our company. Group-wide examples of this in practice include training schemes for future managers. They are coached by Linde-certified trainers who are qualified as engineers, scientists or technicians. Our Line Manager Training Programme is targeted at top and second-level managers as these carry the greatest direct responsibility for staff at Linde. One of the core competencies acquired with this course is people management – how to effectively steer and actively engage employees in such a way as to strengthen the company’s position as a whole.

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