

For immediate release

2024 Apprenticeship Launch: Koehler Group Starts up New Apprenticeship Campus in Willstätt

- **44 junior employees are beginning their apprenticeship or dual work-study program within the Koehler Group**
- **COO Dr. Stefan Karrer and HR Corporate Director Elke Renz personally welcomed the new apprentices and students**
- **Pre-opening of the apprenticeship center for technical professions at the new Koehler site in Willstätt**

Oberkirch, Germany, 09/18/2024 – For the first time, the Koehler Group is providing training for a total of 108 apprentices and dual work-study students across all apprenticeship years at its Oberkirch, Kehl, Willstätt, Weisenbach, and Greiz sites. Chief Operating Officer Dr. Stefan Karrer and HR Corporate Director Elke Renz welcomed 44 new apprentices and students to the Koehler Group at the start of September. This is the first year that the number of trainees has gone beyond the 100 mark. As a result, the Koehler Group’s ambitious target, set within its sustainability strategy, of achieving a trainee quota higher than 4% by 2030 will be reached much earlier than scheduled.

The junior employees are starting their apprenticeship at the Koehler Group as electronics technicians, industrial administrators, industrial mechanics, mechatronics technicians, machine and system operators, paper technologists, and print media technologists. In addition, one student is starting a dual work-study degree in commercial informatics, and one student is embarking on a “Sustainable Science and Technology Bachelor of Engineering” dual work-study degree. At the Koehler Paper site in Greiz, Thuringia, the industrial administrator, mechatronics technician, and paper technologist programs have one trainee each. Two trainees are starting paper technologist programs and one is beginning their electronics technician traineeship at KATZ in Weisenbach.

Pre-opening of the new Koehler Group Campus marks the start of training for technical professions

Elke Renz, Corporate Director HR & Legal Department, emphasized the importance of training at the pre-opening of the new Koehler Group apprenticeship center in Willstätt: “Training is a key factor in Koehler’s success. It gives us the opportunity to train our very own experts, with our sights set on the future.” A ceremony at the new Koehler site in Willstätt was attended by HR management and training management, as well as Works Council Chairman Gebhard Müller and Dominik Gerber from the Youth and Trainee Representation Body. Ms. Renz commented: “Training is extremely important to our success, which is why we have invested extensively in the new ‘Koehler Group Campus’, a training center for technical professions.” Around 45 apprentices across all 4 training years will be trained there in a 3,325 m² space, starting from

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now. To ensure the budding mechatronics technicians, electronics technicians, and industrial mechanics receive comprehensive training, the team of trainers has been expanded to three members. Installing state-of-the art equipment at the Koehler Group Campus was a top priority; it includes 3D printers, C50 lathes, engraving machines, training stations, switch cabinets, rows of workbenches with vices, milling machines, spacious break rooms, meeting rooms, and welding booths. A quiz about the new campus, information on how the new training center was constructed, and some light refreshments topped off the pre-opening event.

Induction days for the new apprentices

The training programs kicked off with three induction days to give the trainees and trainers the chance to get to know each other. Dr. Stefan Karrer, Chief Operating Officer, welcomed the new trainees to the Koehler family. He was accompanied by Elke Renz, Corporate Director HR & Legal Department, who welcomed this year's cohort of trainees to the family company's new training site: "I am delighted that we have attracted so many young people to training programs at Koehler. The initial excitement has motivated you all in different ways to begin your training here at Koehler. Keep the excitement going and stay curious and open to everything that's ahead of you." In addition to time spent getting to know one another, the induction days also included the necessary training sessions plus team-building games to strengthen team spirit. A group tour of the Koehler Paper production site in Kehl gave the junior employees a first peek behind the scenes of paper production. The Youth and Trainee Representation Body and Works Council also took the opportunity to introduce themselves on the induction days. The new Koehler Group trainees completed their induction days enjoying a barbecue and footgolf game with the trainers and the other new trainees.

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Figure: Koehler Group apprentices and dual work-study students at the 2024 training launch alongside Dr. Stefan Karrer, Chief Operating Officer (second from left), Elke Renz, Corporate Director HR & Legal Department (first from left), and the training team. Source: Koehler Group

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Photo (left to right): Rolf Janke (Industrial Engineering Trainer), Sébastien Schaeffer (Project Manager, Willstätt site), Gebhard Müller (Deputy Works Council Chairman), Christian Kiefer (architect, IFP2 Hangs GmbH), Elke Renz (Corporate Director HR & Legal Department), Simone Wölfle (Head of Training), Dominik Gerber (member of the Youth and Apprentices Representation Body), Rolf Schneider and Bernd Huber (Industrial Engineering Trainers) press the start button to launch the new Koehler Group Campus. Source: Koehler Group



2030 Sustainability Strategy

With over 100 trainees for the very first time, the Koehler Group is on its way to achieving its target, set within its sustainability strategy, of reaching a apprenticeship quota higher than 4%.

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About the Koehler Group

The Koehler Group was founded in 1807 and has been family-run from that moment to the present day. The group's core business activity lies in the development and production of high-quality specialty paper. This includes—among others—thermal paper, playing card board, beverage coasters, fine paper, carbon-less paper, recycled paper, decor paper, wood pulp board, sublimation paper, and also innovative specialty paper for the packaging industry. In Germany, the Koehler Group employs around 2,500 people across five production sites, with three additional sites in the USA. The group operates internationally, with an export share of around 70% in 2023, and brings in an annual turnover of around 1.1 billion euros.

As an energy-intensive company, Koehler invests in renewable energy projects such as wind energy, hydropower, photovoltaics, and biomass with its Koehler Renewable Energy business unit. The Koehler Group has set a goal of producing more energy from renewable sources by 2030 than is required for its paper production operations.

With its Koehler Innovative Solutions division, the Koehler Group is collaborating with start-ups to promote innovations in the core business segments “paper” and “renewable energy”.

Find more information at: <https://www.koehler.com>

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