



MAGNA STEYR GRAZ STRATEGY: KEEP INFORMATION FLOWING

When shop floor employees arrived at the Magna Steyr plant in Graz, Austria in mid-April following the COVID-19 shutdown, they received face masks and took part in awareness training on the health and safety measures put in place, from hygiene instructions, disinfection dispensers to cardboard separators on the tables in break areas. When production of the Mercedes-Benz G-Class resumed that day, it was a moment that was watched by the entire global auto industry.

After weeks of silence and shuttered plants, the contract manufacturer was the first auto plant in Europe to reopen.

"It became a blueprint for the rest of the European OEM plants," said Hansjoerg Tutner, Magna Steyr Vice President HR. "It was really impressive. The Magna Team accomplished the mission. Information flow was the key."

Mobilizing for the shutdown and subsequent restart focused on "telling people the truth, staying in touch also during lock down, making them feel safe – and showing them that the company cares," he said.



We are proud of how we managed in this crisis. But we know that this is a path we have to walk together whatever the future holds.

It started with keeping 8,500 employees informed twice a week and every step of the way about health measures and business updates. Before production lines ceased operating, plant management gathered the mobile phone numbers of shop-floor employees so they could receive short text messages updating the situation. Every message included a link to a Steyr homepage devoted exclusively to the COVID-19 crisis.

"We anticipated the situation and we were prepared," Tutner said.

The management team at the plant also set up a COVID-19 hot line to answer questions and address employee concerns. The team fielded 15 to 20 calls per day.

Four days before the restart, 200 production leaders for the G-Class were brought into the plant for training on the new safety measures while maintaining social distancing. They, in turn, trained the rest of the workforce. Today, the sprawling plant is at full production.

"The 'new normal' is a game changer in how we interact and how we work," said Thomas





Heinzle, the director of human resources for Contract Manufacturing. "We are still attending virtual meetings, even when we are in the plant."

Checking the health of employees is part of the daily routine here, along with contact tracing and other measures.

"We are proud of how we managed in this crisis," Tutner said. "But we know that this is a path we have to walk together whatever the future holds."

His colleague Heinzle puts it another way: "We have a realistic attitude. We've achieved a lot, but we have to continue adapting and reacting carefully."



MORE THAN 50000

Text messages were sent to Magna employees during the COVID-19 lockdown, keeping everyone up-to-date.

