

How we empower IT talents with a culture of collaboration

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16/08/2020 To stay ahead of the game and master the transformation from a traditional automotive company to a software-enabled automotive tech player, promoting young IT talents is key for Mattias Ulbrich, CIO of Porsche and CEO of Porsche Digital. About the importance of culture, great IT projects, and the Porsche people behind it.

In a time and society that is subject to such rapid change, companies need to define their very soul and be clear about their purpose. The place that we as Porsche want to have in the hearts and the minds of our fans should be described with the **feeling of making a dream come true**. This also applies to us as an employer.

We want to offer **young talents, especially in the IT industry, the opportunity to live out their dreams** and follow their pioneering spirit as this is a characteristic that has been part of our heritage since day

one. Ferdinand Porsche paved the way with his famous quote „In the beginning, I looked around and could not find quite the car I dreamed of. So I decided to build it myself." Almost 70 years later, our dream cars are powered by and equipped with state-of-the-art technologies.

We are very pleased that we are able to **enthuse young IT specialists** about German motorsport tradition and its software-driven future, as studies show. In the current Universum employer rating by Wirtschaftswoche, **Porsche took a leap from 7th to 4th place among IT graduates** — ranking right behind the three tech giants Google, Microsoft, and Apple among more than 30,000 students. Particularly pleasing is that Universum confirms the results of Trendence, the second most important employer ranking in the student sector with more than 40,000 respondents. There, Porsche rose from 13th to 8th place among IT specialists.

Transformation needs a culture of teamwork, trust, and transparency

The results of the rankings are no coincidence. We have been working hard on **establishing a culture of collaboration and open innovation** that is particularly attractive to young talents thinking about joining us with all their creativity and new perspectives. Our understanding of leadership is based on **empowerment instead of rigid hierarchies,** on **trust instead of top-down-directives**. We aim for an open, honest exchange among employees. Our approach to decentralized and agile teams leads to a new relationship between developers and managers. We encourage creativity and responsibility and foster innovation, constantly asking how we can support our technical experts.

The ongoing **shift of decision-making towards the experts** is empowering on several levels: people who have the absolute responsibility for what they are developing tend to develop better products and come up with more creative solutions and concepts that are more thought out. The manager/developer relationship changes from "do this" to "how can I help you?", creating more trust and quality work. In this way, trust becomes the biggest time- and money-saving factor and the most important requirement for good relations.

Change pays off

There are many projects that showcase the results of this approach — for example, the partnership with Startup Autobahn, in which our innovation managers bring young tech startups to Porsche for collaboration, or the challenging but yet exciting and rewarding cloud journey of the My Porsche team, taking our customer service platform to the cloud for the best customer experience. It ranges from digital payment processes enhancement to driving the digital workplace and contributing to Volkswagen's new digital production platform, just to name a few of the many examples of digital excellence that many of our IT and innovation specialists are already working on.

Our goal is always to **support talents in their personal growth,** which is why I am extremely proud when

I see that our ideas and our vision are also appreciated by others. My respected colleague Cihan Sügür was just recently awarded by the CIO foundation and the CIO magazine with the **CIO Young Talent Award** that is dedicated to **outstanding young IT talents** and is endowed with a scholarship for a part-time MBA program at WHU — Otto Beisheim School of Management.

Overcoming rigid silos takes not only technical skill but also personality

Cihan joined Porsche's IT in 2018, having previously worked for Olympus, Deutsche Bahn, and IBM. Right now, he is part of our **Technology Acceleration and Management team.** Cihan is a great example of the kind of young IT talent we want to promote at Porsche. It is not only his technical skills and experience but above all his passionate personality and visionary mindset that contributes to **driving the digital transformation at Porsche.**

At Porsche, we are on a journey to **transform from a traditional automotive manufacturer to a software-enabled tech player.** We have the plans for our digital future in place — but we **need more young talent** with the right mindset, IT skills and visions to realize them. We can only achieve our aspirations as a team, and I'm very proud that people like Cihan are part of it. Once again: Congratulations, you deserve it!

Info

Text published by Mattias Ulbrich, CIO of Porsche AG and CEO of Porsche Digital.

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