

CASE STUDY: FERRERO

Competence building at Ferrero

The brands owned by Ferrero International SA – Ferrero Rocher, Nutella and Tic Tac among them – are household names fueled by product innovations, strategic brand positioning and creative product advertising. Ferrero is renowned for its numerous product innovations and invests a large proportion of its sales in the brand positioning. The company recognizes that creative and innovative employees and managers – particularly in the areas of product development, marketing and sales – are essential for retaining this important competitive advantage.



“Reading and learning are generally not perceived as work when they are self-directed and individually done.”

– Frauke Hofsommer, Head of Talent Management, Training & Development FERRERO MSC GmbH & Co. KG

Megatrends and Learning Culture

The Ferrero management wanted to establish a creative and innovative work environment for their employees. The ultimate goal was an active knowledge management and a learning organization. For years, Ferrero employees across departments had increasingly demanded more individual learning support. The company’s executive leadership team too was convinced that the future of enterprise education is inextricably linked to trends such as informal, self-organized and mobile learning. More and more workers take their professional development into their own hands, using the internet for their continuing education. For this they mainly use informal channels. As a consequence, the company’s management determined

that Ferrero staff should be supported in their career development as they expand their competencies autonomously and individually according to their specific requirements. In this they should be supported by a matching informal learning resource.

Learning with competencies

Ferrero determined that they needed an innovative, future-oriented learning tool that enabled employees to obtain and preserve knowledge. A main requirement was the integration of the Ferrero-specific competency model. Employees should be made aware of the competencies required at Ferrero. In addition, the new learning resource should be:

- tailored to individual needs
- standardized
- bilingual
- accessible remotely
- usable on all mobile devices

The content should be relevant, up-to-date and extendable. The program should be easy to use and easy to maintain. Good sorting and filtering options, system stability and a user-friendly interface were other important criteria.

The online library as a learning amplifier

getAbstract’s ever-growing online library of thousands of business book summaries fulfilled these requirements in all respects. It allows employees to procure relevant

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information on topics that are important to them from a wide selection of content. Employees and managers are optimally supported in their specific work processes. In addition to autonomous learning, the online library acts as a learning enhancer: By linking it to other staff development activities such as trainings, performance assessments or goal-setting sessions, it draws attention to the competencies that are required and requested. The summaries provide targeted support to a structured, guided acquisition of skills.

With content organized by the seven Ferrero-specific core competencies, the user is instantly able to find appropriate reading and learning resources. Monthly newsletters further draw the employees' attention to current relevant knowledge.

A growing number of users

Since Ferrero introduced getAbstract into its career development support program in 2011, both the number of users and the number of downloads have almost doubled, with the numbers continuing to steadily rise. The simple navigation and the accessibility across all operating systems enables the acquisition of knowledge outside of the workplace. This platform agnostic approach facilitates use anywhere and now more than 25% of all downloads at Ferrero are to mobile devices.

Tailored strategic support

The utilization of getAbstract by employees is not only encouraged by internal HR, but also by knowledgeable getAbstract learning consultants. They assist in the systematic integration of strategically valuable content and offer suggested reading based on corporate initiatives.

As a consequence, getAbstract helps to implement active knowledge management at Ferrero and thus makes an important contribution to the future viability of the company.



Frauke Hofsommer

“The use of new technologies in self-directed learning, by managers and employees, must be supported and promoted.”

– Frauke Hofsommer, Head of Talent Management, Training & Development FERRERO MSC GmbH & Co. KG