

# FORUM

The Stieglmeyer-Group's company magazine



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**The trainee programme at Stieglmeyer combines responsibility, many opportunities and competent support**

Our technical product management is characterised by great expertise and experience as well as young minds full of new ideas. With Alina Simon, Magdalena Höwelkröger and Lasse Radtke, three junior product managers have been strengthening the team for a few months now. The path to the new job in Herford led all three of them through a trainee programme at Stieglmeyer. What does a trainee do? How much responsibility does one take on? Is this career entry worthwhile for newcomers? We asked.

**Please tell us briefly how you got into the trainee programme at Stieglmeyer.**

**Magdalena Höwelkröger:** I studied industrial and mechanical engineering and then deliberately looked for a trainee position. I was quite open when it came to choosing a business sector. I hadn't done that many internships during my studies and therefore found a career entry as a trainee ideal. I found the position in product management at Stieglmeyer through the job advertisement and applied. The first interview already went well, and after the second round with the HR department, I got the confirmation.

**Alina Simon:** I was studying business administration and at some point I no longer wanted to work part-time at a cash register, but wanted a job that had something to do with my studies. I knew the Stieglmeyer company through contacts in my family and then simply wrote an unsolicited application. After a few months I was able to start in Herford and shortly afterwards I got a contract as a working student. The management then asked me if I would also like to work at Stieglmeyer after graduation, and we agreed on me starting as a trainee.

**Lasse Radtke:** I also studied business administration and then deliberately looked for a trainee position. I started at a company in nearby Bielefeld, but I didn't really like it there. That's why I looked around again, this time with the specific desire to work in product management. I also discovered the job at Stieglmeyer through the advertisement.

## How long did your trainee programme last?

**M. H.:** For Lasse and me, a year ...

**A. S.:** ... in my case 15 months.

**L. R.:** Companies are free to design their own trainee programme; it is not a "protected" type of training. However, it is similar everywhere that a comprehensive induction into the future profession should take place.



The Seta pro junior youth bed meets the new paediatric bed standard in hospitals. As project manager, Alina Simon played a decisive role in the creation of this bed.

## Then tell us how your trainee phase at Stiegmeyer went.

**M. H.:** At the beginning it was about getting to know all the departments we would work with as future product managers. We spent two weeks or more each in Construction & Development, Export and Domestic Sales. We visited all the other departments for one or two days and got to know our contact persons in the respective areas.

**A. S.:** Things were different for me in that my trainee position was not in product management, but in Construction & Development. As a working student, I had already got to know many colleagues throughout the company and worked on projects in quality management and production. That's why I jumped straight into the deep end as a trainee in C&D and worked as a project manager. I was responsible for coordinating the development of our new care double bed Libra partner and the hospital youth bed Seta pro junior. That worked out well.

**L. R.:** Magdalena and I conducted market analyses in product management. First, we looked at the potential of heavy-duty beds. Then, for the export business, we investigated how homecare beds are supplied in other countries. The German flat-rate system with beds on prescription is similar in some countries, but in some it works quite differently. Our analysis has helped to define new focus markets in the homecare sector.



The Burmeier model Allura II is a heavy-duty bed for homecare – topics that Magdalena Höwelkröger and Lasse Radtke dealt with in their market analyses as trainees.

## The word "trainee" suggests that you get training. Who supported you at Stiegmeyer?

**L. R.:** In our Marketing & Product Management department, this was mainly the two department heads Christoph Prevezanos and Olaf Steuernagel. Colleagues from product management also helped us.

**A. S.:** That was also the case with me. The head of department Peter Minnig and an experienced colleague from C & D, with whom I managed a project together at the beginning, supported me.

**M. H.:** Actually, the plan was for us to spend more time in the various departments and go on trips. But because of Covid, that was difficult, so in the end we also took on our own projects in product management.

**Today, all three of you work as permanent product managers at Stieglmeyer. Was the trainee programme a good start? Do you feel equipped for your job?**

**L. R.:** For me, it was a good opportunity and a careful build-up. In particular, I learned a lot from going through the many departments with their interfaces to product management. Ultimately, I would recommend such a start to any young professional.

**A. S.:** By taking on a lot of responsibility right from the start, you definitely feel really involved and well integrated straight away.