

Catching-up with Peter Acél, CEO of Dr. Acél & Partner AG

Erschienen: ETH Spin-off Community, December 2015

Interviewer: Alessandra Berti, Project Coordinator Inspire 925

Who are you?

Acél: «My name is Peter Acél and I am an independent consultant and entrepreneur for 20 years now. In addition to being the CEO and founder of my own company, Dr. Acél & Partner AG, I have a teaching assignment at ETH Zurich and I am member of several governing boards. I currently employ 12 people. Back in the days, I completed my post-graduate studies at the BWI Center for Industrial Management now Department of Management, Technology, and Economics (MTECH) at ETH Zurich. I believe that my company belongs to one of the oldest official spin-offs of the ETH Zurich.»

What is your company's mission?

Acél: «We provide specialist consultancy services in the areas of logistics, production and operations. Our job is to improve the performance of our clients keeping them sustainably profitable. For example, one of our most important projects was to support the Swiss Post in their reorganization and automation process. Together, we achieved a reduction to 3 distribution centers throughout Switzerland. You can imagine what this means in terms of cost savings. Another success story is the significant acceleration of Mondaine's production process for watches. For 12 years now we have been punctually supporting Mondaine in their growing process. In this time period, the throughput was increased by at least 30 times the throughput of the beginning. Currently it takes them only 180 seconds to produce a watch in Switzerland.»

What are the future challenges for Swiss companies?

Acél: «I think that there is still a lack of knowledge and ideas among Swiss managers of how to profitably structure the logistic and production processes. I assume that in many cases it would be even more cost-efficient to produce in Switzerland than importing the finished goods from for example China; providing that the processes are at their real optimum. I am proud that I am able to say that in my whole career as a consultant I have created and preserved at least as many jobs as I had to pare down. In my professional life, I learnt that most of the issues to achieve cost reductions are not technical but interpersonal ones. The most important success factor for our business is to gain the confidence and cooperation of the employees. So, in the future, I will continue to implement the needed solutions to keep Switzerland's competitiveness.»

The question from the previous face of the ETH Spin-off Community was: If someone offered to buy your company today, would you sell it? Why?

Acél: «I would not! And I must say I have had offers before. Being the CEO of my own company grants me the privilege of choosing the most interesting projects. I love the job that I am doing and I would not let anyone to take that away from me.»

What kind of crowd wisdom can you offer the community?

Acél: «I am convinced that the exchange of experience is extraordinarily valuable. Therefore I recommend taking all opportunities to discuss your hot topics with experts.»

What is your question for the next face of the ETH Spin-off Community?

Acél: «What are your expectations (from the ETH Spin-off Community's point of view) on the support provided from ETH Zurich?»