Bridging Industries and Academia – The Role of Vocational Training Centres

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Chamber of Skilled Crafts Ostwestfalen Lippe zu Bielefeld

- 23,000 Companies

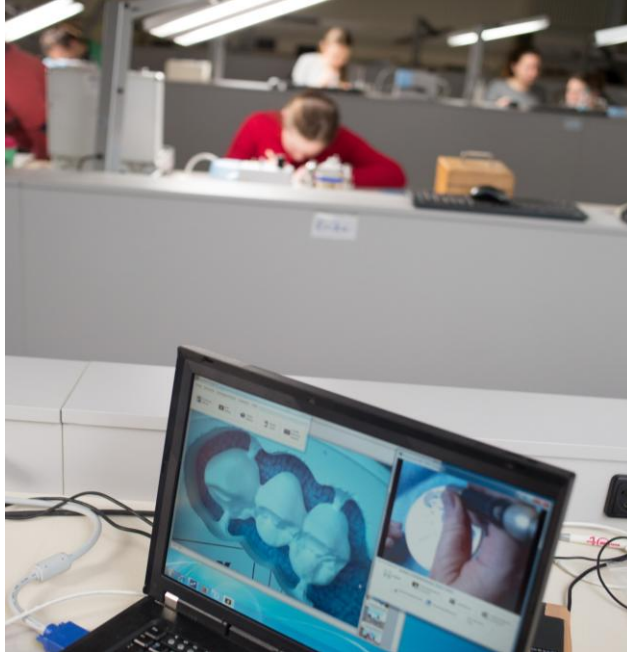- 215,000 employees

- 11,000 trainees

- 28 billion Euros in sale

Dual Vocational Training

- Learning in the Work Process
- At two coordinated learning venues ("dual") within one training programme
- 70% in the companies, 30% in vocational schools
- The Vocational Training Centres are part of the company training

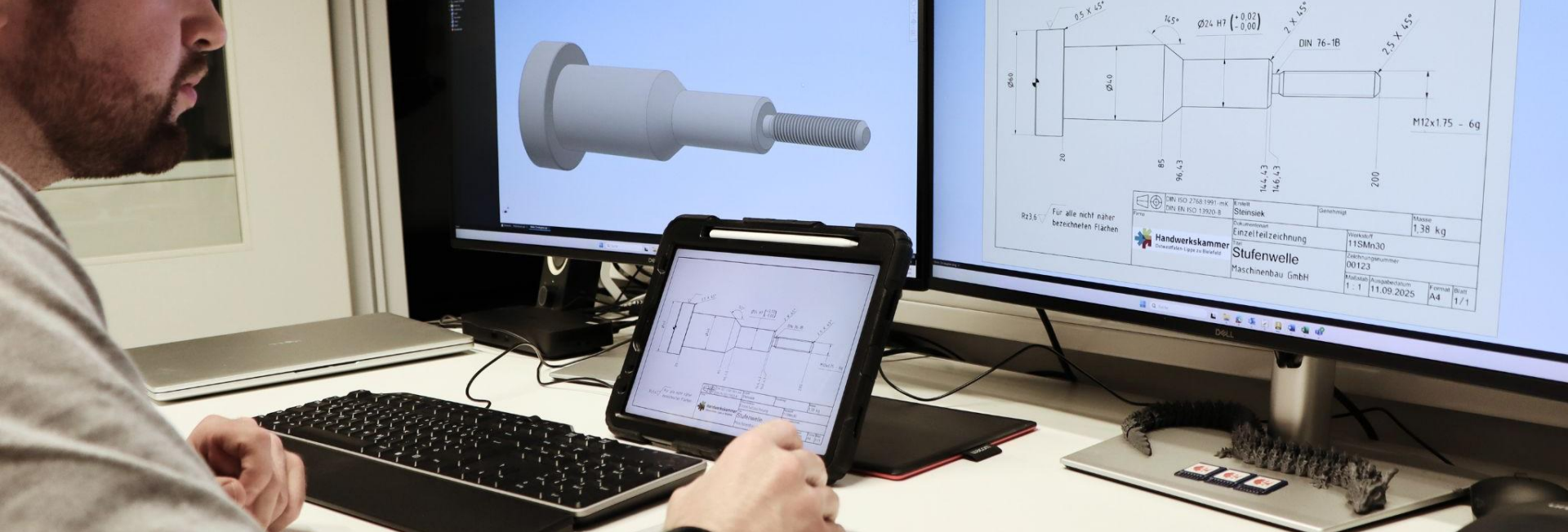Chamber of Skilled Crafts
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Vocational Training Centre

- 10,000 participants per year in 14 different professions

- Competence Center Smart Home/Smart Building

- Focusing on the action-oriented approach, the building is a teaching and learning object

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Global Challenges

- Green Transition
- Digital Transformation
- Demographic Shifts

Symbiotic Intelligence: mutual knowledge creation between academia & industry

VTCs as practical nodes:

- Translate research into skills
- Bring industry needs back into education

Bridging Industries and Academia

- VTCs as brokers of symbiotic intelligence between theory and practice
- Bridges matter in times of rapid change
- A bridge only works if there are people walking on both sides – networking
- makes the connection alive

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Drivers & Necessity

Industry needs:
- Innovation, agile workforce, solutions for sustainability

Academia needs:
- Practical relevance, testing grounds, employability focus

VTC role:
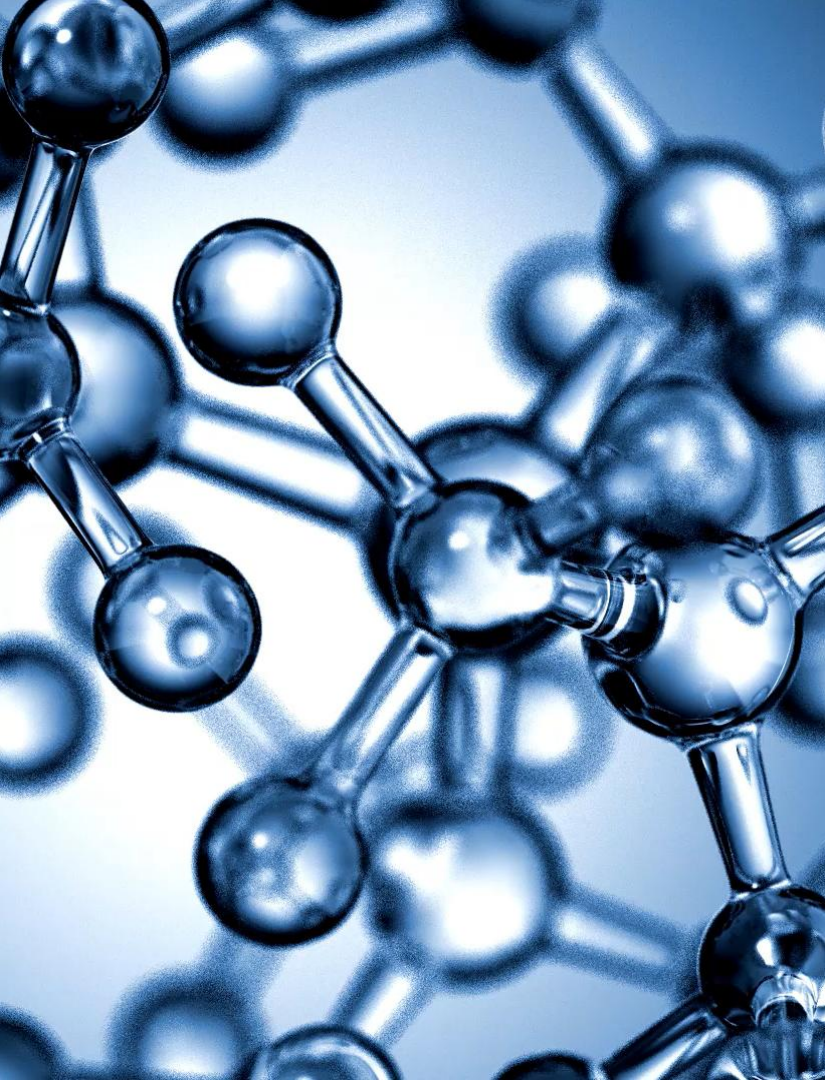- Networking platform → turning global challenges into local solutions

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Models of Cooperation: Workforce Development

- Dual Training
- VTC as co-designers of curricula with industry and academia

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Models of Cooperation: Knowledge Transfer via VTC

- Competence Centres: pilot projects, joint labs, applied R&D

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Dynamics & Symbiotic Mechanisms

- Feedback loops
- Networking as a catalyst

Dynamic element: VTCs enable constant dialogue and flexible adaption

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Industry Networks

Key Questions

- How do you work?
- What do you need?

Round Table „Qualification"

- Universities
- Universities of Applied Science
- Vocational Training Centres

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Key Questions

- What is the optimal padagogy to reach the learning objectives?

- How do we implement AI into the learning process?

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Challenges & Tensions

- Keeping networks alive
- Keeping networks purposeful
- Risk of siloed thinking

Future Outlook

- AI & Symbiotic Intelligence: VTCs as learning hubs for educators and SMEs

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Key take-aways

- Dynamic starts when networks are theme driven with a real life impact
- Networking as the foundation of successful symbiosis
- Symbiotic Intelligence is key to innovation, employability & sustainability
- „Together we're smarter" – the future lies in shared learning

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