



PORSCHE

Porsche Consulting
Porsche Akademie

Learning with Ease

At the Porsche Akademie, clients glean first-hand experience in the methods employed by a lean company. This is achieved by working on simulated production lines. The variety of methods used to achieve significant learning effects has been well received. Here, emulation is encouraged. And numerous clients are now setting up their own employee training workshops.

□ CHRISTIAN WEISS

📷 NIELS SCHUBERT



Can folding a cardboard box be the be-all and end-all? It can—if it is done properly. In an area encompassing 24 square meters, production work procedures are replicated and simulated: every step from procurement of materials to delivery of the finished products. A marvelous game—if it only worked. Pre-assembly stock is far too large, the quality of the cardboard boxes frequently leaves much to be desired, and productivity is on the modest side. What, then, is the solution to the problem?

Welcome to the Porsche Akademie, where a bit of frustration at the beginning enhances learning effectiveness. When Marc Zacherl sees the perplexed faces of his “conveyor belt class,” he knows that the day’s instruction could not be off to a better start. The head of the Akademie deliberately begins with traditional production methods, a far cry from the low-waste approach that is his ultimate teaching goal.

“We intentionally first meet our clients in the familiar reality of their own business. Their first awareness of shortcomings is the catalyst for that first profound Eureka moment.” And that is the start of implementing change. With guidance from the consultants, the cardboard box assembly line is reorganized and remodelled in multiple rounds—in effect, a race against both the clock and against previous production figures. The “factory workers” gradually learn the basics of lean processes and are exposed to pull, flow, takt, and zero-defect principles, as well as a slimmed-down just-in-time production.

At the end of the day, the taste of success. After four rounds, the cardboard box-folding team sees the world →



Towering success: In the cardboard box simulation, the “assembly line workers” improve their production results with every round

Participation leads to a paradigm shift, to a new way of thinking. Of special note is the fact that participants experience this change themselves, because the focus is on the individual



The experience is all the more impressive because it is gained first-hand in a reality-based simulation and is thus anchored more firmly in memory

in a much rosier light: a sixth of the original lead time, inventory down to a tenth, and half the space initially required. Productivity has shot up 40 percent and the takt has evened out to a steady 15 seconds. “Self-awareness enables the experience to create a deeper, more lasting impression,” according to Zacherl. “We help our clients develop receptivity to change, which in turn significantly increases the effectiveness of joint projects.”

Every year, approximately 2,000 participants arrive at the Porsche Akademie. Members of management boards,

managing directors, production managers, department heads, and skilled personnel—everyone lines up next to the conveyor belt and learns that the methods used in lean management can deliver spectacular results whatever the functional area or business industry.

The Porsche Akademie has 16 employees—predominantly engineers and educators with an average of 13 years’ professional experience—who are responsible for giving clients the tools needed to implement the changes they desire for their company. The cardboard box simulation is generally just

the beginning. In all, the Akademie has an entire “armory” of available simulations, allowing the most suitable type to be selected for each group of participants.

The Akademie’s most recent acquisition is the model hotel it developed, whose specific purpose is to be organized as efficiently as possible. The main target group is the construction industry. This “training hotel” is also superbly designed for working with system manufacturers and companies with highly complex maintenance and repair processes.

The Porsche Akademie program



This training method continues to expand into ever widening circles. At the same time that the Panamera went into production in Leipzig, the Porsche Akademie established a branch there. The initial participants were Porsche employees, but this location is now available for use by all Porsche Consulting clients. And it includes a direct view of the Panamera assembly process—one of the finest examples available for observing lean production and logistics in action.

In setting up site-specific academies, Marc Zacherl's team can draw upon a broad range of experience. The Bietigheim experts have equipped more than 15 companies from various industries with their own on-site academies, always integrating “realistic situations” as part of the training program. So clients from the aerospace industry, for example, can send their employees to be trained in the construction of aircraft—against a stopwatch, as usual. ←

The Akademie's program serves as a turbocharger for companies—with its clear objectives: faster, higher, more sustainable



Practical instruction: Effective immediately, external clients too can learn the principles of leaner work processes at the Porsche Akademie in Leipzig—like here during a simulation of producing toy trucks. Real assembly of Cayenne and Panamera models—one of the best examples of lean production—runs in the background



Room with a Visionary View

Porsche Consulting runs a model hotel

Demand is increasing for “lean construction,” or the use of lean principles in the building sector. Through seminars, the Porsche Akademie is preparing this industry for the sweeping changes which are taking place in day-to-day work and has its participants building a specially developed hotel—and then tearing it down.

□ CHRISTIAN WEISS

📷 MARIJAN MURAT

There is no relaxing at this hotel. This is where you roll up your sleeves and get to work setting up walls, installing sanitary facilities, and laying cables or carpets. If you complete the construction project on schedule and successfully collaborate with craftsmen and suppliers, you can then look forward to the prospect of a room with a visionary view. It’s all about lean construction—putting lean principles to work on a construction site.

Right down to the last detail, the Porsche Consulting experts have taken the utmost care in making their construction site simulation as authentic as possible. Working with their own specially developed hotel, clients re-enact a typical working day and, with guidance, change processes and learn to master such problems as costly rework or deadline pressure. “Margins in the building industry have been in a slump for years,” says Principal Jörg Kaiser, “so it’s time to change course.” Therefore, these lean construction seminars pinpoint new approaches for the industry. Here, learning about so-called takt planning and takt control is a particularly crucial element. These are all methods with one overriding objective: To have a building emerge which takes into account all of the suppliers and trades and which has been completed according to the rules of lean production. The focus here should be on the value-adding process—an attainable objective which can be used to great effect. Porsche consultants have visited various construction sites, and determined that only 43.5 percent of on-site activities have previously added any value.

The Porsche Hotel

For the creative-thinking session with a serious purpose: The Porsche Hotel measures around two meters in length and has two floors. The hotel has 15 rooms, an entrance area, and a tower. Porsche Akademie clients are timed as they build and rebuild the model, each time using slightly modified processes to carry out all the tasks involved for the various trades.

