



Greater success with team building

Better knowledge transfer, increased productivity, higher motivation: many factors speak in favour of teamwork over the 'one-man show'. People are also well aware of this at the company PFB – Printing for Business. In order to boost cooperation even further, several members of the team recently travelled to London – from the trainee to long-standing colleagues.

Companies in which people with different skills and personalities work together on a project, share tasks and take joint responsibility for the whole thing are generally particularly successful. 'Working with rather than against one another is really, really important,' says Jolanta Biberstein, development manager at PFB. If it is a success like it is at PFB, then it is usually put down to good teamwork.

Yet it is also clear that good cooperation among colleagues cannot be imposed, nor does it happen 'just like that'. Many factors go into laying the foundations to ensure that teamwork goes well and all members cooperate with conviction. 'The most important basis is mutual trust,' stresses PFB CEO Bert Jansen. 'There must be a culture of conflict within the company that is supported by everyone from the trainee to the boss. Decisions and tasks

must be implemented in a binding manner – this also applies across all hierarchical levels. If these requirements are met, the key foundations for good teamwork are laid: The team becomes stronger and individual team members increasingly see themselves as part of a 'bigger picture'.

Yet putting all the nice theory into practice has also been made more difficult at PFB in the past two years, with employees often hav-

THE PFB TEAM VISITING ITS PARTNER ZEBRA TECHNOLOGIES: 'The most important basis is mutual trust.'

ing to work from home on their own due to the pandemic. Even though the rather routine matter of regularly talking to colleagues was maintained through video meetings, it was not exactly easier. Some of the new employees who joined the company in spring 2020 had little time to get to know their colleagues properly before the pandemic. 'None of us here are robots, but humans made of flesh and blood,' underlines Jolanta Biberstein. She is convinced that if you only know your colleagues from virtual meetings, then it is hard to build trust.

BUILDING TRUST

As a team-building exercise after the difficult pandemic phase, PFB therefore decided to organise a group trip. The destination: the English capital London. This was no coincidence. It is location for the headquarters of the company's most important supplier Zebra Technologies.

But of course London is also one of the most dazzling, exciting cities in the world, making it a good setting for getting to know each other a little better and sharing ideas. All colleagues were eligible to go on the trip. On

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RAMONA WEBER, PFB Office Manager.



account of absences due to illness and other private commitments, nine employees ultimately decided to embark on the journey together. Among them were the longest-serving employee Ramona Weber and the trainee Vanessa Sening.

SUPPLIER VISIT

The trip began at eight o'clock in the morning at Düsseldorf Airport. Shortly after arriving in London, the name of the game was 'hop on, hop off'. The sightseeing bus took the travellers from Tower Bridge all around the capital. In the evening, they went to the Oblix restaurant, which not only afforded a breathtaking view of London, but also offered an excellent dinner menu. The next day, a visit to the design department of Zebra Technologies in the West End was on the agenda, along with a ride

on the London Eye and a boat tour along the Thames. Just before the start of the weekend, a visit to the Zebra headquarters in Bourne End was planned for all of the travellers. This visit was particularly special for Bert Jansen. 'Zebra Technologies is our most important supplier. It is very important for our company to have Zebra Technologies as a strong partner.' The PFB team should definitely get to know the British better in order to build on the successful growth of recent years in the various market segments. Bert Jansen himself took advantage of the opportunity to hold a meeting with the European management to discuss the most important projects in the second half of the year.

Before the group eventually flew back to Düsseldorf Airport on Saturday afternoon, they also went to Madame Tussauds and to Buckingham Palace to see the Changing of the Guard. Despite the perfectly organised programme, there was still time for everyone to take in 'extra tours' either alone or with other colleagues.

THE LONDON EYE: 'We are all humans here.'



SUCCESSFUL TEAM BUILDING

Following the four-day trip to London, the entire PFB team only had positive feedback. The colleagues all got on really well. 'It was not only very well organised beforehand,' stresses office manager Ramona Weber. 'Everyone treated each other with respect from morning to night. We had a lot of fun together and there was no friction. During the tour around London, I noticed time and again a real willingness to help one another,' says a happy Ramona Weber. At the age of 56, with 23 years spent at PFB, she was the most experienced colleague on the trip. Her summary: 'In terms of team building, it was really worth it!'

Folker Lück ■