

MAGAZINE FOR EMPLOYEES

X
PRESS



Be Bolder
Mental fitness is possible. Our experts provide the best training tips.

PAGE 12

The New Thinking Power
AI is changing our lives – many things are faster and achieve better results.

PAGE 14

ONLY THOSE WHO TAKE ACTION TAKE OFF!

Getting started without letting bad news distract you. This is a strength that many colleagues prove every day. We spoke with some of them.

PAGE 6

LANXESS
Energizing Chemistry

FROM THE COMPANY

STAY CONFIDENT!



DEAR COLLEAGUES!

The economic situation remains challenging, but we still have to make the best of it. Many of you are demonstrating how to do this on a daily basis. You pursue the goals you have set for yourselves and do not allow your confidence to be damped. That is contagious.

That's why, in this issue, we introduce you to colleagues who are doing inspiring work in their field: like the protagonists in our focus story (from page 6) or the winners of the LIFE budget (from page 18).

Our colleague Stefan Geissler is also doggedly pursuing his topic. He

was named independently by many colleagues when asked: "Who in the company is committed to our sustainability strategy?" He has now been presented with the new Sustainability Pathfinder Award. Congratulations! (page 22)

For anyone interested in more theoretical knowledge on the subject of "Maintaining confidence in difficult times", I recommend the tips from the two experts Carl Naughton and Hans Rusinek (from page 12).

HAVE FUN!

MIRKA STEIN,
HEAD OF INTERNAL RELATIONS



SCAN ME

**Here you
can find
all issues
online
as well.**

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The commitment of an individual can inspire and advance an entire team. We introduce you to colleagues who have stuck to their goals despite some adversity.

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Stefan Geissler tirelessly searches for ways to make smarter use of energy in companies. This has not gone unnoticed.

COUNTERACT!

Worldwide. The situation in the chemical industry is critical. The cost reductions from FORWARD! and the improvements from the Excellence Program are taking effect. However, the economic downturn is so severe that further steps are necessary. The Executive Board, BU and GF managers have discussed this and decided on several measures, such as the immediate halt to the IPP program in 2025 and no IPP in 2026. There is also a global hiring freeze, a request to review existing flexi models and much more. Structural measures are also being worked on. "Each and every individual can help us get the Group through these difficult times", CEO Matthias Zachert urges everyone.



"At Continental, we are continuously working to improve the environmental footprint of our products. Collaborations such as the one with LANXESS and the use of innovative rubber additives such as Vulkanox HS Scopeblue help us to get closer to our goal of using more than 40 percent renewable and recycled materials in our tires by 2030."

Steffen Ryssel, Head of Purchasing in Continental's tire division. The tire manufacturer is the first to use the new, more sustainable rubber additive from LANXESS, which is also ISCC PLUS-certified.

PERFORMANCE SHOW

Japan/Tokyo. LANXESS shows what is possible: The transformation into a specialty chemicals company was within reach at the "Solution Day" in Tokyo. With expert presentations and seminars, LANXESS demonstrated its innovative solutions to around 150 customers and partners in six key areas: "Batteries and Mobility", "Cosmetics and Personal Care", "Electronics and Semiconductors", "Construc-

tion and Coatings", "Agriculture", "Food and Beverages" and "Sustainability".

For example, visitors were able to find out about advanced battery materials and rubber additives for electromobility or learn about high-performance solutions for semiconductor production and data center cooling in the electronics sector. All made by LANXESS.



1400

POUNDS OF FOOD!

This is the impressive amount of food collected by employees at the LANXESS site in West Hill, Canada, through their self-organized donation campaigns. This will provide food for around 650 families. Congratulations!

NATURALLY DELICIOUS

Worldwide. For centuries, pomegranates were considered the food of the gods, who – at least in mythology – are of dubious character. They probably didn't want to give up any of the sweet and sour fruit and let it spoil quickly. But this is now a thing of the past – at least in the USA. Since the end of 2024, the natural preservative Nagardo has been approved for surface treatment there.[®] Its glycolipids adhere to the surface of the kernels and act efficiently against microbial spoilage. "This opens up new sales opportunities and reduces food waste", says Julius Tertilt, BU MPP. Nagardo[®] has been permitted in soft drinks and non-alcoholic beer in the EU since 2022. Now it is also to be used in food. It is already approved for dried, smoked sausages in the USA. "We are seeing an increasing demand for natural preservatives and are working on new fields of application and the necessary regulatory approvals for Nagardo[®] – for liquid food supplements or other fruit applications, for example", says Tertilt.

THREE QUESTIONS TO

LUCAS MARTINI,

Site manager in Memphis, MPP BU, USA



Ask the Colleagues!

In August, 20 site managers from the Americas region met in Toronto, Canada. Over the course of three days, they participated in more than 25 presentations, hearing from over 30 speakers. They also visited the West Hill site of the LAB business unit. You, Mr. Martini, were also there. What was your experience at this meeting?

Lucas Martini: A very fruitful exchange. I was able to talk to all my colleagues about the challenges at their respective sites. We shared experiences and presented best practices to each other. If every site implements even one idea from this week, safety, operations, cost efficiency, and team building will improve significantly. I am convinced that this opportunity for mutual exchange is crucial to the success of each individual plant.

What new ideas or practices will you now implement at your site in Memphis?

I really got a lot of fantastic ideas for Memphis. What impressed me was the use of digital checklists, which were presented on the topic of predictive maintenance. There was a great presentation by Bastian Jana. I am talking to his team to introduce these digital checklists in Memphis as well, where we'll use iPads specifically for this

type of checklist. This allows us to document information in real time and take photos that we can upload directly to the system. This will make our work and the entire site management more efficient and better. Of course, this will also bring us another step forward in terms of safety.

Another thing I'm looking forward to is the visit by the Operational Excellence Site Diagnostics team in Memphis. We're excited to discuss how to implement AI tools in our distributed control system with the goal of achieving significant savings in the use of our raw materials.

What was the most valuable or insightful experience for you at the meeting?

Networking. For example, a quick Teams call with someone I met in person this week can trigger a valuable initiative that significantly improves our plant. This allows me to leverage our company resources without having to bring in external consultants. It's quick, easy, and much more cost-effective. It's also good to know that we in Memphis are not alone in our efforts to optimize our operations. The visit to the West Hill plant was also inspiring. The facility and the people there were impressive. And I was really glad that the tour didn't take place in winter.

DO IT, INSPIRE OTHERS, TAKE OFF!

Mauricio Buchdid was not discouraged, even though the suppliers initially showed no interest in his electronic auctions. Laura Kovach and her interdisciplinary team did everything they could to get a customer to switch products, and Jack Conen wanted to optimize the transfer of knowledge at Saltigo. Many of them are committed, contribute their expertise, sometimes fail, but then carry on. It is precisely this attitude that will ultimately get us through a crises successfully.

One commentator wrote about the final of the European Basketball Championship in September: "Once again, Germany was asleep at the start and fell behind. The Turkish team played like they were unleashed, and the outcome seemed clear. The Germans were also missing important players due to injury. But then the reigning world champions came to their senses and fought their way back. Suddenly, players emerged who no one had previously thought of. They scored crucial points and, in the end, captain Dennis Schröder made the winning play for Germany. What started out so moderately ended with the title. The mixture of individual performances and team spirit had prevailed.



THE HAPPINESS BRINGER

Confidence and trust are inner attitudes that are also fed by experience. "Unfortunately, we mostly remember negative experiences. That is a mistake. Instead, keep in mind what you have already achieved in your life," advises Naughton. (More on this on pages 14 and 15).

MAKE AN IMPACT IN YOUR OWN ENVIRONMENT

This advice is perhaps particularly important in these times. After all, who doesn't let themselves be dragged down by the seemingly endless stream of negative news? But that doesn't help – neither for yourself nor for those around you. Individuals cannot change the world situation, but they can change their own situation. And that can lead to a personal sense of achievement in the professional environment, which ultimately helps the entire company. A colleague like this acts as a role model. After all, motivation is also contagious.

DON'T QUARREL, PREFER TO ACT

Fortunately, we at LANXESS have colleagues like this in a wide variety of positions around the world. They are not complaining, they are acting. And because this is so important for us in order to get through these difficult times together, even for LANXESS, we would like to introduce some of them to you below. They are only a few examples among many not mentioned here.

If you know of any great actions by a colleague, please write to us. We are happy to share positive examples.
Email to: xpress@lanxess.com

What applies to sports can also be transferred to working life: one person can carry everyone along – in both negative and positive ways. This is also possible in a company. For example, the colleague who remains motivated despite poor economic data and realizes his project in the best possible way. The one who suffers setbacks, analyzes them coolly and carries on. The one who believes in himself and thus has a motivating effect on others. The lucky guy? "No," says consultant Carl Naughton. This is an attitude that can be trained. It doesn't have to be God-given.

In Japanese culture, the crane stands for a healthy, long and fulfilling life. Legend has it that if you fold 1,000 cranes out of paper, your wish will come true.

Maybe start today and give this good luck charm to a colleague?



You can find folding instructions on YouTube.

E-AUCTIONS AT MPP

CONVINCING BY PERSEVERING STAY TUNED-CONVINCED



For around ten months, I have been trying to establish electronic auctions more and more. At first, I had great difficulty persuading suppliers here in Brazil to participate in my e-auctions. Many work according to a "monthly price list model" and have never had any experience with electronic auctions. I had to do a lot of persuading and convey the necessary knowledge to them as simply as possible. That was a big challenge. On the other hand, these tools also offer advantages to suppliers: They have many more opportunities to win orders. At the same time, of course, there is also increased pressure to be undercut by other companies and to lower their asking prices.

Different types

We have various types of e-auctions at our disposal, but we use reverse e-auctions most frequently. In this process, we set a maximum price, and several competitors submit descending bids to win the contract. This is a flexible solution. During the auction, suppliers can view their bids and their position online. Suppliers usually know their ranking but not the actual bid prices of their competitors. The big advantage of this auction is that we always end up with an offer.

The outcome of the Dutch auction strategy is somewhat more uncertain. We generally use it when there are fewer approved suppliers. In this case, the auction starts at a low price, which is gradually increased. The starting price is based on the supplier's reference price and the average price of the previous year. However, such auctions are tricky. I once planned eleven rounds for an auction and took a very aggressive approach, but the offer was only accepted at the 10th bid. So, there is always a risk that there will be

no offer at the end and the deal will fall through. That's why the planning for this type of auction must be much more decisive. The pressure to accept the offer is on both sides. If a supplier accepts the current offer, the auction automatically ends with a winner.

Strategy worked

But it can also work out well. When I had to buy a raw material for which there were only three approved suppliers, I decided to use the Dutch auction strategy. In the first step, I requested a reference price (RFI: Request for Information) to define the auction target. We had also planned to reduce the price by 15 percent. So we set our minimum starting price. With each bid, we gradually increased our offer, and the supplier had time to accept or reject it. In the end, we were very satisfied with the result. We were able to reduce the price by 11 percent compared to the reference price and even by 18 percent compared to the average material price in 2024.

Extensive preparatory work

However, preparing for this auction was time-consuming. First, we had to inform the three suppliers about this different form of e-auction. We arranged a meeting with each supplier to remind them of the date and time of the auction. It was also important that only employees with decision-making authority on the supplier side participated in the auction. We established auction rules and coordinated with the stakeholders. These suppliers had already been trained in the use of the tool.

E-auctions have led to significant cost savings for us in Latin America. This method currently covers around six percent of the total expenditure of the

MPP site in the IPEL portfolio. Key factors for maximizing the effectiveness of e-auctions include defining suitable materials, maintaining a qualified supplier base, training users of the tools, educating bidders, coordinating stakeholders, establishing clear rules, and ensuring clear communication. Although this requires some effort initially, it usually leads to significant time savings and better decision-making processes later.

The exchange of experiences has proven to be extremely valuable for me. I was encouraged to continue down this path. Understanding the process, learning from initial attempts, and adapting the concept to my specific requirements were crucial to my success. It was also important to me that questions about e-auctions, such as choosing the right type or using the right tool, were answered directly by the Center of Excellence (CoE) or the Ambassadors team. This has created a truly global community.

Overall, e-auctions bring greater transparency, competitiveness, and more dynamic negotiations. The next step for me now is to work with the sales team to share knowledge and insights. Our goal is to develop a variety of strategies that will open new business opportunities for the company.



MAURICIO BUCHDID
Senior Procurement Manager,
GF GPL, MPP BU

CUSTOMER SEGMENTATION AT PLA THE EXTRA MILE DO IT!



As part of the Commercial Excellence Initiative this year, the Polymer Additives commercial organization reanalyzed and segmented our customers, identifying along the way 90 accounts that still have strong growth potential. The newly formed "squads" – cross-functional teams comprising representatives from sales, marketing, and technical are tasked with tapping into this potential. In addition to myself as Strategic Account Manager, our squad includes Global Product Manager Michael Bearer and R&D Lab Manager Emily Mayes.

Our K-FLEX Dibenoate Coalescent agent is used to reduce the volatile organic compounds (VOCs) of a coating formulation to hit target VOC values, while maintaining the film properties for the

performance of the coating. Our goal was to expand our business with a leading manufacturer of coatings and paints at three new plants. In June, we achieved this: Purchase orders were placed for the three target production sites in the US.

Reliable delivery

How did we achieve this? By earning an "A+" report card for our current business: on-time deliveries, 100% quality performance, and strong technical support for current business and projects. The account is actively identifying and presenting business opportunities for growth. Our supply chain model of having product at terminals for different regions of the country was a good match for the selected companies with their plants. That was a big advantage for us.

Once that first order was placed, it became essential for us to deliver as promised, and this is where we received critical support from outside the squad: demand planner Timo Breitkopf and customer service representative Anita Lorch both played key roles in ensuring smooth implementation, reliable delivery, and first-class service.

Close communication

Weekly conference calls between myself, Anita, and the customer's supply chain team confirmed on-going operations requirements to include in our planning, enabling us to avoid disruptions. After all, every product change involves high risks, especially during the transition



LAURA KOVACH
PLA Account Manager Laura Kovach
reports

phase, when problems can have serious consequences for production and thus also jeopardize the reputation of individual employees at the customer. By communicating proactively and collectively examining and analyzing all potential difficulties in advance, we were able to gain the trust of our corporate contact and management.

Include all sites

The decisive factor in this case was that we communicated with both the operations and commercial stakeholders, offered them practical solutions, and anticipated problems. Beyond this immediate success, we have also received impetus for further joint development projects that could expand future business even further and we are in direct contact with the customer's technical teams. Our Customer's Category Manager has already expressed his great confidence by requesting direct project updates from me for these new projects and has confirmed that our approach works for both him and the company.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AT SALTIGO

TOGETHER TO THE BEST SOLUTION

How do the others actually do it? We have often asked ourselves this question when faced with complex challenges in the development or optimization of a recipe. Because even if our products and systems are different, we all face similar tasks: Designing production processes efficiently, defining parameters precisely and combining system functions optimally. There is therefore a great deal of specialist knowledge in the plants at Saltigo - but no way of sharing this in a structured way. Solutions are developed multiple times, even though they have long existed elsewhere. This costs time, money – and energy. And we wanted to change that!

The idea was therefore to set up a knowledge exchange project for automation engineers. As the Saltigo plants work with different process control systems and therefore also with different programming languages, methods and structures, it quickly became clear that the meetings would have to take place on site instead of in the meeting room in order to develop a real understanding of the other area and the "wording" that prevails there. So two companies always got together and organized dates for visits and return visits.

More than just spectators

Very practical questions from our daily technical routine were involved: How is a nutsche operated or a process step carried out? How do you define the end of a filtration process, for example? The guest automation engineer gains access to the local system and thus a deep insight into the work processes.

Perhaps the other company has a more efficient way of carrying out a work step and your own company could benefit from this.

The first meetings have shown that valuable impulses have been generated for both sides. We have also already identified some approaches that can offer added value across all locations but have so far only been used in one plant.

The aim of future longer exchanges will be for the guest to create a recipe for one of the existing products – using their own logic and methodology. This will then be compared with the original and discussed together.

The project shows that it is not about finding the perfect system. Every plant has its own strengths and challenges. But if we create transparency and share good ideas, we can achieve so much more together.



JACK CONEN

Process Expert Automation, Saltigo, Plant 4

PROCESS OPTIMIZATION FOR ACCOUNTING

FASTER WITH THE CUSTOMER

A customer calls and wants to buy a product in a different container size. A simple request, really. But internally, this means handling a process that involves up to 30 steps in multiple systems and involves up to 15 people - including Sales, Marketing, Controlling and Quality Management. Processing took around 30 days on average - which naturally led to frustration. Because as long as the new material master data has not been created in the system, no order confirmation can be sent - and the customer could drop out.

Our goal was clear: to equalize the workflow and reduce bottlenecks. The challenge: every business unit is organized differently - some have higher-level data teams that control the entire workflow; Others work decentrally. It is therefore not always easy to find a solution that works for everyone. We therefore entered into an intensive dialog with our contacts.



COMEX ACADEMY IN THE USA

MORE KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO MORE SALES



**CARSTEN
SEGSCHNEIDER**

Group Function Accounting, Team
Master Data Services

After a year of intensive project work with the business units, IT and the Commercial Excellence team, we now have a leaner, more efficient workflow. We have removed as many steps as possible from the "critical path" so that a larger part of the process can now run in parallel. This means that the overall duration is not necessarily extended if one point takes longer. With a new dashboard, we can also specifically monitor where certain steps are particularly time-consuming. This allows us to target these areas in the event of anomalies.

Our ideas are having an impact: It currently takes an average of just 17 days to create new logistics materials, such as finished products or raw materials. And we can do even better: 10 days is our declared goal. But we can only achieve this if everyone pulls together. If you extrapolate the potential time savings to the 5,000 or so data records that we create each year, we can make a significant difference - both for LANXESS internally and for the satisfaction of our customers.

The Commercial Excellence Academy focuses on growth initiatives. And there is still plenty of room for improvement. For various reasons – such as the pandemic, acquisitions, and internal obstacles – we had become too focused on internal matters. Now we needed to refocus on our customers. The training brought everyone together: We gathered ideas on how we could improve and collaborate across business units. In my more than eight years at LANXESS, this was a first for me, and I really appreciated it.

While this project focused on CASE (Coatings, Adhesives, Sealants, Elastomers), MPP and PLA also have common customers in the areas of water treatment, agriculture and plastics. My colleague Michael Bearer, BU PLA, and I had already noticed a year earlier that we had a very large overlap of mutual customers. At that time, we decided to work more closely together. Now we used the Academy to formalize this.

The benefits of this kind of cooperation are already clear, especially with customers who are important to both MPP and PLA. For example, we once knew that a customer still had growth potential. PLA was in closer contact with the contact person in the purchasing department than we were. Thanks to PLA, we received information that we could use to generate further growth with this customer.

Specifically, we have identified five important CASE accounts in our training courses. Our goal is to coordinate these major accounts in order to discover growth opportunities and potential collaborations. Another important aspect is that customers do not try to play the BUs

off against each other. Recently, there have been cases where customers have told us that MPP and PLA have made different statements about pricing structures with regard to customs duties. We want to either avoid such situations.

Or we want to have a good explanation for them in advance as to why the BUs approach certain issues differently.

Due to the specialization of our individual BUs, each of us must remain in contact with customers. However, we must convey a consistent message across all BUs. In addition, we should always look for further opportunities to offer our customers solutions beyond the current offerings of the individual BUs. We need to find ways to leverage existing relationships between business units and customers to increase LANXESS's overall sales.

We want to create a culture where collaboration between BUs becomes the norm. There are still many opportunities for growth. In fact, MPP and PLA recently had a joint meeting with an agricultural company.



ROB CASTANEDA

Industrial Preservation & Coatings Market
Segment Manager, MPP BU



BE BOLDER!

Those who are mentally fit perform better. This is good for the company, but above all for the employees themselves. At their events during „**Mental Health Week**“, the two experts Hans Rusinek and Carl Naughton will explain how you can succeed in shaping your own working life with optimism and confidence.

The news just won't get any better - neither inside nor outside the company. The wait for an economic upturn is grueling. I personally can't change the fact that it's not coming. "That's true. But whether it comes or not is independent of the decision to commit to a project at work. Keeping an eye on external circumstances is important, but they don't prevent us from taking action ourselves," says futurologist Carl Naughton. Good, but looking outside affects our mood, in other words, our motivation. The expert has an answer for that, too. He has answers to quite a few questions that only allow one conclusion: Those who are committed, even if they make mistakes or suffer setbacks, are more likely to succeed in the end, feel better about themselves and make a valuable contribution to the company.

THE BASIS FORMS THE COURAGE FOR THE FUTURE

Carl Naughton developed the term "future courage" from the concept of "psychological capital". "It is easier to understand, evokes optimism and no associations with Freud and Marx," he says. The aim is to exploit the psychological capital that each of us has. "Studies show that people with high psychological resources are more motivated, more productive and more resilient," says the language psychologist with a doctorate. But how can you develop this in times of daily negative headlines? "Through confidence, trust, robustness and realistic optimism. Through these four dimensions, many things can succeed," says Naughton.

CONFIDENCE AS INNER ATTITUDE

And so one could ask: How can I gain confidence in the face of the many crises and uncertainties in this world? "That can be trained," Naughton is convinced. Confidence in particular is a question of inner attitude. Do I assume that the new project the boss has just presented won't work out anyway? Or do I have the attitude: 'Yes, I see this new project as an opportunity, I want to help shape it and play a part in making it a success'? "We're not talking about blind optimism here. We take a close look and also gain certainty by imagining possible future problems

THREE QUESTIONS FOR

HANS RUSINEK,

who completed his doctorate at the University of St. Gallen, where he continues to research the changing world of work.



Mr. Rusinek, you are campaigning for a better future of work. Let's say I find myself in a crisis with my work. What should I do?

First of all, crises always have a positive side. They are often the impetus for change. In your case, I would advise you to have an open discussion with your line manager. The conversation is our best "repair software". Explain in detail why you are frustrated and what you could do for the company. Then give your boss at least three months to react. He will do something.

It takes courage to seek such a conversation ...

That's true, but you only have something to gain. You spend about a third of your time working. This third should also be meaningful. Studies show that people who find meaning in their job perform better, experience more appreciation and are also much more balanced and happier in their private lives. There are interactions between these areas. The model that is often described - I go to work, spend my time there to earn money and live my real life in my private life - doesn't work. If we no longer feel anything at work, then we will feel the same in our private lives. People cannot divide themselves in two. Courageous employees are of great value to companies.

Why?

In one experiment, students were placed in a waiting room in which smoke was slowly building up. When the test subjects sat alone in the room in the first setup, they quickly left the room to get to safety from an apparent house fire. In the second setup, groups of three were always led into the waiting room. Again there was smoke, but now much more time passed before one of them called for help. Everyone relies on each other - and in the end, it may be too late before someone draws attention to a problem. So be brave and move forward!

and thinking of solutions." Even after utter failure, the confident colleague asks: "And what do we try next?" In this way, he also motivates his team and inspires them. Confident people remain capable of taking action, look for solutions and alternatives and become creative. Naughton adds: "Studies show that confident teams are more stress-resistant and develop better solutions because they invest their energy in action rather than brooding."

CONFIDENCE ARISES THROUGH EXPERIENCE

Confidence, on the other hand, is a question of how much I believe in my self-efficacy. We all know the moment when another change comes along: a new program, a project with completely new parameters - everything seems difficult. Now it is once again the inner attitude that decides. It can help to remember what you have already achieved and which challenges you have already actively tackled with a lot of energy and mastered despite a few stumbling blocks. "Research shows: People who have confidence in themselves remain more motivated, are more resilient and enjoy their work more," says Naughton.

Crucial for the company

It is precisely this attitude that is of the utmost importance for companies: "Confidence is the basis for willingness to change and innovation." After all, only those who believe in their own creative power will try out new things and drive change. "In times of transformation, confidence is therefore not a luxury but a core competence - for each of us and for all of us together," he concludes.

ROBUSTNESS MAKES SUSTAINABLE

Nelson Mandela once said: "I never lose. Either I win or I learn." This quote from the Nobel Peace Prize winner stands for extraordinary resilience. Even after spending a long time in prison, he never lost it. When it comes to our work, this means that no matter what we do or tackle a new, there will always be setbacks. How we deal with them is crucial. Do we sink into frustration and become passive or do we try to use setbacks as a springboard to learn from our mistakes and improve?

Change is rarely straightforward

According to Naughton, robustness is a key to a company's future viability. Major setbacks can be endured with robustness and even used proactively. "This allows us to remain capable of acting as a team - even in stormy times," he says.

REALISTIC OPTIMISM STRENGTHENS TEAMS

Those who attribute setbacks more to external circumstances see them as temporary and can be more optimistic about the future and take action. Realistic optimism is particularly important in teams, says Naughton. It acts as a mood anchor: When the others have doubts, it reminds them that progress is possible. This maintains a balance between sober analysis and a motivating view of the future. "Managers who exemplify realistic optimism create an atmosphere in which employees find confidence and direction even in difficult times," says Naughton. For him, realistic optimism is the attitude that sustains change. It combines clarity with hope and a sense of reality with drive. "And that's exactly what we need to move into the future with courage and success."

THE NEW THINKING POWER

STUDIES FORECAST, THAT AI COULD INCREASE GLOBAL ECONOMIC OUTPUT BY UP TO 15 TRILLION US DOLLARS BY 2030.



800 MILLIONS

users worldwide use ChatGPT regularly – that's around 10% of the world's population.

Source: OpenAI

THE DEVELOPMENT OF

1950

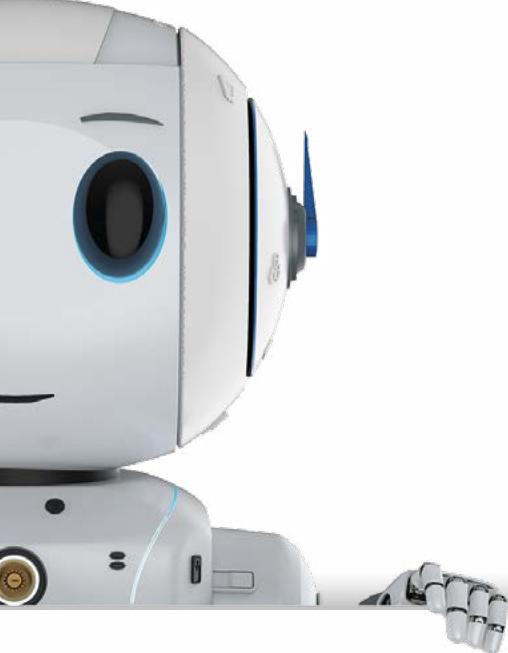
TURING TEST

Alan Turing publishes "Computing Machinery and Intelligence" and asks the question: "Can machines think?"

1956

BIRTH HOUR OF AI

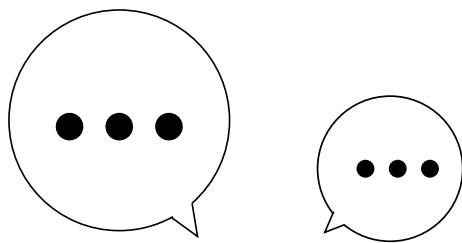
The term "Artificial Intelligence" is coined at the Dartmouth Conference - the starting point of AI research.



Whether in the laboratory, in production or in the office - Artificial intelligence (AI) is no longer a future scenario. It helps us to manage floods of data, operate systems more securely and develop new ideas faster - and is changing the way we work. **An overview.**

"AI is one of the **most far-reaching technologies**, that we are working on as humanity - more profoundly than fire or electricity."

Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google



MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION TO AI ASSISTANTS ON THE JOB:

"Can you summarize this?"

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

1997

DEEP BLUE BEATS KASPAROV

An IBM chess computer defeats the reigning world champion - a milestone for AI.

2011

WATSON WINS AT "JEOPARDY"!

IBM's "Watson" beats human champions in a quiz show - a breakthrough for NLP and knowledge processing.

2012

DEEP LEARNING REVOLUTIONIZES AI

A neural network wins the ImageNet competition - the starting signal for modern AI applications.

2022

CHATGPT IS PUBLISHED

OpenAI launches ChatGPT - generative AI becomes suitable for the mass market.



ACCOMPANYING CHANGE

Only 1%

of companies are considered "AI-ready" at - in other words, they have fully integrated AI processes.

63%

of companies do not have a clear guideline for the use of generative AI.

Only 36%

of employees feel are well prepared for the use of AI

Source: KPMG study "Generative AI in the German economy 2025"

XCHAT - OUR DIGITAL COLLEAGUE AT LANXESS

The internal AI chatbot Xchat (link on the Xnet homepage) has been available to all colleagues worldwide since April 2025. The Group Function IT team is continuously working on further improving the tool.

THIS IS NEW

SPEECH-TO-TEXT

You can create prompts by voice input using the microphone icon.

FILE SIZE

The file upload has been increased from 5 to 15 MB per document (max. 5 documents per session)

ONE CLICK

The new copy button allows content with formatting to be pasted directly into an Office document.

OPTIMALLY CONNECTED

In future, important internal knowledge sources such as the Knowledge Portal or Xdirect will be integrated in order to deliver even better results.

**150
USE CASES ...**



... for AI is currently driving LANXESS IT forward. Many projects have already been successfully implemented.

The new AI compass provides an overview.

PROMPT SUCCESS!

Man, machine - machine man: With a clear instruction - the so-called prompt - you will receive the best results.

SMALL TALK IS WORTH IT!

Be polite (this has been proven to promote cooperation), give the AI assistant feedback on its answers and feel free to ask for feedback on your communication yourself.

BE PETTY!

What response do you expect in terms of tone, length and format? What do you need the information provided for (presentation, social media post, email to a customer, etc.)? Specify which sources and templates the AI assistant should use, for example attached files.

DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING!

AI assistants can also make mistakes. Therefore, always check the answers for correct content, grammar and style.

Even more tips

can be found at the Prompting-training courses. The dates (from the end of October) can be found on Xnet.

PROFESSIONAL TIP

ROLE PROMPTING

Put a hat on the AI by assigning it a clear role for a chat. Example: You are to act as a bilingual translation agent and translate my input from German into English.

This prompt is only ever valid for the individual chat session, but can be used again at any time.

Tailor-made suggestions for the best prompts are provided by the new "Prompt Buddy**" – now available in the "AI Exchange" community in Teams.**

LIFE BRINGS INNOVATIONS TO LIFE!

LIFE stands for *LANXESS Innovation Fund & Energizer*. As unwieldy as the resolution may sound, it is true for the four winners of the LIFE budget. LIFE's financial support ensures that the PLA, R&F, IPG and MPP business units can develop their most innovative and economically promising new products for technology, agriculture, electricity storage and industrial plants.

SUSTAINABLE CABLE CLUTTER

A biologically harmless Plasticizer: This is how BU PLA convinced the LIFE jury.

There is a great call for sustainable and harmless plasticizers. After all, 40 to 50 percent of many PVC products are made from them. Even if the issue of sustainability is taking a back seat in difficult economic times, Jan-Gerd Hansel, Head of Research and Development in the Polymer Additives business unit, is convinced that it will become more important again: "And then we will be ready."

The business unit is researching such a plasticizer for PVC applications. The initial focus is on the wire and cable industry. "In our research, we can draw on knowledge that we gained years ago," says Hansel.



JAN-GERD HANSEL
Head of Research, PLA BU





In the new project, particular attention is being paid to the selection of suitable raw materials. To this end, the team is currently investigating various synthetic building blocks that come from renewable sources or can be produced in a CO₂-neutral way. Collaboration with other business units plays a key role here. The aim is to procure the right sustainable raw materials competitively. "This is a crucial aspect," says Hansel. The cost pressure among PVC manufacturers is enormous: China is flooding Europe with cheap products, meaning that even an environmentally friendly plasticizer must remain below certain price thresholds.

Environmentally friendly production

This production process produces no salts or environmentally harmful waste, only water. This simplifies the entire production process. "And we also comply with the strict European and US regulations," says Hansel.

The project convinced the LIFE jury: They approved the team's budget for two years. "That's what we were counting on," says Hansel. Now they can employ a laboratory technician who, together with the application technology department, will devote himself entirely to the tests to obtain the plasticizer with the best properties. "Of course, we are also in contact with our customers and want to tailor the product to their requirements," says Hansel.

Plasticizers account for around a fifth of the PLA BU's turnover. The new green high-performance plasticizer could take up a greater share of this or open up another business segment. The team also took this into account in its application. "Together with our colleagues Gizem Cinar from Application Technology and Miriam Bührle from Production as well as our colleague Max Siebenbrock from Marketing, we were able to present a convincing application concept," says Hansel.

CRISP ON THE SHELF

Mold is a problem for farmers - a sustainable fungicide from the F&F BU is now helping them fight it.

Since 2020, the F&F business unit has become involved with agriculture. Together with a partner, they are seeking to obtain approval for a fungicide in accordance with the EU regulation for the first time. "Our partner has expertise in the agricultural sector, while we have expertise in benzoic acid and formulation development," says Senior Project Manager Doris Pfeiffer. The product based on benzoic acid as an active ingredient is a winner – the acid has been used in the cosmetics and food industry for decades and is therefore on the GRAS list ("Generally recognized as safe") in the USA. "However, approval in the EU is a challenge due to the rules and regulations," says Pfeiffer. "That's why we initially only applied for approval for apples, pears, tomatoes and ornamental plants in greenhouses in the Netherlands, Greece, Italy and Spain," says Andre Grossmann, Head of Innovation and Business Development at the F&F BU. Even with this restriction, the scope of the required studies is enormous.

Replacing the organic solvent

In the meantime, Grossmann's team has received feedback from its partners and from the various field studies. The conclusion was that the product could be significantly improved if the organic solvent was replaced. "The brilliant idea came to



ANDRE GROSSMANN

Head of Innovation and Business Development, F&F BU

"With *Styraxo*® 3.0

we offer farmers a biodegradable, rapidly degradable and sustainable alternative."



us in a meeting with our cooperation partner. We wanted to try it with our benzoic acid in water," recalls Torsten Groth, external consultant. This approach was passed on to Amber Yarnell, head of the research laboratory in Kalama, F&F BU. After one and a half years of successful research, the optimized product Styraxo® 3.0 is now available: a sustainable and effective fungicide based on biodegradable, nature-identical benzoic acid. A patent application has been filed for the new formulation.

Improved solution for farmers

Based on the good biodegradability data, Pfeiffer and Grossmann expect that Styraxo® 3.0 can be applied up to a few days before harvest. Normally, fungicides may be applied to the fruit for the last time 30 days before harvest. "This is often a problem for farmers, as many fruits are particularly sensitive shortly before and after the harvest," says Grossmann. Styraxo® 3.0 would provide them with an improved solution for this situation.

For Styraxo® 3.0, registrations are currently being prepared in several countries with different climate zones. As each country has its own regulations, F&F needs a suitable registration partner in order to get through the regulatory jungle more quickly. For example, the efficiency of the product in the respective country must be proven in two to four seasons on the target plants. These field studies and the preparation of the respective dossiers are time-consuming and expensive. "Thanks to financial support from LIFE through 2028, we will now reach our goal much faster," Grossmann is convinced.

The Innovation Excellence Committee justified its decision as follows: "With Styraxo® 3.0, LANXESS is setting new standards in the field of sustainable plant treatment. It is a strong signal for innovation and responsibility."



MURAT GÜRSOY
Head of Innovation, IPG BU

CLEVER SAVED

With iron phosphate as a precursor for LFP cathode materials, the IPG BU is one of the very few western suppliers worldwide.

One thing is certain: wherever electricity is generated and used, storage is necessary. Whether it's wind turbines, solar panels, or even electric cars, China is leading the way in this area and flooding the world with its batteries. "We want to use our iron phosphates as precursors in battery technology to help reduce this dependency," says Murat Gürsoy, Head of Innovation at the IPG Business Unit. He estimates the economic potential of lithium iron phosphate (LFP) batteries to be very high: "We would be one of the few Western suppliers in this field."

Sustainable battery materials

This convinced the LIFE jury. The research project will now receive financial support until 2028. The jury justified its decision as follows: "The project gives LANXESS a strategic advantage in the rapidly growing market for LFP batteries and positions the company as a pioneer in sustainable battery materials."

Gürsoy and his team are currently still in the development phase. "We are testing our samples on a small scale first and then in our pilot plants. After that, we will

send them to our potential customers. Their feedback is very important to us." This work – testing, analyzing, modifying – requires time and, of course, expertise. But Gürsoy is optimistic: "We expect to be able to produce the first quantities in 2027." Interest is high. As far as is known, there is currently no iron phosphate manufacturer with significant capacity on the North American continent.

Iron phosphate consists of iron and phosphorus, both of which are harmless to the environment and are readily available. This is in contrast to the precursors commonly used for lithium-ion batteries, which consist of nickel, cobalt and manganese. "The largest supplier of nickel is Russia, cobalt is mined under question-

"We see great economic potential in iron phosphates, which we can now leverage more quickly thanks to LIFE."



able conditions in the Congo, and the EU has once again classified manganese as a critical raw material for battery chemistry in 2023," says Gürsoy. LFP batteries also offer major advantages in terms of safety: for example, they are less flammable.

Exemplary organic growth The production of iron phosphate would initially take place in Krefeld-Uerdingen. This area of battery chemicals is a new business area for the IPG BU and could represent exemplary organic growth within the Group. New business structures would also have to be created, such as in marketing and sales.

Gürsoy's optimism is based on facts: Even though sales of electric vehicles are currently weakening, the market for stationary storage stations is undergoing very positive development. In addition, the EU has made it clear through various funding programs and statements that it wants to become independent of Chinese manufacturers. The project would also benefit from the high tariffs that currently apply to Chinese products in the USA. "We are already in contact with US manufacturers who are interested in our research," says Gürsoy.

MPP WINS WITH THE SOURSWEET-PROJECT

The business unit is working on a new active ingredient.

The research project is still in its infancy. Initial molecule development and testing are taking place at the MPP research laboratory in Wilmington, USA. For patent reasons, however, it is not possible or permissible to disclose much more at this time. Xpress will report on this in detail at a later date. Suffice it to say that the project also has a cross-business unit aspect. The scaling from laboratory scale to initial pilot production is to be carried out jointly with the Saltigo business unit in Leverkusen. In line with the ONE LANXESS strategy, development for large-scale production is also to be carried out jointly with Saltigo.

"Precisely because we are still in the early stages of development, we are very pleased to have secured the LIFE budget. This will enable us to strengthen our research laboratory in Wilmington, build new research capabilities, and advance the project more quickly," says project manager Mark Kubik, MPP BU, adding:

"The additional resources will allow us to conduct further development experiments, which will increase the chances of a successful market entry."





With the new "Sustainability Pathfinder" Award, the global sustainability community at LANXESS recognizes colleagues who are particularly committed to LANXESS's sustainability goals - and thus generate cost savings or new business opportunities.

The first winner is Energy Manager Stefan Geissler (CEO PTSE), who received the award in the Cologne Tower from Inga Cramer (CEO DEV) and Sebastian Röhrig (CEO COM).

AWARDED VISIONARY

A "tireless advocate for his subject" – this is how colleagues describe Stefan Geissler. The expert from Global Energy Management (PTSE GF) has a clear vision: to use energy smarter in our operations. He has now been awarded the new "Sustainability Pathfinder" award for this.

When Stefan Geissler talks about energy, images come to mind that stick. There is distillation, which works like a saucepan: heat at the bottom, condensate at the top – which in one company simply escapes into the waste water, while another urgently needs precisely this energy. "Energy cannot be touched. It rushes invisibly through pipes, drives pumps and heats reactors," he says. "My job is to make these flows tangible and work with the companies to find out how we can use steam, electricity and gas as efficiently as possible." Geissler has been pulling the strings in global energy management in the Group Function PTSE for eight years – a task that requires technical expertise, strategic vision and a good dose of te-

nacity. Four times a year, he brings together the energy officers of the business units, informs them about new legal requirements, shares best practice examples and provides impetus.

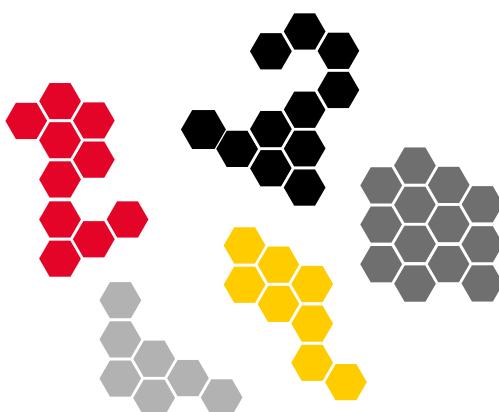
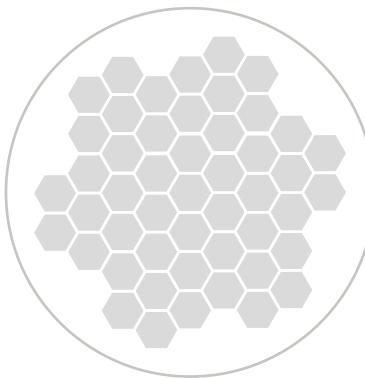
He does not see himself as a lone fighter but as an intermediary between management and the companies. "I can't achieve anything on my own. You need people in the companies who are willing to try out new," he clarifies. And fortunately, there are already a few such people, as the figures show: Between 2021 and 2024, LANXESS has reduced its annual energy consumption by around 200 GWh. "That saves us around EUR 12 million every year," says the expert. And Geissler is

convinced: "We are nowhere near tapping the full potential." But the path is not easy. Additional equipment costs money, conversions involve risks and approvals take time. He therefore also sees great opportunities through the possibilities of digitalization and AI. "New monitoring systems, which are already being used in the first farms, create a completely different form of transparency. In the future, artificial intelligence could check operating reports and provide information on how we can manage our energy flows even better," he reports.

The award, which has been prominently displayed on his desk for a few weeks now, is therefore above all an incentive for him to keep going. "For me, the Pathfinder title is clearly the result of great, cross-divisional teamwork – for the economic success of our company and the protection of the climate."

PUZZLE & WIN!

1. WHERE DOES WHAT BELONG?



How do the six pieces have to be put together to create the area shown?

2. HOW MANY INNOVATIONS HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED BY LIFE?

- a. Were there two?
- b. Or four?
- c. Or maybe eight?

3. ERROR FINDER

Five differences are hidden in the picture below. But where?



LANXESS MEANS ...

► Lancer: Frank words

With the new CFO town hall format, Oliver Stratmann is creating space for his finance team to exchange ideas, be transparent and be close – directly and globally. The idea came from Philipp Härtle, Head of Global Controlling & Strategy (GF Accounting). He says, "Especially in challenging times like these, it is important to gather colleagues around the world, provide them with additional information and strengthen collaboration." This is exactly what Stratmann has achieved with the new format.

► Success: Excellent

LANXESS had impressive results in numerous categories at the Exetl 2025 Europe & Emerging EMEA Equities Awards. The company ranked among the top 3 in almost all areas and took second place overall in the Chemicals Sector. Our Investor Relations team took first place in several categories, including best IR team in the small and medium-sized companies category and best IR team overall. The IR program and the investor/analyst event were also both finished in first place. "To receive such an award in these times speaks for the quality of our IR work. The team does a great job every day - and that deserves recognition," emphasizes CFO Oliver Stratmann.

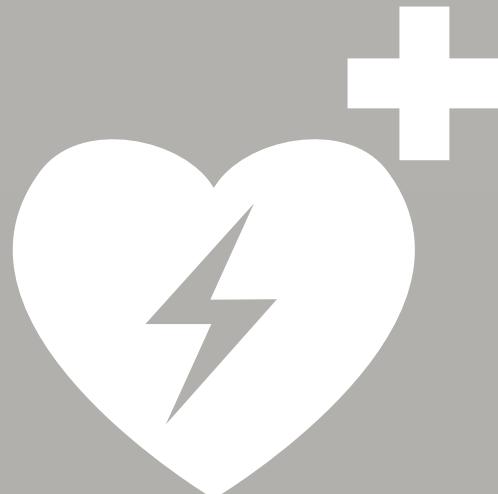
JOIN IN

Where is my bag? Where is my child? With Apple AirTags you can find everything quickly. We're giving away two. Send us the **Answer to question 2** at xpress@lanxess.com.



Employees of LANXESS and its subsidiaries (except Corporate Communications) are eligible to participate. Each participant may only take part once. Legal recourse is excluded. The solution will follow in the next Xpress. The winner of the quiz in the Xpress 02.2025 is **Li-Foong Wee**, Germany. The correct solution to the 2nd question was answer c.

QUALITY WORKS.



HEROES OF EVERYDAY LIFE

If cardiac arrest sets in, a shock helps. This is the purpose of defibrillators when cardiac arrest occurs. They are designed to restart the heartbeat and thus ensure survival.

Defibrillators in public places save lives in an emergency. Every second counts. To ensure that these life-saving devices are always ready for use, they usually contain a lithium thionyl chloride battery, characterized by high reactivity and a very low tendency to self-discharge. Thanks to these properties, batteries with thionyl chloride are not only extremely durable but also function reliably in a wide temperature range with a service life of several decades. Our thionyl chloride from the AII business unit in Leverkusen is the central component of this battery – an invisible hero of everyday life.

