Product manager for remote services Jennifer Richardt: „We have to make technical professions more attractive!"

She is the product manager for remote services at thyssenkrupp Cement Technologies since April 2020 – Jennifer Richardt works in the service department and has a particular enthusiasm for working closely with

customers and digitalization. For our INSIGHTS magazine, she talked to us about the challenges of her daily work and the role of women in technical professions.

Jennifer Richardt is marked by a deep connection to the Münsterland. Born in Fröndenberg, she moved to the westphalian region of Germany after primary school and completed her apprenticeship in Beckum. After all those year, she learned to appreciate the balance between rural tranquility and living close to big cities that characterizes the Münsterland. After her apprenticeship as a technical product designer, her career in the service department at thyssenkrupp Cement Technologies began.

What she appreciates the most about working in the service department is the variety of tasks it holds and the proximity to customers, foreign companies and suppliers. She describes the department as a big family, that is especially characterized by openness and communication willingness: “Everyone works hand in hand” – that is what makes the service department special to her.

During her work in the product department of the polycom® roller mill, Jennifer Richardt started to deal with the topic of remote services, until it become no longer indispensable after the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. In the following April, she became the product manager of said remote services. The new service came exactly at the right time – it was ready for use only four weeks after the enactment of travelling restrictions and prevented many shutdowns of the customers’ plants. For Jennifer Richardt, it was the close cooperation between the service, the other specialist departments and customers that enabled the early start of the remote services.

There is no typical daily work in her job, she explains. Since she is responsible for the entire remote services product lifecycle, she says her job is characterized by versatility. It also offers a close exchange with other departments, in addition to the opportunity to stay up-to-date on the topic of digitalization. For Jennifer Richardt however, remote services do not only offer the advantage of digitalization, but also help to protect the environment. Not only can the customers’ problems be solved quickly and reliably, but costs and CO2-generating business trips can also be saved. The proximity to customers, which makes the service so special, would not be lost by the remote operations: It is precisely the quick support and reliability that lay the foundation for a trusting relationship.

Even though Jennifer Richardt herself never felt disadvantaged being a woman in her profession, she still sees some challenges in die industry when it comes to the topic of diversity. She believes that technical professions should be portrayed more attractively in order to arouse interest among young women. In short term, she believes that the best way is to work on one’s own attitude and shed preconceptions: “If every did that, we’d get there faster”.

The bottom line: As a product manager in a technical profession, Jennifer Richardt clearly promotes the versatility that her profession has to offer. She advises young women who are still hesitant in their

decisions to take a similar path to approach the apprenticeship without shyness. It does not matter whether you are a man or a woman – in the end, success lies in your enthusiasm for what you do.

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