

Globe

+GF+

The global magazine for GF employees

03/22

plus
postcards



We are successful because of our differences. Examples from the world of GF show that, when we live diversity and inclusion, we can all benefit from the inspiration it provides.

CELEBRATE SMALL SUCCESSES

What Kurt Schneider from GF Machining Solutions learned about dealing with time pressure and criticism **23**

THE FUTURE IS TREMENDOUS

How GF Casting Solutions is helping shape new trends and increase efficiency in production **26**

SALT WATER INTO ENERGY

How GF Piping Systems is helping SaltPower generate clean electricity through osmosis in Denmark **32**

HELLO!

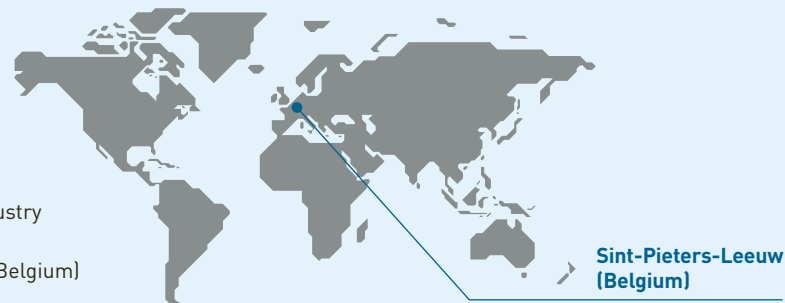
Part of a big family

How are we living the GF values in our everyday lives? Hannelore Watelle experienced "Caring" right from the very beginning, when her team in Belgium was still quite new.



Hannelore Watelle

Position: Account Manager Industry
Division: GF Piping Systems
Location: Sint-Pieters-Leeuw (Belgium)
Joined GF in: 2022



Sint-Pieters-Leeuw (Belgium)

Many new employees have joined GF Piping Systems in Belgium in recent months. Five of them are pictured above. When I started my job as Account Manager Industry, I was also among the happy ones.

The latest addition to the team is our country manager, who supports us, but we actually also support him – and we're even "supporting" him in our photo shoot!

We can enjoy a laugh and explore opportunities together, but we also

have each other's backs when there is a problem. All colleagues around the world have each other's backs and care about each other, and not just the group pictured here. You can feel it right away. Take, for example, our contact persons in the data centers, the global product managers, and many others worldwide.

I am looking forward to meeting more of them at the next GF Mystery Coffee. We are one big family at GF. You are seeing just one small part of this big family in the picture above. ■

+

And how about you?

How do you live the GF values in your everyday life? Share a photo with us. Send your photo (high resolution: approx. 2 MB) together with a short description of it to: globe@georgfischer.com.

EDITORIAL

Entering inspiring territory

Dear colleagues,

This summer, we as a family decided on short notice to spend our vacation at the seaside on account of the excruciating heat. We came across the beautiful region near Utrecht in the Netherlands, but we weren't aware of one thing: it was also Pride week. Suddenly we found ourselves in Amsterdam amid huge crowds and an enormous wave of colors. The city was buzzing; the canals were filled with party boats vibrating to the beat of the music; everyone was in high spirits. It was wonderful! We arrived just in time for Europe's biggest parade for the Pride week celebrations! There's no doubt that massive events such as this are one of the most spectacular ways to show how much we welcome diversity!

These thoughts remind me of GF. Confetti and colorfully decorated building facades are not (yet) part of everyday life. But where do we stand today as an industrial corporation, founded more than two centuries ago, in terms of diversity and inclusion? How firmly is diversity – a diversity that welcomes everyone – rooted in our company? How multifaceted and inspiring is our everyday life? We encounter these questions in the Spotlight section of this issue.

But only to reveal this much: GF recently adopted a corporation-wide directive that firmly establishes our guiding principles on diversity, commitment and inclusion.

We hope you enjoy reading and exploring this issue!

Isabel Proske
Globe Project Manager



What has been your experience of diversity and inclusion at GF? What do you think about this latest issue of Globe? How are you planning on using the postcards in this issue? We're interested in hearing your opinion and impressions. Write to us at: globe@georgfischer.com.



Does anyone know the identity of this former GF employee?

There is a picture of her on page 38. She received her vocational training at GF in 1963, but sadly we don't know her name. The Globe editorial team would be grateful for any leads you may have. Send them to: globe@georgfischer.com.

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY

Pia Bublies

Globe's designer of maps, animations, and awesome graphics also works for Die Zeit. 16



Major Tian

Our reporter lives in China and has been producing content from Asia for Globe since February 2019. 24 and 30



Ian Teh

Our Spotlight section photographer has worked for National Geographic, The New Yorker and Bloomberg. 8



SPOTLIGHT



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Teams with a diverse make-up are more innovative and efficient and the employees are happier. Our Spotlight section explores diversity and inclusion from all angles and shows how these values are lived at GF and help to drive the company forward.

CARE

24

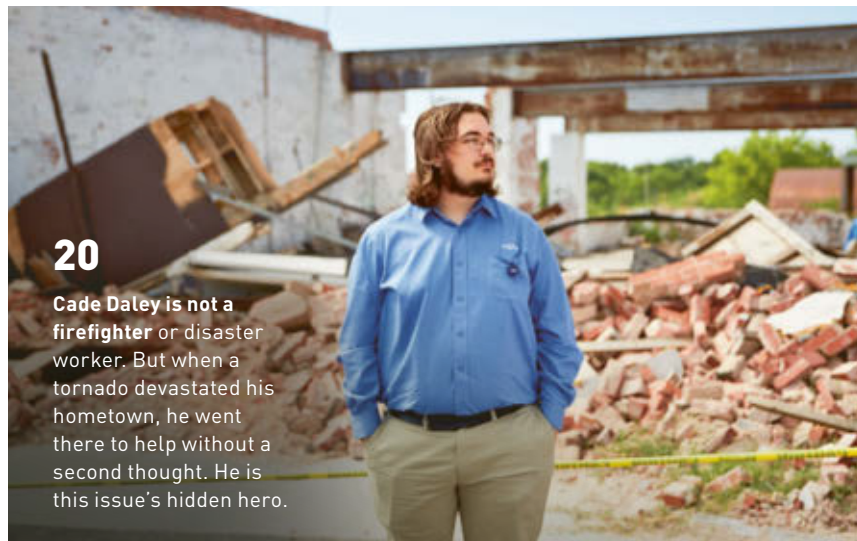
My Team: "Cooperation is the best way to respond to uncertainty and disruption."

Sean Yang Head Sourcing Manager at GF Casting Solutions



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Cade Daley is not a firefighter or disaster worker. But when a tornado devastated his hometown, he went there to help without a second thought. He is this issue's hidden hero.



Globe is also available online!

You can read Globe from anywhere in the world at:

globe.georgfischer.com.

CREATE

26

Vehicle bodies and structures consist of fewer and fewer parts, but now they're getting bigger. This is big casting and GF Casting Solutions is defining the trend. Find out more in Our Markets.



CONNECT

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SaltPower in Denmark wants to generate electricity with the help of GF Piping Systems. Find out more in Our Customers.



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What does GF Piping Systems have to do with wine? Find the answer in There's GF in It.



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GF Casting Solutions won't need to take pictures of its products any more. It's enough just to have the data.

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Products from GF Piping Systems are being used in wine-making in Australia.

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IN BRIEF



Solar power system at the GF Machining Solutions location in Langnau (Switzerland)

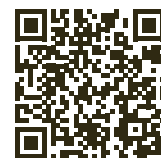
Step by step to greater sustainability

The Swiss locations of GF Machining Solutions are improving their sustainability through energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. For example, apprentices at the Langnau location helped install a photovoltaic system on the roof of the assembly hall as part of a project to improve sustainability. A solar installation will also supply the headquarters in Biel with electricity from the end of 2022. A modernized building was recently opened in Losone. The new facility attached to the existing building is now better insulated to reduce heat loss and optimize energy efficiency. In addition, the heating system has been converted from oil to natural gas.



Want to find out more?

Have we piqued your interest in sustainability at GF? Just scan the QR code: and off you go to our 2021 Sustainability Report.



Assured success

GF Central Plastics LLC in Shawnee, OK (US) is celebrating successes in safety. For 1'200'000 working hours, there have been no accidents there that have led to downtime. One section in Shawnee has even gone five years without any injuries or incidents. Now there is a safety committee for all shifts (pictured). The site was rewarded for its efforts with the Global Employer Engagement Award at the HR Summit. It also received recertification for the Voluntary Protection Program (VPP), and from the Oklahoma Safety Council came the Pinnacle Safety Award for being one of the best companies in Oklahoma for safety.



New intranet for everyone – everywhere and at all times

GF is launching its new intranet system as the central communication platform for all employees worldwide. GF is proceeding step by step and will gradually enable everyone without previous intranet access to use it from 2023. Access will be possible via app, browser and Microsoft Teams. Thanks to an automatic translation function, it will be available in all the languages spoken at GF. Access for all is intended to facilitate exchange across divisional and national boundaries.



A summer of trade fairs

After a long break, GF Casting Solutions is once again presenting itself in person at renowned trade fairs. The division met with customers in the automotive sector at Euroguss, the largest and most important trade fair for die casting, and enjoyed some lively discussions. At Cast-Forge, the team showcased solutions in the Off-Highway sector, and at the Farnborough International Airshow demonstrated its portfolio in precision casting and additive manufacturing.

The Culture Movement is turning one!

Since its launch a year ago, the movement aimed at spreading GF's new values and strengthening our Winning Culture has reached an increasing number of people and is in full swing. More than 200 change agents across divisions and regions have been trained. Together with their teams, over 1'100 employees and many teams have experimented together on how to apply our values to our daily life. More initiatives actions are in the pipeline!

Mystery Coffee talks take place worldwide



Connect with people from around the world via Mystery Coffee! Employees at GF Piping Systems have been able to do just that since last spring. They have followed the call of the Mystery Coffee talk to randomly get to know colleagues from their division worldwide with whom they

have not yet had any contact in their daily work. Mystery Coffee offers employees the chance to expand their global network. In the process, they can learn from each other and share experiences, and thus can collaborate more effectively in the future.

Register online:
<https://gfps.mysterycoffee.com/>

Launch of ERP Trans/4mation

GF is revamping its global ERP landscape. "Enterprise resource planning" represents the core of GF business processes on digital platforms. The innovation and automation of our ERP systems will make a significant contribution to profitable growth as part of Strategy 2025. ERP Trans/4mation is a GF-wide program in which all divisions are participating. It is designed to create the technological basis for new business models and will be implemented by teams from IT and Business. Stay tuned!



900 celebrate at Schaffhausen



On 29 September, some 900 employees from all divisions celebrated the Schaffhausen (Switzerland) site festival. After a two-year break because of the pandemic, there was finally once again an opportunity for personal encounters. In a joint address, Andreas Müller, Joost Geginat and Carlos Vasto welcomed guests. The Culture Movement team provided a surprising start to the evening with a team experiment in which those present enthusiastically participated.

YOUR FEEDBACK

Learning from longstanding colleagues



QUESTION:

Dear Globe Team,

It would be nice to have a column in Globe that includes special birthdays or anniversaries of long-time colleagues, possibly including a brief survey of the things that they appreciate most about GF and things that they appreciate less, as well as the reasons why. We could learn from more experienced people, as well as gain personal insights.

Participant of the 2021 Globe reader survey

ANSWER:

Dear colleague,

Thank you for your inspiring feedback. You are addressing a very important aspect that we want to achieve with Globe: to strengthen the level of exchange with each other and to bridge the age divide. We are currently evaluating our options to determine how best to go about this. Using the special anniversaries of experienced colleagues as a starting-point for the cross-generational approach is certainly a viable idea that we would like to consider in a more concrete manner.

In order to find exciting contributions in every area, we are especially dependent on suggestions from you, our readers.

Your Globe editorial team



And you?

Have any feedback about Globe or a question for the Globe editorial team? Then send us an e-mail at: globe@georgfischer.com

How D&I contributes

The opportunities of diversity and inclusion in figures

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Why we need D&I

An expert talks about diversity in companies

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How we see D&I

Four opinions on diversity and inclusion at GF

Page 19

Diverse but one GF

SPOTLIGHT: Diversity and inclusion increase a company's innovativeness, productivity and success. GF has a chance to tap the potential of more than 15'000 colleagues in 34 countries around the world. There are many examples that show how the company supports diversity and inclusion.

Common goals connect across national and linguistic boundaries, as shown by the global environmental and occupational safety team of GF Casting Solutions. This group of some 25 employees from 13 GF sites in China, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Romania has been working since July 2021 to optimize the environmental impact of our plants and promote a safety culture. Zackary Welch of the GF Casting Solutions Sustainability team recalls that, since the first video conferences with colleagues, some living thousands of kilometers apart and in different cultures, the team has developed a trusting and appreciative online working relationship. "The first brainstorming sessions showed that the challenges we all faced were similar, even if we were articulating them in different languages. This led to increasingly open communication about best practice approaches and concrete suggestions among colleagues." He quickly realized that diversity on the team was a great opportunity if the framework was flexible.

Part of the community as a given criterion

Diversity means the range of human differences, including but not limited to racial, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical or mental abilities or characteristics, religious or ethical value system, and political beliefs or associations. Inclusion refers to creating a work environment in which all people are treated fairly and with respect, have equal access to opportunities and resources and feel em- →

Leveraging diversity

Diverse teams, such as the one with (from left to right) Michele Tey, Cathy Pang, Mahdi Malik and Head of Marketing Nina Diethelm at GF Piping Systems in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), are learning a lot from their various differences.

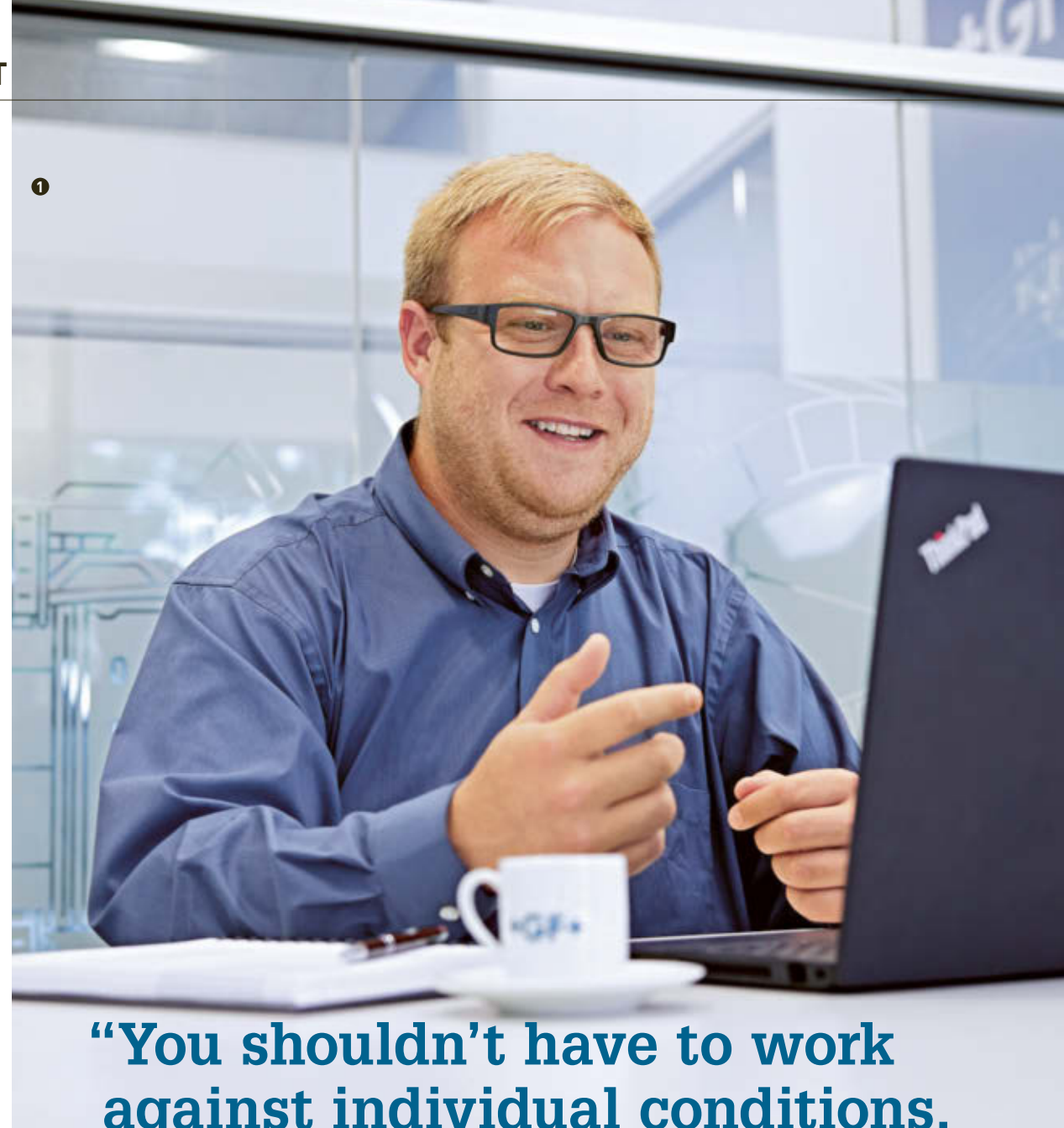


1: Zackary Welch, Sustainability Officer at GF Casting Solutions, speaks with his team via video call.

2: A total of 25 employees working at 13 different locations make up the Sustainability team at GF Casting Solutions.

36%

Increase in the profitability of companies that place a clear focus on diversity and exhibit diversity in terms of ethnicity within their management ranks. Profits can increase by 25% just with more women in management.



“You shouldn’t have to work against individual conditions, but rather integrate them.”

Zackary Welch
Sustainability Officer at
GF Casting Solutions

powered to contribute fully to the success of the organization. According to the 2020 report “Diversity wins: how inclusion matters” by consulting firm McKinsey, diverse teams are more productive and innovative; diversity is considered a real success factor. And employees are more engaged in an inclusive environment. The goal is to consciously deal with unconscious biases. With initiatives such as training programs on Women in Leadership and Unconscious Bias for employees involved in recruitment processes, GF aims to raise awareness of the strengths of diversity and to promote implementation.

In the process, international teams bring different ways of thinking and working, which means approaches to solutions can also be more diverse. “After a phase of getting to know each other, the interest in exchange and

the willingness to present their own content increased,” says Zackary. So a trust-based environment grew. “All team members together form the foundation of our sustainability system within the division,” Zackary says. “So we explained how important this is to the company and the important role all team members, with their views from the different locations, play in this.”

Innovations and new insights

As a globally active company, GF is committed to greater diversity and inclusion on many levels. Our declared goal is to create a diverse and inclusive work environment at GF where inspiration, cooperation and innovation can grow and employees are empowered to perform at their best. “We believe that diversity and inclusion generate innovation and new insights,

25%

By 2025, 25% of all new hires in management should be women. This is the goal established in the GF Strategy 2025; that goal was already surpassed in 2021 (30%).



as well as increase the quality and strength of organizations,” says Nesibe Bruggmann, Head of Corporate Learning & Development at GF. “It makes good business sense, in addition to fostering a healthy and economically meaningful work environment.” GF’s Executive Committee has set ambitious goals with its Strategy 2025. These include its aim to fill 25% of new management positions with women, an ambitious goal considering that 20% of engineering positions are currently held by women, according to the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report. For 2021, the figure was already 30%, so GF exceeded its target here in the first year of the five-year journey. Women already make up one-third of the Board of Directors, and another woman has been nominated to the Board; 15% of newly appointed senior managers are also expected to be women. GF views diversity as a valuable source of talent, creativity and innovation, which can lead to better performance levels and decision-making capabilities. For example, as a global company, GF gives employees the opportunity to gain experience in both their professional and personal lives in different countries during their careers. GF is also committed to clear values, which are set out in its Code of Conduct. Among other things, these include mutual respect and zero tolerance of discrimination. GF supports diversity in all areas of its business, something reflected in the new corporation-wide GF policy on diversity, engagement and inclusion. This defines the roles and responsibilities that will ensure that the company’s workforce diversity is better →



Zackary Welch

Position:
Sustainability Officer
Division:
GF Casting Solutions
Location:
Schaffhausen
(Switzerland)
Joined GF in:
2017

The GF definition of Diversity and Inclusion



Diversity

This means the range of human differences, including but not limited to racial, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical or mental abilities or characteristics, religious or ethical value system, and political beliefs or associations.



Inclusion

This refers to being able to create a work environment in which all people are treated fairly and with respect, have fair access to opportunities and resources, and feel empowered to contribute fully to the success of the organization.



Unconscious biases

These are implicit stereotypes held by a person about an individual or groups of people regarding their abilities and skills. These biases exist in a person’s mind below the threshold of conscious thought, and are the product of:

- Personal experiences
- Stories told by others
- Education/upbringing
- Media
- Influence exerted by institutions
- Cultural conditioning
- Other external influences

reflected in the company's work environment, that employees are engaged and satisfied with their work, and that they feel safe and are valued for their contribution to the company's success.

GF systematically scans its workforce for talent, regardless of individual backgrounds, and strategic succession planning and programs for employees with high potential have been in place for some time. Many initiatives at GF promote the individual development of employees. With Women@GFPS, for example, the company has created a network for women at GF Piping Systems, and with the "Mystery Coffee" format it invites employees to come into contact with colleagues all over the world and get to know people they have never met before. Each of these things makes an impact. According to a recent employee survey, no fewer than 80% of employees would recommend GF to others as an employer.

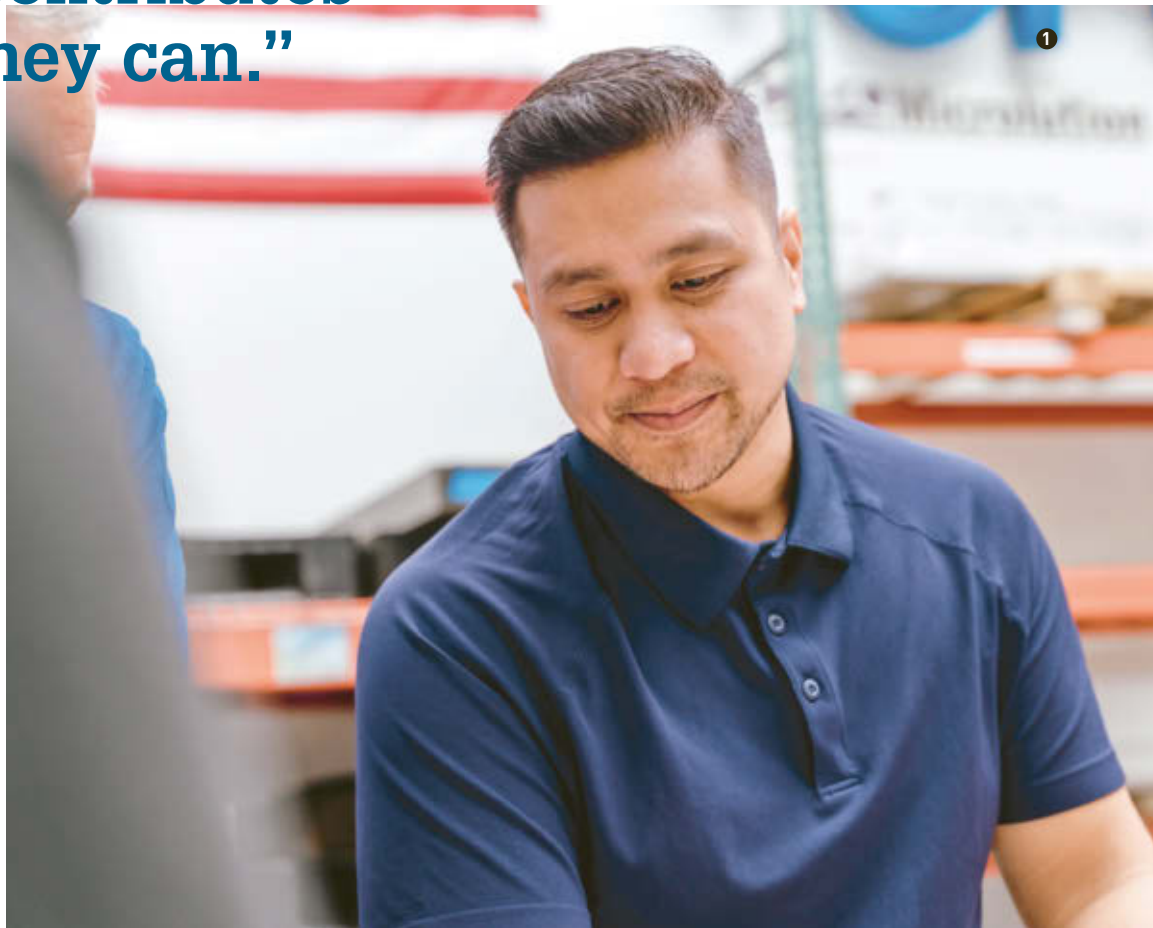
"We see ourselves as people with different characters and everyone contributes however they can."

Domingo Balangue
Production Manager,
GF Machining Solutions



Domingo Balangue

Position: Production Manager
Division: GF Machining Solutions
Location: Chicago, IL (US)
Joined GF in: 2018



Trust-based environment at work

"Diversity and inclusion are not just about human resources, they are also about leadership and are a part of overall organizational development," Nesibe says "Leadership is essential in allowing differences to flourish and in turn having them offer added value. As an employer, GF strives to build diverse teams, as well as to create a consistently trust-based, inclusive and psychologically safe work environment for all employees – a space in which everyone feels heard, recognized and at ease." This is the only way that everyone can give their best and develop their potential, she adds. It is also a given that colleagues with mental and physical disabilities are integrated into the company. GF works with organizations in the United States that support people with disabilities in developing the skills needed to work in their profession, and applies this at GF. In Switzerland, several locations regularly award contracts to workshops that are staffed by people with disabilities.

For Julie Malizia, Head of Customer Care at GF Piping Systems in the US, diversity is an important basis for GF's further development. Her daily interactions with employees and customers remind her time and again "that we are all the same regardless of our background. We are all human beings, with hopes

and dreams, successes and failures. Our individual experiences are what makes each one of us different." She points out that a diverse team is better able to understand the needs of customers.

People with different characters

Four people work together in a team for GF Machining Solutions in Chicago, and their diverse backgrounds are representative of the many, many employees in the company. Milan Bjelanovic, Machine Engineer, already has 22 years of work experience, and he loves dancing and riding his bike. Mariana Mankova, a warehouse technician who oversees shipping and receiving in the warehouse, moved to the US as an adult after enjoying a career as a professional dancer in her native Bulgaria. She is one of only six women at the location. She says that contact with people from other cultures inspires her. Pablo Valentin's family comes from Mexico. In his spare time he coaches kids in baseball, and at GF he keeps the day-to-day production running as a senior machine technician.

Domingo Balangue is a production supervisor and musters the troops every morning to discuss that day's agenda. Domingo is originally from the Philippines and joined GF in 2018. "We just see ourselves as people who have different characters and everyone contributes however they can," Domingo says. "For example, Milan tends to be quieter. So when he does say something, everyone listens because it's sure to be important." For Domingo, diversity means that everyone contributes with their individual skills and experiences. "If we want to solve a problem, then we have to be open to suggestions from everyone on the team. We obviously →



Mariana Mankova

Position: Warehouse Technician
Division: GF Machining Solutions
Location: Chicago, IL (US)
Joined GF in: 2018



Pablo Valentin

Position: Machine Engineer
Division: GF Machining Solutions
Location: Chicago, IL (US)
Joined GF in: 2019



Milan Bjelanovic

Position: Machine Engineer
Division: GF Machining Solutions
Location: Chicago, IL (US)
Joined GF in: 2019



1: Production Supervisor at GF Machining Solutions, Domingo Balangue musters the troops every morning to discuss the day's agenda.

2: Members of the team in Chicago come from a diversity of backgrounds.

3: From left to right: Mariana Mankova, Pablo Valentin and Milan Bjelanovic together at work.





“We want to generate and use the synergies together. There is a great deal of diversity on the team, and we all learn a lot from each other.”

Nina Diethelm
Head of Marketing and Communication,
Asia division at GF Piping Systems

don't look at gender or skin color, but we do look for the best input." More often than not, they feel the differences between them when they have an informal chat while at work. Mariana explains: "We all celebrate Christmas in different ways and even on different days, but we exchange our ideas about it and find many commonalities. It makes no difference where we are from or what language we spoke growing up; we're just nice people."

First parental leave, then promotion

Nina Diethelm also knows all about how an individual's performance counts for more than a person's individual circumstances. She was on parental leave following the birth of her son Yuri when her boss at the time gave her a call. He wanted to know how she was doing and whether she would like to take on a management position when she returned to the company. "Many of my friends at this stage of life are treated like ticking time bombs at job



Nina Diethelm

Position:
Head of Marketing & Communications,
BU Asia

Division:
GF Piping Systems

Location:
Kuala Lumpur
(Malaysia)

Joined GF in:
2017

interviews, but here I was being entrusted with so much new responsibility, especially in this situation," she says. "It was an enormous mark of confidence in me." Nina accepted the offer and climbed back in the saddle with a part-time position.

Nina had started as Online Marketing Manager at GF in 2017. In 2018, she traveled to Tokyo and Singapore on business. "I enjoyed talking with the people there and experiencing the different cultures so much that I immediately decided I would like to live in Asia for an extended period of time," she says. Her husband Steve, who happens to be half-Swiss, half-Filipino, had no reservations about the idea. When their son was two-and-a-half years old, Nina got the chance to relocate from Schaffhausen (Switzerland) to Malaysia. "My heart was immediately set on adventure and we decided to leave our comfort zone and move to Malaysia as a family." They have been there since March 2022. "I have never regretted it for a second," says Nina.

Inclusion achieved as a team

The GF values are tangible for Nina more than ever, because "'Caring is about being part of a team' is not merely a rule that will be implemented at GF at some point in the future. Rather, we have already been living it for quite some time." Right from the start, Nina fitted in quite easily with her new colleagues. She works with them locally as Head of Marketing and Communications for the Asia division, but also with colleagues in China, Australia, Singapore, Indonesia, South Korea, Taiwan and Japan, among other places. There is a great deal of diversity on the team. For

1: Nina Diethelm (right) benefits from the huge amount of expertise held by the employees in her team – and this is no different for Cathy Pang.

2: The team in Malaysia (from left to right): Michele Tey, Cathy Pang, Mahdi Malik, Nina Diethelm and Ronnie Soon.



example, some have only been working in marketing for a few years and originally came from different disciplines, while others have been working in the field for decades. We all learn a lot from each other." In comparison with Europe, religion plays a much bigger role at work in Indonesia and to some extent also in Malaysia. Nina points out: "There are many Muslims living here. I don't see any problem with scheduling meetings around prayer times."

Malaysia feels like a second home for Nina. "Everyone here has made it very easy for me. I feel just as at home at GF in Malaysia as I do in Switzerland." Nina has learned through both her personal and her professional experiences that, in a diverse environment, inclusion can only be achieved as a team.

"Everyone helps and supports each other, no matter who I work with here." Embracing, celebrating and leveraging differences is what makes diversity a success factor for GF and its employees.

20%

A company's proceeds from innovation are higher when women hold **20%** or more of the seats on its supervisory board.



CEO CORNER

Building a diverse GF

What makes GF a great company? I am convinced it is the more than 15'000 employees who come to work every day full of motivation and ambition, and who also expect a welcoming work environment, respectful of their individuality and life journeys. As leaders of a global company, we are responsible for the creation of such an environment, one in which authenticity plays a key role and each individual, no matter what their age, gender or personal beliefs, is given an opportunity to thrive.

How can we lead inclusively? It wouldn't be easy without having a genuine interest in people – in their experiences, backgrounds and opinions. I, for example, am curious about anyone with whom I might interact, as this is always an opportunity for me to be exposed to new ideas and inputs and different ways of seeing the world. We also need to encourage individuals to express themselves, validating their thoughts and building their confidence through equitable treatment and psychological safety. Finally, we need to be mindful of our own unconscious biases, keep them in check and work to remove barriers.

At GF, diversity and inclusion also play a role in developing people's creativity. From the production floor to the corporate office, our teams are constantly generating ideas and innovation. A diverse GF, an inclusive GF – that's one of the ways in which we will achieve our full potential together.

Andreas Müller
CEO GF

Diversity is a fact, inclusion is the act: Why we need both

INFOGRAPHIC

What benefits do diversity and inclusion bring to companies? And where does GF stand? Our facts and figures offer some answers.

Developments at GF

30%

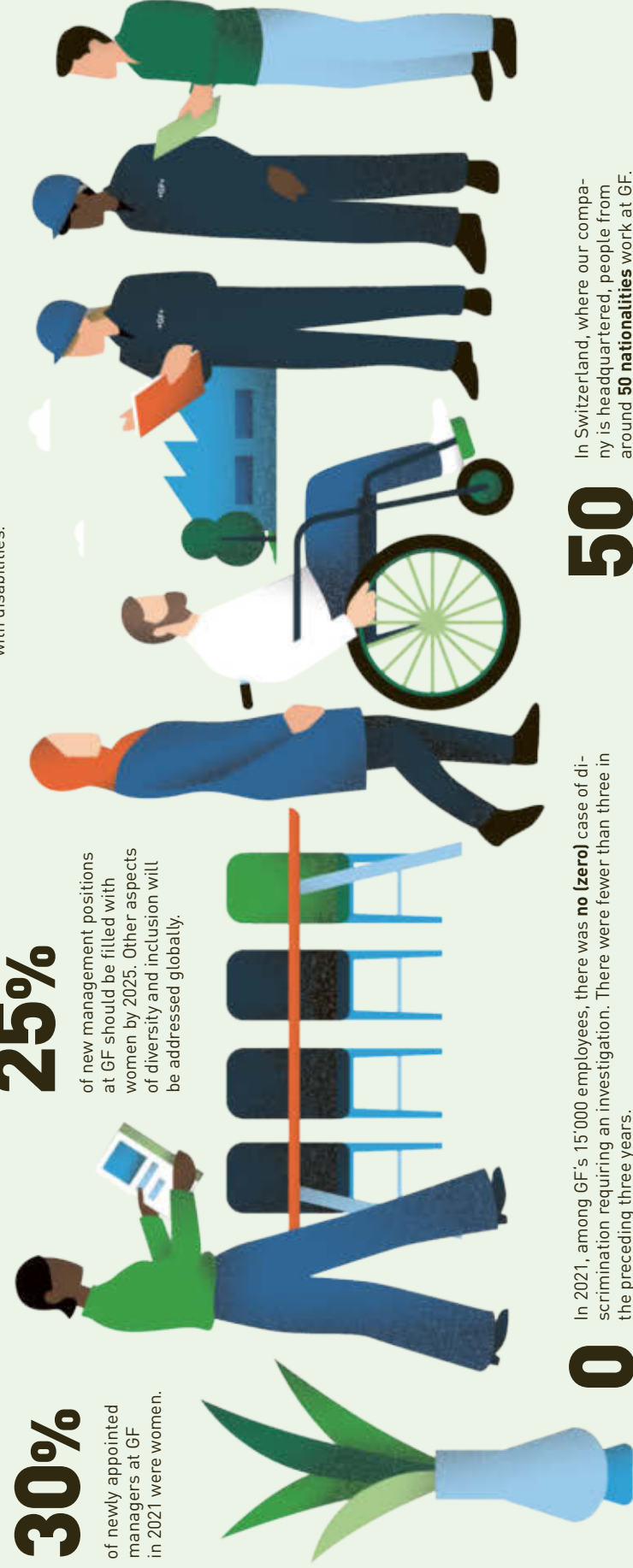
of newly appointed managers at GF in 2021 were women.

25%

of new management positions at GF should be filled with women by 2025. Other aspects of diversity and inclusion will be addressed globally.

In 2021, there were **115 employees** with disabilities at GF. GF also had an order volume of CHF 2.5 million from workshops employing people with disabilities.

GF Machining Solutions employs people from **11 different countries** at its sites in Asia alone.



0

In 2021, among GF's 15'000 employees, there was **no (zero)** case of discrimination requiring an investigation. There were fewer than three in the preceding three years.

50

In Switzerland, where our company is headquartered, people from around **50 nationalities** work at GF.

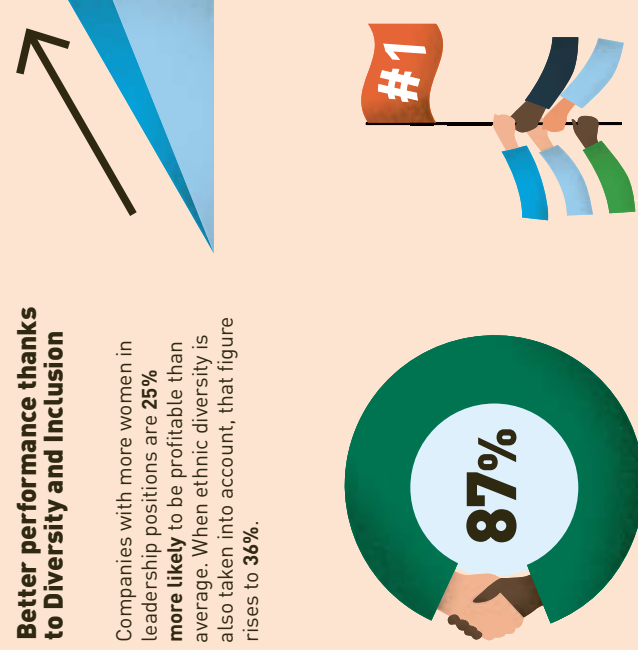
Better performance thanks to Diversity and Inclusion

Companies with more women in leadership positions are **25% more likely** to be profitable than average. When ethnic diversity is also taken into account, that figure rises to **36%**.

87%

Diverse teams make better decisions **87%** of the time.

Inclusive companies are **1.7 times** more likely to be market leaders.



Dimensions of Diversity and Inclusion



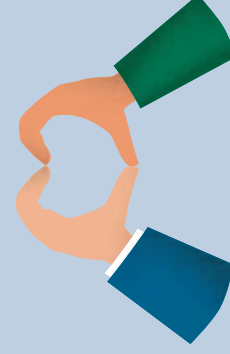
95% of companies focus on women when it comes to diversity.

Employees value Diversity and Inclusion

67%

of employees say a diverse workforce is important.

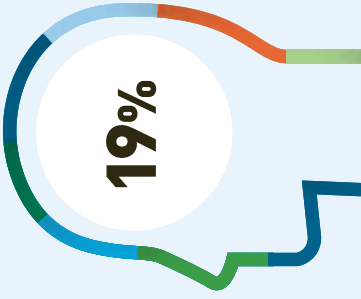
According to a survey, the extent to which a company strives for integration was an important factor for **80%** of the more than 1,300 respondents when selecting a company.



Diversity and Inclusion as a factor for Innovation

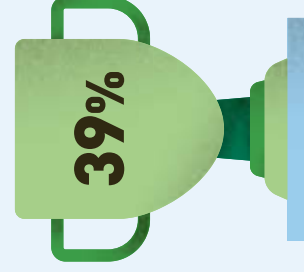
19%

Companies that reported above-average diversity on their management teams also reported innovation revenue **19%** higher than that of companies with below-average leadership diversity.



39%

A survey found that **39%** of respondents believed diversity and inclusion offer a competitive advantage in the marketplace.



Diversity is not a program for minorities

INSIDER'S VIEW



Hans Jablonski

Position: Global Senior Consultant and owner of Jablonski Business Diversity, a consultancy firm. One of Germany's first diversity managers, he co-founded the Charta der Vielfalt (Diversity Charter).

Background: For 20 years he worked in HR and organizational development at companies such as Ford Motor Company, bp plc, Roland Berger Strategy Consultants, and Commerzbank.

Expert in: Diversity and inclusion. He is a sought-after consultant, keynote speaker, and author of articles and contributions to books.

A diverse and inclusive workspace is important to a company's success. In this interview, Hans Jablonski explains how companies can best position themselves.

Why are diversity and inclusion factors that make a contribution to the success of a company?

Hans Jablonski: The business environment is very complex and dynamic, including in terms of the demographics of the labor and sales markets. Increasing interculturality, mixed-age teams, challenges to traditional values and gender roles, and social sustainability are all aspects of this. Accordingly, there are many benefits from diversity management. Diverse talent enriches the talent pool of companies. Mixed workforces are better able to reach a diverse customer base, making them more successful in new markets. Because they understand a diverse customer base better, mixed teams are also more likely to succeed with successful sustainable innovation. Companies that have diverse workforces project a more cosmopolitan image and are more appealing as business partners. And finally, motivation and commitment are increased when everyone can see that their talents are recognized and acknowledged.

At what point can a company credibly state that it is a diverse and inclusive one?

Companies are inclusive when a wide variety of talents feel addressed and are motivated to stay on board. Whether and how this is successful is something that every company must examine for itself.

Traditionally, many of the jobs in technology companies are performed by men. How can a diverse and inclusive workspace be created in such companies?

If a team becomes aware that its composition is rather homogenous, its members should ask themselves whether the work atmosphere and conditions remain attractive to other people. The goal is to enable everyone on the team to contribute 100% of their potential. As teams become more diverse, the original members eventually come to find the diversity enriching. The argument that there are no women in technical professions is no longer a valid one. Companies are motivating a growing number of young women to pick STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) subjects as early as the career choice stage – and the success has been notable. To be an attractive company, it is important to score points with all genders.

What does it take for diversity and inclusion to be practiced in companies with international operations, where people of many ethnicities and social backgrounds come together?

In these companies, it is often their headquarters that dictate the culture and career behavior. Exchange and dialog – for example, through international project teams or intercultural mentoring – have not only brought good insights for everyone involved here, but also better results.

You are white, male and western European. What entitles you to talk about diversity and inclusion?

"Diversity" is not just a program for minorities, but concerns everyone. And every individual needs to be clear about the role they play, what they have in common with others, or what makes them different from others. I support managers from all over the world in successfully leading people who are different from themselves. ■

YOUR VIEW

What does diversity and inclusion mean for you?

It seems that everyone is talking about diversity and inclusion. But what do these values mean in a work context? Four GF employees from different regions share their personal views.

Rachel Greasby

"I love the culture that comes with inclusion, people can come to work feeling comfortable and confident to be themselves, and work in a way that suits them and the needs of the business. Diversity brings different ideas to the table, positive and challenging diverse views to make a better workplace and lead to success."



Position: Managing Director
Division: GF Piping Systems
Location: Coventry (UK)
Joined GF in: 2022

Irina Frost

"I love working at GF, as it may be the most diverse company I have ever worked for in my career! Diversity at work is a source of inspiration, energy and openness that enables us to discuss ideas, solve problems and share values. At GF, we have built a culture of respect and an environment in which everyone can thrive and succeed."



Position: Head of Strategic Procurement
Division: GF Machining Solutions
Location: Biel (Switzerland)
Joined GF in: 2012

Steven Zhao

"It expanded my horizons. We can get inspired by communicating and cooperating with people with different professional backgrounds. An inclusive workspace is one where everybody can make the most of their strengths. We can give advice or get help on an equal footing."



Position: Tech and Standardization Supervisor, Maintenance Department
Division: GF Casting Solutions
Location: Suzhou (China)
Joined GF in: 2009

Carrie Schaller

"Diversity and inclusion means that there is acceptance and freedom in my work and my workspace. This means I feel no shame about who I am or what I do. GF's culture around these values not only allows me to have a better working environment, but also helps me to innovate, as I feel safe in my environment and supported by my peers."



Position: Culture Movement and Talent Management Intern
Division: Georg Fischer AG
Location: Schaffhausen (Switzerland)
Joined GF in: 2022

Successes thanks to error culture

Lessons learned by Kurt Schneider from time pressure and criticism

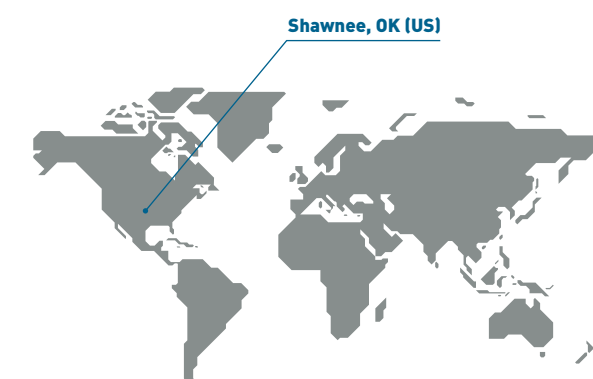
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Teamwork during the pandemic

China opened a new location in record time

Page 24

A man you can count on



HIDDEN HERO: Cade Daley had no training as a disaster worker nor as a paramedic. But when a tornado devastated his hometown, he went there to help without giving it a second thought.

Can one get used to tornados? You could get that impression from listening to Cade Daley. The 21-year-old from Seminole in the US state of Oklahoma has already experienced several of them. "There is generally a season for tornados. Mostly in May, when they get particularly strong, they are top of mind for everyone I know," Cade says. People in the region turn on the TV or radio to keep up with the news throughout the day. When a tornado is approaching, there's normally also a local warning with sirens blaring across town. "Most locals either have their own shelter or know someone who does. When that's not the case, a lot of people simply grab a mattress and take shelter in the bathtub," Cade says.

Tornados raged hard this May

Cade works as a junior systems IT administrator at GF Piping Systems in Shawnee, Oklahoma. He grew up in the small town of Seminole, home to just under 8,000 people.

On 4 May 2022, a total of 12 tornados swept across Oklahoma with speeds of up to 217 kilometers per hour. Around 7 p.m., a tornado also struck Cade's hometown of Seminole, tearing off several roofs, destroying homes and uprooting trees. "The town of Seminole had never been hit hard by tornados in the past," Cade recalls. →

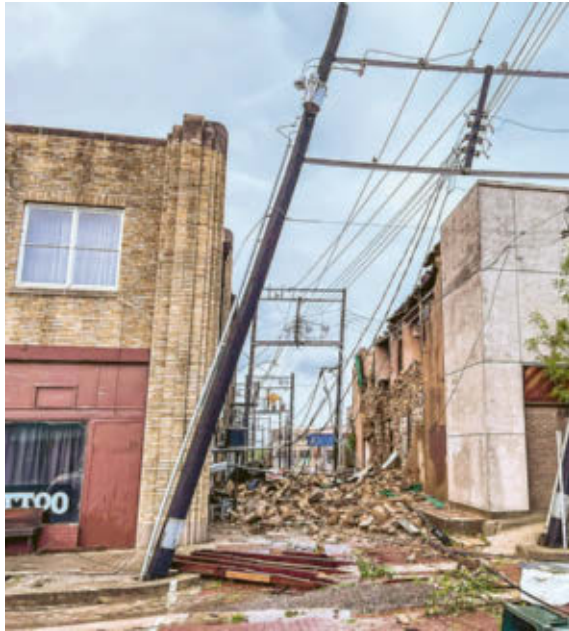


↑ Many homes in Seminole were completely destroyed by the tornados that struck the town in May.

Cade Daley

Position: Junior Systems IT Administrator
Division: GF Piping Systems
Location: Shawnee, OK (US)
Joined GF in: 2021





"It was almost a myth. People believed the place was protected from storms. So when our town was hit after all, this came as a shock to many residents." When Cade heard about the calls for help from local people looking for volunteers, he did not hesitate. The very next day, he got into his car and drove the 110 kilometers from Shawnee to Seminole to lend a hand.

← The many volunteers helped to quickly clear away the damage caused by the storm.

→ Many of Cade's colleagues consider him to be a reliable and very helpful person.

Helping others has always been important to Cade. As a student in college, he volunteered two to three times a week at a soup kitchen, and he also helped out at a food bank and the Salvation Army. When Cade talks about his many selfless acts of support, he usually lowers his head a bit and speaks softly and modestly. Just as if it were no big deal for him – unlike for the people he helped. ■

Disaster relief backed by IT skills

The IT professional offered to help the authorities and, in addition to his IT and technical skills, used the Google Voice online service to set up an ad-hoc call center for people in need of help. He prepared a list to catalog multiple affected locations and assign priorities based on the severity of the damage. The classification was based on the type of assistance and equipment that was needed at each disaster site.

Cade coordinated his work with the Oklahoma disaster management team and the Department of Homeland Security's on-scene officer. As a result of this concerted action – and only a few hours later – a map showing the priority locations for disaster relief was made available to the numerous volunteers and professional helpers.

Damage almost completely removed

The tremendous efforts of the many volunteers such as Cade meant that, only a few weeks after the severe tornado had struck the town, most of the debris had been cleaned up in Seminole. However, there are still sections with noticeable damage that affects many of the residents and the community is still recovering from the shock.

What impressed Cade the most was the solidarity of people on site. "When we finished working somewhere, some of us just kept walking down the street until we ran into the next folks who were in need of help. And within minutes, it felt like you'd all known each other forever."

WHY HE IS MY HERO:

"Cade is a hero to me because he spared no effort to help community members during a disaster in Oklahoma."

Charles Miller
Business Unit
Americas IT Lead
Shawnee, OK (US)
GF Piping Systems



And how about you?

Which colleague is your hidden hero? Send us an e-mail with your explanation to globe@georgfischer.com

MY BEST LESSON

An error culture is necessary for success

Kurt Schneider is no stranger to changes in either his professional or private life. He has often been under great pressure in his career and has had to deal with criticism. This has taught him a lot.



Kurt Schneider

Position: Head of Research & Development at TU Milling
Division: GF Machining Solutions
Location: Biel (Switzerland)
Joined GF in: 2004

Back in 2010, Kurt Schneider was promoted to Head of TU Milling's Research & Development department at GF Machining Solutions. It was a career move freighted with expectations and challenges. "At the time, the section was receiving a lot of criticism. Deadlines were not being met and we had cost overruns," he recalls. "To try to meet these deadlines, we were sending designs to manufacturing way too early. This meant that we were not locating the design flaws."

realistic about some of the challenges at the time, in terms of the amount of time and the way in which a machine could be developed." A completely new workflow was developed at a retreat with section and project management in 2013. Since then, each project is put to the test every 12 weeks, because "in order to meet deadlines, you need the flexibility to keep reorganizing the team." On one planning day every quarter, project managers and department heads openly list any problems. "After that, we address the issues or correct our approach," says Kurt.

The team realized that they needed to make substantial changes to the way they worked. "We were under pressure from outside the team to succeed and to meet deadlines, but we also had to evaluate our own processes within the team. We should have been more

The project managers interview their employees before those planning meetings are held. They do this because "when it comes to a realistic assessment of how the work is progressing, the employee is the expert, not the project manager." It takes a lot of trust and a functioning error culture. "We don't lose sight of the big picture, and there is no longer any danger of us heading in the wrong direction for a long time." This is the reason why projects are now generally implemented according to schedule. Since making the change, the rate of goals being achieved in the specified time period has increased to 80%, up from just 50%.

"It is important to help each other and to celebrate even small successes."



Kurt had already learned how to face challenges while dealing with the high pressure in the early years after he joined GF. A graduate in mechanical and industrial engineering, he joined Step-Tec, a GF subsidiary, as head of mechanical development in 2004. Soon after he started there, 25 different

defects were discovered in a spindle that had already been delivered in large quantities. It would take several years of careful fine-tuning under constant high pressure from the customer to eliminate these defects. During this time, Kurt was also coping with an extremely difficult situation in his home life, always trying to balance work and family. "I got to know myself back then," he says today. In addition to support from those around him, it was always important for him never to give up and to keep believing in the positive. He says he learned that it is important to help each other and to celebrate even small successes. In the meantime, Kurt manages the stress through his fitness training and by riding his mountain bike. "You have to know yourself and not allow work-related things to meddle with your personal life. It helps you to deal with pressure and allows you to continue with self-reflection, so you can admit mistakes and correct them." ■

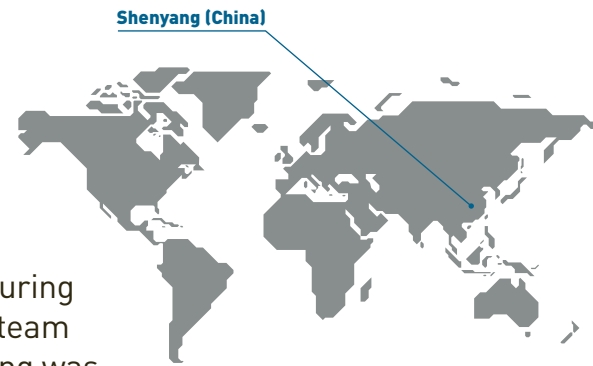


And how about you?

What life experiences would you like to share with your colleagues? Write to us at: globe@georgfischer.com.

Together against the odds

A STRONG TEAM: Commissioning a new plant is difficult during a pandemic. It takes a top team to pull it off – such as the team that made sure GF Casting Solutions’ new plant in Shenyang was inaugurated in less than 12 months.



Collaboration is the best response to uncertainty and disruption,” says Sean Yang, Lead Buyer of GF Casting Solutions China. He is responsible for sourcing equipment and machines for the new plant in Shenyang. Together with Bin Lu from Maintenance, Zhihua Zhang from Tooling and Renlong Geng, the new Head of Maintenance in Shenyang, the team worked closely together to overcome some unprecedented difficulties, making sure that the plant was inaugurated on time. The city of Shenyang, a major industrial center in the northeast of China, is more than 1’600 kilometers away from the previous GF site

in Suzhou. But it’s close to many of GF’s customers in the region, which reduces both transportation costs and GF’s carbon footprint.

Unusual ways to solve unusual problems

The Shenyang plant, which produces lightweight automotive parts for some of the world’s premium brands, including BMW and Volvo, broke ground on 1 July 2020, the same day the project was officially approved internally. Back then, the COVID-19 pandemic was still raging around the world, which turned the otherwise standard procurement process into a logistical

↓ Left to right: Sean Yang, Zhihua Zhang, and Bin Lu discuss the new plant.



← Sean Yang and Bin Lu inspect an installation in the new plant in Shenyang.

↓ The new GF Casting Solutions plant in Shenyang started production in the fall of 2021.



nightmare. “The plan was, in a way, to copy and paste the technology from the Suzhou plant to Shenyang,” says Sean. “The issue was that we needed to reconfigure a critical piece of equipment to increase the capacity for the new plant.” Since the original manufacturer of that critical equipment is based in Austria, it would have taken anything up to 12 months to supply GF with the necessary components, and that would have delayed the plant’s overall schedule by more than six months.

“We needed to stay on course, so we tried something very unconventional,” says Sean. With technical support from the colleagues at Suzhou, the team came up with a bold idea – sourcing the majority of the parts from local manufacturers and assembling the equipment in China. The Austrian manufacturer eventually also agreed to participate, and its local partner was recruited as their supervisor. This was a complex collaboration involving GF, the Austrian manufacturer, its technical partners in China and the new Chinese suppliers that were found by Yang and the team. “We needed to work together around the clock to make sure the newly assembled equipment met our technical requirements. There were so many components – it was like changing a tire while the car was still running,” Sean recalls.

There were also some logistical issues within China. When delivery of production materials was interrupted due to COVID-19 lockdowns, the team rented a warehouse in a nearby city to function as a temporary logistics hub. The weather was a challenge too, as construction had to stop during winter due to cold temperatures in the region, which added even more pressure to the already tight schedule. Thankfully, all the effort paid off: the new equipment passed quality control on time and was successfully installed in the new plant. The Shenyang plant started production in October 2021 and has been continuously increasing its capacity ever since.

A well-oiled machine

Sean, a 15-year GF veteran, believes that a performance-driven culture is what makes the team so collaborative and efficient, especially under pressure.

“We shared the same goal – serving our customers with excellent products. So everyone is motivated and willing to take the initiative, sometimes beyond our job descriptions.”

This winning culture is so pervasive that new hires such as Renlong can quickly get on board with the way things are done at GF. Sean believes that an effective and comprehensive training system also contributes to a smooth collaboration between existing and new employees. “Nowadays, all the training and learning can be done online, which turned out to be very helpful during the pandemic.”

Looking ahead, Sean expects that the plant will gradually reach its full capacity in the coming months. “This is another step towards our goal of being close to our customers and providing them with the same high-quality products anywhere in the world,” Sean says. ■



Sean Yang

Position: Lead Buyer
Division: GF Casting Solutions
Location: Suzhou (China)
Joined GF in: 2007



↑ Along with Bin Lu, Zhihua Zhang, and Sean Yang, Renlong Geng (wearing the red helmet) is also a member of the team.

Customer service in record time

How GF is re-inventing customer communications

Page 29

The new 'super factory'

A plant in China was suddenly too small – so a new one was needed.

Page 30

The future is big

OUR MARKETS: In the past, vehicle bodies and structures were assembled from many separate pieces. In the future, the body and structure will consist of fewer and larger lightweight structural parts. This reduces weight and increases production efficiency, and it's no different at GF Casting Solutions.

There is hardly another industry undergoing as many changes as the automotive industry, affecting vehicle electronics, in particular. For example, Volkswagen currently manages with 10 to 100 million lines of code in its cars' software. It will likely soon be 200 to 300 million lines of code, according to the company and media reports.

What are the benefits of 'big casting'?

While IT systems and electronics are becoming increasingly multilayered, big casting in vehicle bodywork is reducing complexity on the customer side. Instead of many individual parts made of sheet metal or extrusion, die-casting machines produce, for example, a partial front end or a rear structure all at once. There are many advantages to reducing the number of separate pieces and work steps. Lower error rates and less waste save money and energy. The larger components are a precise fit and tailored to the respective vehicle model and customer requirements.

In various development projects, GF Casting Solutions is working on integrating several separate pieces into one large component, which will in turn reduce the quantity of individual tools required and the complexity of jointing technologies, such as welding. "We have a big die-casting tool and on it the component is produced in only one shot. We are consistently implementing big casting in line with the GF Strategy 2025. We develop the components so that they can be produced on large die-casting machines with 4'400 tons whenever possible," says Frank Gensty, Chief Technology Officer at GF Casting Solutions. This leads



↑ This die-casting machine, located at the GF plant in Altenmarkt (Austria), is also capable of being used in big casting.

to significantly optimized jointing processes when it comes to connecting parts and assembly steps at the customer's site.

Production time halved

Another advantage of big casting is time savings. "Vehicle manufacturers can greatly reduce the production time of a vehicle when they assemble a complete front or rear end," says Frank. As a result, a typical mid-size vehicle is produced in just 10 hours →

Pictured here is a compilation of various body and structure components from GF Casting Solutions for different manufacturers.

→ It is now possible to cut back on many of the steps in assembly, thanks to the use of larger parts.



instead of 25. The production of larger parts and their installation also require corresponding adjustments to the plant technology on the customer side. According to Frank, many customers have already set a maximum number of the die-casting machines to be used in order to achieve the greatest possible efficiency with existing plant technology. At the same time, this also means that there need to be adjustments in logistics to accommodate the transportation and warehousing of larger parts, for example. The machines that produce the big castings are also naturally getting bigger and heavier. This in turn has a direct influence on the infrastructure of a plant.

Sustainability is in the driver's seat

GF Casting Solutions is developing a CO₂ calculator for greater sustainability. This is an attempt to provide accurate information regarding the sustainability of production. According to Frank, "Every one of our customers will receive an explicit statement about the CO₂ footprint of the cast component produced at GF. The advantage is that we can also use it to correctly simulate components in the development phase." GF is already actively shaping the big casting trend, even though it is still in its infancy in the automotive industry. "We are in the middle of implementing it and developing the ideal solution for our customers in each individual case, combining lightweight construction, integration of features, performance, economic efficiency and



Frank Gensty

Position: Chief Technology Officer
Division: GF Casting Solutions
Location: Schaffhausen (Switzerland)
Joined GF in: 2020

ecological aspects," continues Frank. According to the Chief Technology Officer, three major vehicle manufacturers in Europe are implementing big casting. "There are some companies that have not yet finalized the finer points of their strategy. What's more, traditional vehicle manufacturers will push a 4'400-ton machine to its technological limits," is how Frank analyzes the current situation in the growing market.

GF operates six die-casting sites, divided evenly between Europe and Asia, to ensure that production can always be as local as possible. This year, GF has also signed an agreement with the Bocar Group, a foundry that is headquartered in Mexico and specializes in lightweight components, to serve the US market. "We never stop trying to improve. Growth through innovation is a part of our DNA at GF," says Frank with conviction. ■

What does 'big casting' mean anyway?

Big casting is a term used to describe the production of particularly large structural castings for vehicle bodies.

3

Three major vehicle manufacturers in Europe are currently relying on big casting: Volvo, Tesla and Ford Europe. Other manufacturers are still on the fence about it, but they are closely watching the trend.

300

Cars increasingly rely on software components. Volkswagen currently manages with 10 to 100 million lines of code in its cars' software. It will probably soon be 200 to 300 million lines of code.

10

Big casting is already providing automotive manufacturers with considerable savings in terms of production time, and this could increase in the future. As a result, a typical mid-size vehicle can be produced in just 10 hours instead of 25 hours.

Special castings for electric cars

Electric cars need different components for the powertrain than vehicles with internal combustion engines. In terms of die-casting, these include battery housings and electric motor housings. Lightweight structural parts made of magnesium and aluminum lower the car's overall weight.



This car part was produced using the big casting process. It is the frame for a rear door.

INNOVATOR'S INSIGHT

Digital assistance around the clock

A software suite from GF Machining Solutions ensures that customers can get help with their machines faster and more efficiently. Digital Services Business Developer David Labadie is in charge of rConnect and explains the service solution.



Seamless Support

Customers of GF Machining Solutions can submit service requests directly from the machine's user interface.



Live Remote Assistance

Expert knowledge close at hand. With the Live Remote Assistance hotline, GF employees can remotely repair customers' machines.



24/5 Service

Since the worldwide customer services have been networked, an Italian customer, for example, can now get support from the US team outside business hours.

The challenge

Before rConnect existed, customers of GF Machining Solutions contacted customer service by email or phone. But waiting for a response costs valuable time, and information that comes over the phone is not really accurate. We wanted to develop digital solutions that would enable customers and GF experts to communicate faster and more efficiently, as well as to remotely diagnose issues correctly.

The process

During the pre-launch development in 2017, a market analysis was used, and in the further development of the rConnect software suite, design thinking methodology was also applied. We are focusing

on continuously maximizing the service. Until recently, it was still tied to working hours. Since mid-2022, the service is available day and night.

The result

The platform consists of different digital services. With the new feature, Seamless Support, the customer can submit a service request not only from anywhere with a computer or a smartphone, but now also even directly from the machine user interface, and communicate with GF experts via chat, whiteboard and camera. Via the Live Remote Assistance hotline, GF experts can remotely control the machine. For the new round-the-clock Extended Remote Support service, we have connected the local customer services around the world. ■

David Labadie

Position: Digital Services Business Developer
Division: GF Machining Solutions
Location: Meyrin (Switzerland)
Joined GF in: 2001



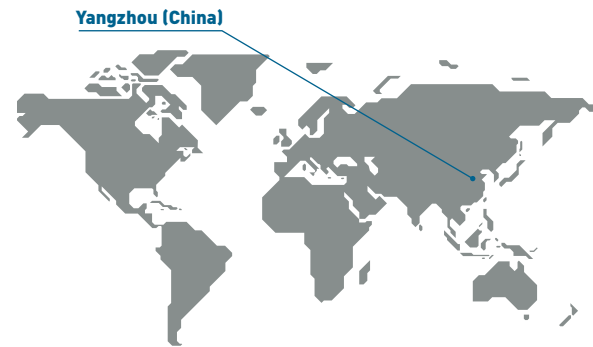
A 'super plant' for the future

ON SITE: GF Piping Systems has been represented in China since 1997. Because the old factory in Shanghai became too small, production had to move. It went to Yangzhou, 280 kilometers away and one of the most beautiful cities in this huge country.

At the tower of the Yellow Crane in the west, my old friend takes his leave / in the mist and flowers of spring, he sails down to Yangzhou / lonely sails, distant shadows, disappear into the blue void / all I see is the Yangtze River flowing into the distant horizon." With these lines, about 1'300 years ago, the famous

Chinese poet Li Bai bid farewell to a friend who was traveling to Yangzhou. The city was one of the most beautiful and prosperous places in ancient China, and Bai's lines are still so famous today that people visit the city in eastern China just because of them. But for Yafeng He, who came to Yangzhou in the summer of

↓ The new factory in Yangzhou far exceeds the capacity of the old location.



← The pipes produced in Yangzhou are used in the energy industry.

→ Yafeng [center] is in the process of preparing the workforce for the future.

2022 as quality assurance manager China and interim plant manager Yangzhou, it's about much more than just visiting the area.

A new "Super Plant" had just been built in Yangzhou, with state-of-the-art production facilities and some of the most advanced energy-saving installations. Yafeng He's job is to get the production on track as early as possible. The plant is now GF Piping System's largest and most efficient in Asia and will be able to supply GF customers in the Asia-Pacific region with a wide range of products, including a variety of PPH and PVC pipes and steel-reinforced plastic flanges. The factory is already in operation, and its capacity is to be gradually increased.

A tradition of growth

The previous location in Shanghai had witnessed the constant growth of GF's largest division in China, but it had reached its limits over the course of a quarter of a century and has since ceased operations. The size of about 5,000 square meters, with eight extrusion lines, nine injection machines and a rented warehouse of 8,000 square meters was not sufficient to meet the growing demand.

The Yangzhou plant is 31,800 square meters and with 15 extrusion lines and 30 injection machines has nearly doubled the old plant's capacity. It also has a 24-meter-high warehouse with automated systems that reduce the physical workload of employees. This

"The Yangzhou plant is a true testament to GF's global commitment to sustainability."

Yafeng He
Quality Assurance Manager GFPS China and interim Plant Manager of the Yangzhou plant

will enable it to handle the huge production capacity with the same number of people. "We are hiring more skilled workers and providing them with several months of training because they have to operate more machines. This helps build a workforce for the future," he says.

'Super' in every respect

The plant fully embodies the GF Strategy 2025. With a new, advanced 2'000-square-meter prefabrication workshop including a 500-square-meter clean room, the plant can also produce more complex and customized products, such as fabricated PVDF units. These products are often used by semiconductor manufacturers and in the energy industry. "In Yangzhou, we can now also manufacture piping systems with diameters between 8mm to 400mm for industrial and commercial applications," proudly explains Yafeng. Previously, it was not possible to manufacture products in some diameters. "This will allow us to enter a higher value-added segment in China and differentiate ourselves from many local competitors," he says.

Equipped for the next decades

GF Piping Systems has applied for National Green Building Level 2 for both construction and operation. This is the highest rating for industrial buildings in China. For example, the air compressor heat recovery system uses air compression to heat the shower water, reducing energy consumption by up to 90%. The rainwater collection system also helps to reduce consumption. From toilet flushing to irrigation, 80% of the water used for these purposes can be saved, which is equivalent to 6'900 tons of water per year. Overall, the plant is expected to reduce its carbon footprint by more than 700 tons in 2022. "The Yangzhou plant is a true testament to GF's global commitment to sustainability," says Yafeng.

Yafeng believes this positions the business unit well for the coming decades. "During the design process, we learned so much from our colleagues in Europe and the US," he says. "Seeing the plant improve throughout the process and ultimately be built before our eyes was a great experience."



Yafeng He

Position:
Quality Assurance Manager GFPS China and interim Plant Manager of the Yangzhou plant
Division:
GF Piping Systems
Location:
Yangzhou (China)
Joined GF in:
2011

**No camera,
no photo shoot**

How to create
videos and images
using only data

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**There's GF
in It**

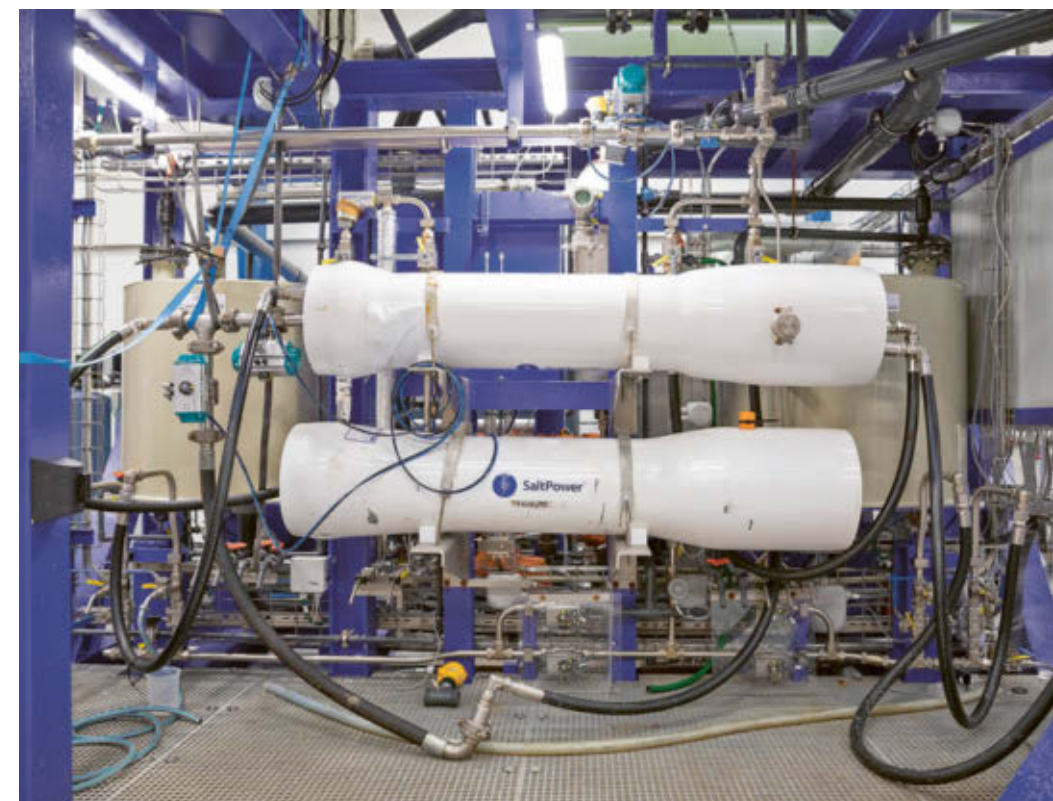
Everyday products
that have a little
bit of GF in them

Page 37



Lars Storm Pedersen
inspects the salt
water that is used to
generate electricity.

→ Fresh water and
salt water are pumped
through tanks to
generate electricity.



Clean energy from salt water

OUR CUSTOMERS: What if we could harness an unlimited source of clean energy? SaltPower has partnered with GF Piping Systems to produce CO₂-free electricity by osmosis.

In 2021, global CO₂ emissions from energy combustion and industrial processes reached an all-time high of 36.3 gigatonnes (Gt), up 6% from the year before. This reflects the upswing in the economy following the economic slowdown of 2020 that had resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic.

SaltPower, a Danish start-up taking an innovative approach to the problem of global warming, was founded in 2015 by engineer, inventor and businessman Jørgen Mads Clausen. Its unique system uses salt water – one of the world’s most abundant resources – to create emission-free energy through the power of osmosis.

While designing its initial prototype, SaltPower needed more sustainable and longer-lasting alternatives to traditional steel pipes. Having previously collaborated with GF on a project with Semco Maritime, SaltPower engaged GF Piping Systems as an official supply partner. “GF believed in our business model from the very beginning and supported us in our pioneering work even as a start-up,” says SaltPower CEO Lars Storm Pedersen. “GF’s advanced piping components and focus on sustainability have been decisive in making our pilot projects so successful.”

Using salt to create energy

SaltPower uses the natural process of osmosis to generate 100% emission-free electricity. Its system pumps fresh water and salt water through two tanks separated by a membrane with pores so tiny that only water can pass through them. Seeking a natural balance, the fresh water automatically moves through the membrane and mixes with the salt water to equalize the salinity levels. This controlled water transfer creates a build-up of pressure that powers a turbine and generates clean electricity, 24/7. The

→ Danish start-up SaltPower generates electricity from salt water. Plastic pipes from GF Piping Systems are used in the process.



Transforming salt water into energy



How the SaltPower concept works: a system pumps fresh water and salt water through two tanks separated by a membrane with pores so tiny that only water can pass through them. Seeking a natural balance, the fresh water automatically moves through the membrane and mixes with the salt water to equalize the salinity levels. This controlled water transfer creates a build-up of pressure that powers a turbine and generates electricity.



← Michael Adamsen from GF (right) and Lars Storm Pedersen from SaltPower are working on the energy of the future.

system’s only by-product is salt water, making it a sustainable energy solution for companies that produce or consume large volumes of salt.

A rewarding partnership

SaltPower is currently using GF components to deliver its first full-scale system. GF supplies plastic PVC piping along with fittings, ball valves and sensors used in the pumping chambers that combine the two water sources. Michael Adamsen from GF Piping Systems supports as industry area sales manager OEM (original equipment manufacturer) customers and others. He manages comfort- and process-cooling projects and has led the SaltPower collaboration since 2017. Michael says the change from steel to plastic pipes delivers a host of unique benefits: “GF’s plastic pipes are unaffected by salinity and will last up to 25 years, which is five times longer than steel equivalents. PVC pipes also have a much smaller carbon footprint than steel, meaning they lower costs, conserve resources and significantly reduce lifetime emissions.”

SaltPower’s systems are rated at 100 kilowatts and measure just 6x15 meters. The company says it can also achieve larger capacities by connecting multiple systems together, providing clean baseload power for facilities of all sizes.

Working together for clean energy

After several years of research and development, SaltPower recently sold its first commercial system and is now planning to scale production throughout Europe. Now that its first commercial order is underway, Lars Storm Pedersen believes that SaltPower is primed to make a lasting impact in the clean energy sector. “Renewables such as solar and wind have key roles to play in the energy transition, but they are intermittent by nature,” he says. “Using GF’s piping components, SaltPower can generate clean electricity 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, which is exactly what the world needs going forward.”

In the face of rising carbon emissions, GF is proudly working with SaltPower to develop this sustainable energy solution. And with the Danish company poised for rapid growth, this successful collaboration is laying new foundations for a cleaner, greener future. ■



Lars Storm Pedersen

Position: CEO
Company: SaltPower
Location: Sønderborg (Denmark)



INTERVIEW

Two points of view

What challenges did SaltPower face while developing its method for producing clean energy through osmosis?

Lars Storm Pedersen: Our system pumps water with a salinity of up to 26%, making it difficult to use steel pipes as they’re prone to corrosion. In addition, our clients are increasingly focused on our environmental footprint, so we needed components that would enhance our sustainability.

How did GF solve the challenges?

Michael Adamsen: GF’s salt-resistant plastic pipes and components last around 25 years, which is five times longer than steel pipes. These extended lifespans conserve natural resources, and as they’re also much lighter and easier to install, they vastly reduce maintenance costs.

What do you value most about the collaboration?

Lars Storm Pedersen: GF is a professional and reliable partner that has been instrumental in reducing both our costs and our environmental impact. GF’s plastic pipes have a small carbon footprint and very long lifespans, helping us in our mission to deliver clean and sustainable energy.

What will the future of the partnership look like?

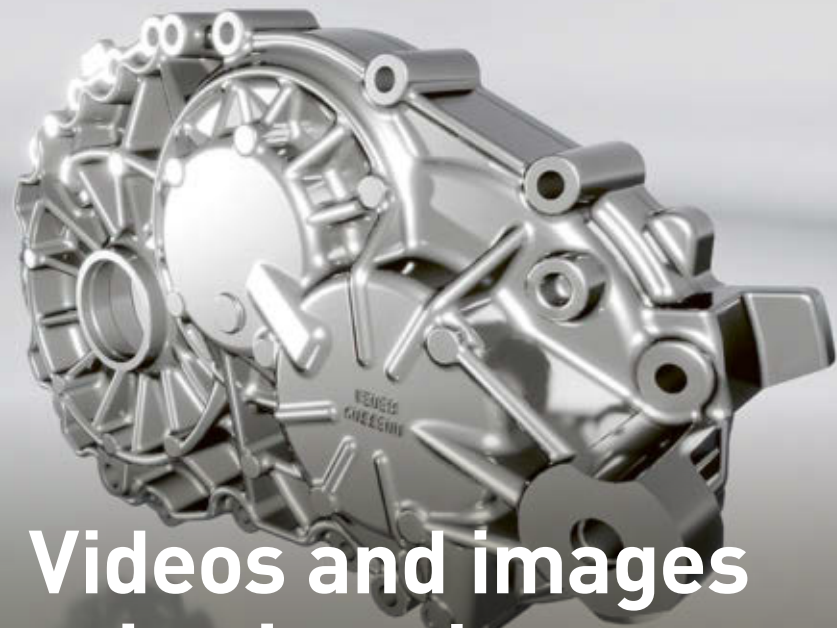
Michael Adamsen: Our cooperation has been highly successful so far, and SaltPower has recently sold its first full-scale unit. We are very proud of this progress and will continue to supply SaltPower with our plastic components for the systems that it develops in the future. ■



Michael Adamsen

Position: Industry area sales manager
Division: GF Piping Systems
Location: Taastrup (Denmark)
Joined GF in: 2012

DID YOU KNOW?



Videos and images using just datasets

GF Casting Solutions is constantly producing new cast components. It was always very time-consuming to photograph them for brochures and websites. Times have now changed, thanks to Product Viewer.

Four facts about the software.



The **Product Viewer software** converts computer-aided design (CAD) datasets, which are needed to produce a cast component, into high-quality, printable images thanks to 3D visualization. This also applies to new components that previously only existed as 3D datasets or that are still in the design phase. Product Viewer can also be used to create 360-degree videos.



GF played a pioneering role in this, and is the first company in the world to test the software, a **pilot project of the Feysinn company**. GF Casting Solutions' products are thus the first to be shown as images and videos with the help of Product Viewer, especially at trade fairs. They appear in print in catalogs and flyers, on posters and banners, or on websites.



For a photo shoot, the usually large castings previously had to be transported from the production site to the studio. This cost time and money and, because of the transport, polluted the environment. Now, the **data is imported**, the lighting is set, and the videos or images are created. It doesn't matter if it's a long shot or a close-up, as long as the quality of the artificial image is high enough.



The software can also display **cross-sections of the castings**, accurately depicting cavities such as cooling channels or structures. To do this it was formerly necessary to cut into a component, rendering the part unusable. Now we don't need to worry about producing scrap in this way. Product Viewer not only saves time, but also makes a contribution to sustainability at GF.

2.5 GB

This was the size of the largest file ever generated using Product Viewer. It was video footage for a show car that contained light metal parts, almost all of which were produced by GF Casting Solutions. And now a physical model of the car is also on display in the showroom at GF Casting Solutions in Schaffhausen (Switzerland).

THERE'S GF IN IT

Cheers!

For many connoisseurs and aficionados, wine is more than just a drink – it's a way of life. Around the world, fine wines are very popular. And GF products contribute to turning ripe grapes into excellent wine.



Did you know?

- The pipes of the COOL-FIT 4.0 system are up to **65% lighter than metal pipes**. As a result, they put less strain on building structures and are easier to transport and install.
- The COOL-FIT 4.0 system is 30% more energy-efficient than conventional systems. Thanks to its **low thermal conductivity** and integrated foam insulation, it achieves a lower environmental footprint than previous commercially available pipes.
- The lines are made of corrosion-free pipes and fittings and therefore require **no maintenance**.

Less than an hour northeast of Melbourne lies Yarra Valley. Flanked by gently rolling hills, the Yarra Valley is one of Australia's best-known wine regions. The local Zonzo Estate winery produces top wines, including Chardonnay and Pinot Noir – with the help of GF. To ensure that the yeast can ferment in optimal conditions, the correct heating and cooling are vital.

The COOL-FIT 4.0 piping system from GF Piping Systems helps with this. Zonzo Estate uses COOL-FIT 4.0 for the wine production cooling circuit and for cooling and heating the entire production plant.

In the cooling circuit that has been specially designed for the Zonzo Estate installation, a mixture of glycol and water circulates at a temperature of

–5°C. Steady temperatures are important for wine production. Most of the time, the fermentation tanks need to be cooled. However, there are certain situations in which the fermentation of wine may require heating. The pre-insulated COOL-FIT 4.0 lines reduce energy loss to a minimum, meaning that they are particularly energy-efficient. ■

TIME MACHINE

1963

Position: Technical draftsman
Apprenticed at GF since: 1961
Location: Schaffhausen (Switzerland)

Keen eye for detail

Plant photographer Max Graf took this photo in 1963 for a report on an all-female class of apprentice drafters in the employee magazine GF Mitteilungen. The former GF employee here is working at the drawing board with a straight edge, ruler, and compass.

Draftswomen made detail drawings and working drawings for production components. GF began training women in the 1950s, initially only for office jobs such as payroll clerk or draftsman. The first women in workshop jobs at GF started in 1972 as model makers. ■

AFTER WORK

Soccer creates friendship

Ben Chan plays soccer once a week with his colleagues from GF. Because the team works together not only on the job, but also on the playing field, colleagues have now become friends.

We have now been playing soccer every Tuesday for seven years. Normally, GF employees form a team with their friends, and the customers are the opposing team. The picture shows me celebrating a goal with Michael Wu from Sales (left) and his supervisor Richard Shum (center).

Scoring a goal takes skill, physical ability and, of course, teamwork. We recently had a celebration for one of the guys. He worked for one of our customers for many years. When he retired, we organized an event with a trophy, a banner and a dinner together. That's what I call friendship forever. ■

Ben Chan

Position: Cross Technology Product & Sales Support Manager
Division: GF Machining Solutions
Location: Dongguan (China)
Joined GF in: 2004

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And how about you?

What do you do after work?
 Send your photo (good resolution: approx. 2 MB) together with a short description of it to: globe@georgfischer.com.



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Thank you!

We are grateful to all our GF colleagues who shared their stories with us in this issue and supported us in publishing it.



Your topics

Do you have an exciting story that you would like to share with all GF employees? Write to us!



Your feedback

In your opinion, what was the best thing about this issue? What could we improve? We look forward to your feedback.



The Globe team (from left to right):
Isabel Proske, Klara Kaefer, Susanne Düggelein,
Carsten Glose, Marta Falconi, Johanna Lüder

The Globe editorial team is looking forward to your message! Send us an email at:

globe@georgfischer.com



Competition

All employees who send us an email at globe@georgfischer.com by **31 December 2022** with input for the sections **Hello!**, **Hidden Hero**, **My Best Lesson** or **After Work** will be included in a prize draw to win a **Samsung Galaxy Watch Active 2**.

Take part and, with a bit of luck, be in the next Globe!

This issue's winner is:

Pisano Massimo, GF Machining Solutions, Biel (Switzerland)

Conditions of entry

Georg Fischer AG (GF) is the organizer of the competition. All GF employees are eligible to participate. Participants consent to publication of their name if they win. The winner will be chosen from a random draw from all eligible entries received before the deadline. The prize cannot be paid out in cash. There shall be no legal recourse. Participating in the competition implies your agreement to these conditions of entry. Your data will be processed for the purposes of the competition. For more information, please see the privacy statement on the GF website (<https://www.georgfischer.com/privacy-statement-de>).



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