



The Council Forum / Craig Diem

Becoming a Team Builder

BWI Group Global Director of Manufacturing Operations Craig Diem believes Manufacturing 4.0 will reshuffle the competitive landscape, and that trust and collaboration will be required in the new era.

Q: What is your role and focus at your company?

Starting September 1, 2017, I was appointed to my new role, in which I will have responsibility for five manufacturing sites and one under construction in Greenfield, Indiana. In addition to the day-to-day production, I also have divisional production, control, and logistics, quality, facilities, and manufacturing planning responsibilities. My focus for the next year will be driving continuous improvements and flawless project start-ups. I also am focusing on putting together a plan and roadmap for our Manufacturing 4.0 strategy.

Q: What is the most pressing issue facing the manufacturing industry today?

I believe it is human resources. BWI has operations in Poland, Czech Republic, UK, Mexico, China, and soon to be in the USA. Each operation is unique in its HR challenges. In developing countries, the challenge is to retain resources after they have developed skills. In developed areas it is getting graduates interested in the manufacturing industry. Then, as technology and automation increase in each site, it is the training and skills required for employees to run and maintain the equipment.

Q: What is the most important corporate initiative you are involved

in at the moment?

As we are just getting started on the Manufacturing 4.0 journey, it would be putting together our roadmap and strategy to implement it across our global operations. We are currently having cross-functional discussions to lay out this plan, and this process will need to be managed closely as all functions have needs and desires to implement technologies so we can become more efficient. But not all of them can happen at once due to various resource constraints.

Q: What will be the most important leadership qualities to possess in the future?

There are many, but I would say team-building and change agent would be a couple at the top of my list. I have always felt that any operation, function, company, or organization is operating at its best when they work as a team. To me that means they trust each other and work together for the best interest of the organization. With all the new digital technologies available, one must embrace the changes which will happen..

Q: What will be the greatest opportunities for manufacturers over the next five years?

The opportunities are going to lie with digitization of processes and operations. It will be a challenge to implement the digital processes, but the op-

portunity will be taking full advantage of the data and information made available to improve efficiencies and performance of people and equipment. The manufacturers who can do this are going to be the winners going forward, as those that don't are not going to be able to compete on a cost basis.

Q: What is your favorite activity outside of work or the last book you read?

My favorite activity outside work is golfing. I have always enjoyed sporting activities. Must be my competitiveness. Golf allows me to get outside, enjoy the surroundings, and compete. Now if I just had more time to get out and play



Craig Diem
Company: BWI Group
Location: Kettering, OH
Size: Six manufacturing plants
Industry: Brake and suspension systems
Website: <http://www.bwigroup.com/>

