



POSITIVE CHANGE

Juergen Maier of Siemens UK talks responsibility, technology and industry 4.0 with **Vikas Shah**

Juergen Maier is CEO of Siemens in the UK and an industry commentator on responsible business practice. Austrian born but raised in the UK from the age of ten, he was awarded a CBE earlier this year.

What does responsible capitalism mean to you?

Responsibility is something that should be deeply embedded in the culture of a good organisation. I've been reflecting on why capitalism is different in Germany versus the UK, and why generally we see that medium-sized businesses and corporates in Germany have more social purpose than their counterparts in the UK. It's not because anyone regulated these behaviours, it's because in German culture, responsibility is deeply ingrained.

I can't answer the question of what creates this, but there are certainly cultural differences in the nature of education, the family unit and the structure of the country. In the UK, there has historically been more of a 'We'll start a business, we'll get rich quick' mentality – but it's important to add on: 'And we'll be responsible, serve the community and serve society for the long term.'

How will industry in the UK fare in the coming years?

The UK's industrial decline took place – that's a fact. But then new industries were created, quietly, by business leaders and champions (including Siemens) who grew those new industries – without fanfare and, to be honest, without a great sense of national purpose supporting us. Within industry, there is a huge passion for the new forms of manufacturing and engineering – but we don't have that national passion outside. We left behind old industry and have not yet created the

narrative for where we are now – the next industrial revolution!

Take the automotive industry as just one example. There has been a massive revolution of creating the new from the old in the UK. Today we have brilliant Nissans, brilliant Jaguar Land Rovers, brilliant Toyotas all being made here in the UK. And we're about to embark on the next revolution into electric, hybrid and potentially hydrogen and autonomous vehicles.

To be successful, we have to create a sense of national pride in our engineering and manufacturing sector. We have to create a sense that these are sectors that we need and have to invest in. They are core and fundamental parts of our economy, and we need to fall in love with them again.

What are the trends generating our new industries?

We have an overriding sense of purpose and reason to all our technological progress in manufacturing and engineering right now – that being the need to move towards a more sustainable planet. Why is the revolution happening to

move to electric vehicles? Why are we changing from fossil fuels to renewables? It's sustainability that drives that. And that is creating new manufacturing processes that, in turn, are being enabled by drivers such as the industrial Internet of Things and big data, which make the whole manufacturing and supply chain much more efficient, less wasteful and more sustainable.

How do we tackle the resistance to technological change?

Any technological change brings resistance, it's just that this revolution is hitting us slightly faster! I came up through engineering in the 1980s and that was when the first PC-based control systems and robots came into the industry. Everyone was scared of these technologies and many were saying, 'Oh, it'll never



Bright outlook
Juergen Maier is geared up for the fourth industrial revolution

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THE LIST

HOW TO SUCCEED AS A YOUNG CEO

Samuel Leach, 28-year-old CEO of Samuel & Co Trading, has ten tips on how to convey authority and earn respect as a young CEO.

1. GIVE PEOPLE A VOICE

Always empower staff and give them the chance to voice their opinions. Everyone should have equal opportunities, regardless of age or the position they have within the company. Creating a dynamic environment in the office allows staff to comfortably share ideas and air any grievances.

2. BE TRANSPARENT

It's crucial to get your ethos and messaging across early, both internally and externally. Sharing company news and holding team meetings that let staff know how the company is performing will encourage focus and give everyone a clear purpose.

3. GET STUCK IN

As a company grows, it becomes harder for employees to meet new members of the staff across the business, so introduce initiatives that bring together people who wouldn't otherwise meet. Young CEOs have the unique luxury of

being able to get involved in these fun company bonding initiatives, such as an annual dragon boat race, which allows leaders and employees to bond in a more relaxed environment.

4. IGNORE STEREOTYPES

Do not let people's presumptions and judgements about your age worry you. Focus on your own goals and let your company's success do the talking for you.

5. INTRODUCE REWARDS

Staff want to be appreciated and shown that they are valued, without being

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happen.' That was the semi-conductor and PC-based revolution, and now we're into the fourth industrial revolution, which is about the Internet of Things, additive manufacturing, big data, the next generation of robots and more. There's a fear of the unknown, and a sense of 'Wow! This is complicated, difficult and expensive!' We need education and training to alleviate those fears. There's no need for society to be fearful of disruption and displacement of jobs. Each industrial revolution has shown us that if we approach technology right, it creates more jobs and more prosperity rather than displacement. It's just that the jobs won't be the same.

Already, in our schools and colleges we are seeing the next generation of our workforce learning the skills they will need for the future of industry – coding, apps and the Internet of Things – but there's a big job around upskilling and reskilling those people who are working in our factories today to understand the world of additive manufacturing, internet platforms, robotics and data. There's no need for everyone to be an expert in all these technologies, but leaders of businesses



Industry 4.0
The virtual 'CAVE'
at Siemens'
Cogleton site

need to understand the possibilities that technology creates and understand how to communicate with – and reskill – their employees to help them through this change.

Are the technologies of industry 4.0 going to enter our homes?

If you go to many homes, you will already see Alexa, Hive and many smart devices. We've even put an IoT sensor and transmitter on our little dog so we know if he ever escapes! Some of this technology in the home is playful and fun but a lot of it helps homes and buildings to become more efficient and sustainable.

To what extent is it important that we can play and tinker with the technologies of industry 4.0?

We've just invested in a 3D printer at home, and now – on our street – we've become a little community 3D printing workshop! This is the reality of the fourth industrial revolution. When I was a kid, if I needed a new part for my bike, I had a chap across the road who had a workshop with a milling machine. I knew him well enough and he saw me as a budding engineer, so he would let me put my safety goggles on, and would show me how to mill a specific part. Today, we're doing this with additive manufacturing – you can go on to our products website, which has digital files for spare parts for any manner of products. You download the file, print the part and you're on your way.

How inclusive will industry 4.0 be for SMEs?

The fourth industrial revolution favours the British way of manufacturing and engineering. It moves away from capital-intensive robotic cells and huge machine

tools and towards small robotic and 'cobot' cells all connected via the internet – much cheaper, much more efficient, and much more likely for small and medium businesses to be able to participate in. In the UK we have created a national initiative called 'Made Smarter' to help exactly these businesses engage and adopt the new technologies at a faster pace.

How soon will the fourth industrial revolution pave the way to the fifth?

I'm not itching for the fifth industrial revolution just yet. We think the fourth industrial revolution will certainly be shorter than the third (which was around 40 years). The revolutions before this were around a century apiece – so from 100 years, to 40, perhaps to 20 for the next one. We've still got plenty to be doing in order to harness the power of data and the Internet of Things – and we've still got plenty to be doing to make our industries more sustainable, and lower and neutral in relation to carbon.

At the moment, a lot of companies are entering industry 4.0 to be more efficient, and realising that it also allows for better customer relationships with more personalisation, and even more integrated services. My view is that we need to all be thinking about the impact our businesses have on the planet and on our communities – and that brings us right back to responsible capitalism. ■

“There's no need for society to be fearful of disruption and displacement of jobs”

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patronised. Rewards such as five-star holidays for top performers not only encourage loyalty and incentivise employees to impress, but also offer another opportunity for team bonding across all levels.

6. DON'T EXPECT RESPECT, EARN IT

Being a young CEO means that gaining respect can be more of a challenge than normal. Always share knowledge, but also be open to learning and don't dismiss

other expertise too quickly. Being relatable and approachable but also being aware of what you still have to learn will make for happy and motivated employees.

7. EMBRACE FEEDBACK

Listen to all feedback within the company, especially if it's critical. This is the best way to grow and develop your company to be the best it can be. Being able to accept the negatives and use them to initiate change is an important skill.

8. FUTURE PROOF

Nowadays, technology changes so quickly and suddenly that it can leave you behind. Don't assume that you have all the answers. Listen to your workforce's pressure points and be open to change.

9. BE SURE OF YOURSELF

Maintain a clear leadership model and stick to it. While it's important to be flexible in your decisions, follow your gut and don't allow yourself to be too easily persuaded.

10. ENJOY THE RIDE

Heading up a company while you're still young can be overwhelming, but it also means that you have time to embrace the experience and all that comes with it, ultimately appreciating your achievements. ■

Samuel Leach is CEO of Samuel & Co Trading, which teaches people how to become traders. Visit samuelandcotrading.com