



Shortage of skilled workers in the IT industry: MHP, Stuttgart Chamber of Industry and Commerce and Reutlingen University discussed challenges,

PRESS RELEASE

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MHP, Stuttgart Chamber of Industry and Commerce and Reutlingen University discuss IT skills shortage

Skilled workers in IT - a scarce commodity or a management mistake?

- IT skills shortage: discussion of challenges, opportunities and risks together with the management and IT consultancy MHP, the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Industry and Commerce and Reutlingen University of Applied Sciences
- Germany: 137,000 vacant IT positions
- Digital Transformation of Recruiting: Finding and Retaining IT Talent the Right Way
- Policy and management: Intelligent and forward-looking planning
- Dr. Ralf Hofmann: "We all have to take the IT skills shortage very seriously. This is top management responsibility."

Ludwigsburg - Yesterday evening, the management and IT consultancy MHP hosted a roundtable discussion with the Stuttgart Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Reutlingen University and its continuing education foundation - the Knowledge Foundation - on the current shortage of skilled workers in the IT industry at its in-house "MHPLab" in Ludwigsburg. The main question was whether the current situation is a general shortage of skilled workers or whether management errors are leading to fewer skilled workers being available.

Dr. Ralf Hofmann, co-founder, partner and CEO of MHP: "There is no question that the demand for IT specialists is enormous - both on the corporate IT side and on the product IT side. But the demands today are completely different, keyword: product differentiation via software. We can't find all the specialists here in Germany - and certainly not in the greater Stuttgart area. We have to learn to deliver differently in order to minimize demand. Companies need service providers like us - and we need near- and off-shore. That's the only way we can compensate for capacity bottlenecks."

IT specialists urgently sought: 137,00 vacancies in Germany

The need for capable employees in IT is particularly clear: 137,000 vacant IT positions - that's

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how many alone are needed in Germany, according to a recent Bitkom study. This is a new record. On average, companies have to wait seven months before they can fill a newly advertised position. This shortage of IT specialists is a real risk for companies. This is because this problem specifically affects future issues, such as the digitization of companies.

Julian Pflugfelder, President of the Ludwigsburg District Chamber of Commerce and Industry, emphasizes: "In 2028, for example, we would have to add 2,100 computer science graduates just in the Stuttgart region to meet the shortage of skilled workers in the IT industry. This is a major challenge. The need for professionally qualified IT specialists is even higher. Here, there would be 2,600 positions that could not be filled. And the need will continue to grow."

This fact is also revealed by the current study "Industrie 4.0 Barometer 2023" by the management and IT consultancy MHP: There is a lack of qualified personnel in the DACH region in particular to implement the digital transformation in companies - the digitalization gap with China, the UK and the USA is widening.

Prof. Dr. Alexander Rossmann, Professor of Digital Business at Reutlingen University: "Companies have to get used to dealing with this shortage. Many things simply take longer, such as digital projects or application processes." He continues, however, by naming possible solutions: "Solutions to the shortage of skilled IT workers include, for example, professionalizing HR, training your own employees in and for the necessary areas - also by means of reskilling measures - or internationalization. The latter means either relocating a value creation system abroad or increasing the attractiveness for skilled workers from abroad." Above all, however, according to Professor Rossmann, there are "people who think in terms of the future and recognize such deficiencies early on."

Dr. Ralf Hofmann adds: "The attractiveness of IT positions must be further increased. Keyword: remote. That is a prerequisite today. It starts with the recruiting process - one of our core processes. It has to be fast and reliable. Who still waits for a response after two months?"

Above all, there is a shortage of professionally qualified specialists

The Stuttgart Chamber of Industry and Commerce has calculated the demand in Baden-Württemberg alone, one of the most important industrial locations in Germany: According to this, the economy will lack an average of more than 397,000 skilled workers per year between 2022 and 2035. For the occupational group of computer scientists, the IHK forecasts a shortage of 9,000 skilled workers, resulting from supply (164,000) and demand (173,000).

Julian Pflugfelder, President of the Ludwigsburg District Chamber of Commerce and Industry: "By 2035, the shortage of skilled workers will continue to worsen, also due to demographic factors. The challenges of ensuring that we as a region and as a company are not left behind will be considerable."

Due to the retiring workforce from the baby boomers in the next few years, the supply potential will drop enormously. In 2035, the economy in Baden-Württemberg will lack 863,000 skilled workers. Of these, 792,000 will be vocationally qualified specialists.

Markus Klingspor, founder and CEO of Thinking Objects GmbH and Chairman of the Committee for Digitization and IT Economy of the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry: "We believe that it is less a matter of management mistakes in the past and more a matter of political mistakes that have been made. The general conditions must be adjusted. Above all, this includes improving school education and expanding university capacities in line with demand."

Dr. Ralf Hofmann adds: "Management error? It's also a policy mistake: IT at university is too late. We need to start at school and bring STEM subjects there."

Recruiting 2.0: Finding IT talent and training existing staff

But that alone will not be enough - and above all, it will not happen so quickly. However, companies can also become more active here and counteract the shortage situation. This starts with recruiting and ends with the training of existing staff. "We are convinced that a strong purpose is needed today. This means that the meaningfulness of the job is questioned - and rightly so! Answers to questions such as 'what does the company offer you?' and 'why should

I as an applicant do exactly this job?' are crucial," says Dr. Ralf Hofmann.

Prof. Dr. Katrin Schein, Professor of Digital Business at the Faculty of Computer Science at Reutlingen University, adds: "The topic of 'lifelong learning' is still underestimated. In initial studies, we have seen that, in addition to reskilling, continuous upskilling plays an overriding role in the long-term retention of employees, especially in the IT sector. As a university, we see ourselves as a partner for companies and provide support through customized continuing education programs."

The management and IT consultancy has made its own experiences when it comes to recruiting new employees. It is still possible to meet the demand. In the long term, however, something else needs to happen, says Shahriar Kamali, Head of Talent Acquisition at MHP: "We need a learning culture, an environment that promotes continuous development at the individual and organizational level. This also includes the acquisition of technological skills. For employees, this offers the opportunity to pursue a fulfilling task in the long term. For companies, a learning culture is indispensable if they are to hold their own in the long term in the competition for innovation, including with customers. And it helps to counter the shortage of skilled workers."

The participants in the discussion round at MHPLab in Ludwigsburg

Daniel Geigis, CEO of the Knowledge Foundation, led the subsequent panel discussion. Guests were Prof. Dr. Katrin Schein, Professor of Digital Business at the Faculty of Computer Science at Reutlingen University, Julian Pflugfelder, President of the Ludwigsburg District Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Markus Klingspor, Founder and Managing Director of Thinking Objects GmbH and Chairman of the Committee for Digitalization and IT Business of the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Shahriar Kamali, Head of Talent Acquisition at MHP, and Dr. Ralf Hofmann, Co-Founder, Shareholder and Chairman of the Management Board of MHP.

You can watch the panel discussion on our [Youtube channel](#).

Further information and images can be found at www.mhp.com/newsroom. Interviews on the subject of the "shortage of skilled IT workers" are available on request at any time.



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