



A SPECIAL INSIGHT

The place where a successful day ends with dirty hands and a smile on your face is the professional home of Andreas Kern. His work range extends from coordinating his strong team of foremen to providing the necessary materials for assembly.

CORE-com-pe-tence

An important cog in the WFL machinery

Insights into all the goings-on at WFL Production. The place where machines first see the light of day is where Andreas Kern can be found, directing a key department – Mechanical Production – with meticulous accuracy, control and passion. We are dropping in on him today to chat about processes, teamwork, the future, his life outside work and the key details in complete machining.

Every single WFL machine begins its journey in an atmosphere where the air smells of iron, hands are dirty and a passion for fabrication abounds. Mechanical production is a playground for big boys whose job is to put precisely timed and minutely planned processes into action. Special machines require special measures that have to be stuck to religiously. It is essential to have a perfectly organised team standing by to play their part in these processes. Andreas Kern leads the WFL technicians and motivates them to give their best performance, so the right machines can be delivered to customers on time.

Mr Kern, the Head of Mechanical Production, has joined us to answer our questions right in the midst of the MILLTURN's production site.



follow my father's advice, and that's how I came to be in Steyr. Initially, there would have been an apprenticeship available at VOEST too, but I decided to work for Steyr first of all. Why? It's highly likely I wouldn't be where I am today if I hadn't chosen the more difficult path beforehand.

What is the most adventurous job you have ever had?

I have worked in this industry my whole life, but nothing has ever ruffled my feathers yet. I really like this kind of work; even if we run into problems here and there, I always have my sights set on the solution and give my best. In terms of adventures in the job, I have had a few at WFL – usually on business trips in the most varied corners of the world.

Mr Kern, what made you decide to work for WFL?

Before I joined WFL, I was an apprentice machine fitter at Steyr-Werke. Nowadays, you'd call that a mechanical engineer. It was during a restructuring in the company that I took the opportunity to move to WFL.

What were the most important cornerstones of your career?

My father was a driving force in my career. He advised me to look beyond the limits of our town and start an apprenticeship at a bigger company. Like any parent, he only wanted the best for me. So I decided to

“My team and I are well tuned to each other.”



ORGANISATIONAL TALENT
Keeping and planning appointments as a new exciting challenge for Andreas Kern.



“We can count ourselves lucky to have such a smoothly functioning team right across WFL.”

You are an important cog in the huge WFL machine. What is your workflow like – how exactly do you work?

In my new role as master craftsman, I don't work as closely with my employees and colleagues as I did when I was a supervisor, unfortunately. Nevertheless, I help whenever a hand is needed. The flow of information is never interrupted thanks to my team of supervisors. Therefore we can meet deadline after deadline with mechanical lead times of between 30 and 60 days. We don't just focus on deadlines, but have to manage many different procedures too and work through them from early till late. And speaking of cogs – a big thank you to all of our departments. Our staff's outstanding teamwork,



TEAMWORK
Together mechanical challenges are solved with great success.

and the fact that it allows us to manage cross-departmental processes perfectly, means we can build around 60 machines per year.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

My passion is, and always has been, mechanical engineering. Because of that, I plan to stick with WFL for the next 10 years and complete my master craftsman training, and will try to keep finding a solution to every problem.

How do you manage your work-life balance?

For me, the only way to do it is to strictly separate work and leisure time. When I was working in a supervisor role, I

couldn't do that. However, I've now found the perfect balance and my team and I are well tuned to each other. Even if an operation can't be completed on a particular day, we always have an exact plan ready for the day after.

How important is teamwork for you at WFL?

Teamwork is one of the most important skills in working life. The focus should not just be on one department, but rather should always be on the whole – the bigger picture. Every working step affects every department and so teamwork is required of us all. We can count ourselves lucky to have such a smoothly functioning team right across WFL. If different wor-

king steps and processes are to be carried out in parallel, everything must run like clockwork.

What makes you think “THAT is something I would love to do...” what's on your bucket list?

Actually for me, there are really only two major things on my bucket list. The first is to stay healthy, and the second is to cross the Alps on my mountain bike. Fitness is paramount for crossing the Alps. So I need to get training so I can achieve my dream. And no – I won't be using an e-bike.

When do you lose track of time at work?

If I'm working on something challenging or complicated, I lose track of time. When



PROFILE

Name: Andreas Kern

Age: 43

Home town: Pregarten, Upper Austria

Education/Career:

1982–1986 Primary school

1986–1990 Secondary school

1990–1991 Polytechnic course

1991–1995 Machine fitter apprenticeship

Has worked at WFL Millturn Technologies

GmbH&Co.KG since 1996

Worked in main assembly department for the M100 & M120 MILLTURN series until 2005, with numerous assembly projects for customers and some support assignments.

From 2006: Supervisor for M60 & M65 MILLTURN series

From 2018: Master craftsman training

From 2019: Head of Mechanical Manufacturing

I used to work as a supervisor, I had to assemble various modules and constantly lost track of time because I was so immersed in it and concentrating so hard. My new duties involve a lot of deadlines and cycle times. Now I perceive time quite differently; I always have to keep an eye on the clock to make sure orders are completed on time.

What are you looking forward to in the future?

At the moment, my master craftsman training after work is taking up quite a lot of time. So the thing I'm looking forward to most of all is having my free time back when I've finished.

When do you feel like you're in your element?

Definitely when I'm cycling in the mountains. When I go on short weekend trips to the Alps, it's an exhilarating feeling to scale the summit and be rewarded with a panoramic view. That's when I'm in my element and would most like to press the pause button!

Last of all, we'd like to know where you see WFL in the future?

WFL is generally on a very strong course and is already at a high level. I have no doubt at all that the future has even more to bring. Realistically, there will be highs and lows like there are everywhere in the engineering industry, but with our excellent teamwork and perfectly coordinated processes in the different departments, any future 'problems' will be overcome with ease too.

"I have no doubt at all that the future has even more to bring."

All eyes on...

WFL

Robotic Solutions

by WFL Millturn Technologies

Well-known companies from films such as "UMBRELLA Corporation", "SKYNET" or even "STARK Industries" are often closer to reality than you may think. That's because in this day and age, a lot of action is happening within the field of robotics and even artificial intelligence. If you're looking for futuristic, high-tech solutions reminiscent of that in the films, that's exactly what WFL has been providing over the last few years