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Insights _ Polysius



Plant designer Dmitri Knodel:

"Diversity thrives on open

communication - in society and in

the workplace".

Dmitri Knodel has always been interested in technical innovations. So it's no surprise that the 32-year-old family man has been working as a technical draftsman in thyssenkrupp's plant planning department in Neubeckum since 2014. The technology fan has had close ties with the

town in Münsterland since childhood: His parents live in neighboring Beckum, he completed his apprenticeship at thyssenkrupp Polysius and now lives in Neubeckum with his wife Jennifer and their three children Benjamin, Anastasia and Melina in their own house.

Dmitri Knodel is not afraid of new challenges - neither professionally nor privately. In recent months, for example, he has been working intensively on the programming of 3D models. The goal is to significantly speed up processing times by automatically generating 3D models. So-called "Building Information Modeling" makes it possible to link information from a current job with the model and thus generate extensive data. This makes coordination on the construction site even more effective.

Dmitri Knodel is most enthusiastic about visualization tasks. In some cases, vivid 3D or even 4D animations are created from 2D drawings and models. Dmitri Knodel: "It is fascinating to see how you can generate beautiful images from any model using light, shadows and different textures. Animations can really be brought to life. Be it just a small sightseeing flight over the plant or a 4D animation simulating a construction site with the time factor."

Daughter Anastasia was born with trisomy 21

But Dmitri Knodel and his wife also faced new challenges in their private lives two years ago after the birth of their daughter Anastasia. "At first, we had to assume that our "little snail" would be born with a serious heart defect. Of course, that was a kick in the gut. But Anastasia is a fighter and today only 2 small "holes" remain from the severe heart defect, which will not need surgery for the time being." When Anastasia was born, she was also diagnosed with trisomy 21. It was a diagnosis that the Knodels first had to let sink in. "But in the meantime, our family is having so much fun with her. She needs a little more time to learn everything and is not quite as fast as children of the same age, but she is making great progress and we are very proud of Anastasia. She is incredibly curious and observes her environment very closely. She also enchants those around her with her cheerful nature and greets everyone with a warm smile."

Due to her handicap, Anastasia needs a lot of time and attention. Doing justice to her job and family has to be well organized. "The special challenges," reports Dmitri Knodel, "are the doctor's visits and therapies; people with Down syndrome tend to have further impairments. Therefore, examinations must take place annually, semi-annually or even quarterly. In addition, there are various therapies, such as speech therapy, physiotherapy or early intervention."

It's not always easy for Dmitri Knodel and his wife to manage their schedules. "Fortunately I work in a company that is very flexible and my colleagues are very understanding when I have to take over appointments with my daughter at short notice. With flexitime, opportunities for mobile working and additional vacation days, thyssenkrupp helps me a lot. When it comes to time management, I feel well supported! "

More attention to the needs of people with disabilities

However, Dmitri Knodel would like to see more attention paid to the needs of people with disabilities - both in our society and in the workplace. "Many people still have great inhibitions about addressing this issue. Not out of ill will, but rather out of insecurity. I would like to see us overcome these inhibitions and talk openly about such topics. I'm sure that would also strengthen cohesion within the company. In addition, colleagues would then have someone to talk to when they face similar challenges." For Dmitri Knodel, this open communication is an integral part of the diversity of a modern company. The fact that he has made his life story public is an important contribution for him.



The bottom line: For Dmitri Knodel, work and family are and will remain closely linked. This is also demonstrated by his latest private project: As a plant designer for thyssenkrupp, he creates 3D models of complex industrial plants. So why not create a virtual model of his entire house? He has already purchased the corresponding software and VR glasses, and soon nothing will stand in the way of a virtual tour of his house. Benjamin and Anastasia, his two "grown-ups," are already very excited.
