

Reiner Habrich

Siemens Technician – Entrepreneur – Driving Force

Manfred Hoefle

If you ask Reiner Habrich about his attitude in life and business, the answer comes without a second thought: honesty. For him, this means not overestimating oneself, not promising others what you cannot and will not keep – in general, seeing in the other person a partner that you wish to win and keep.

His childhood in Amberg, Bavaria, Germany, during wartime, was marked by hardship, but was all the more filled with parental love and faith. However, at the age of nine he lost his father. His mother, who had worked as an educator abroad, was the remaining anchor for the hard-working boy.

THOROUGH TRAINING, CONSTANTLY LOOKING FOR NEW SOLUTIONS

As a result of malnutrition, which was not uncommon at that time, Reiner Habrich missed nearly a year in elementary school, but made up for the shortfall. Three apprenticeships followed, one as a druggist, one as a business clerk, and one as a chemical laboratory technician. With a vocational baccalaureate, he went to study at the State School of Engineering in West Berlin. Immediately afterwards, in 1963, he joined Siemens in the Development Department for Plastics at the Central Laboratory in Munich.

Siemens became a pioneer in the development and application of epoxy resins, especially for insulation, in close cooperation with the leading chemical companies of the time, Ciba and Bakelite. Reiner Habrich chose to focus on processing technology. His approach to work was to be pragmatic, cooperative and self-reliant. In order to arrive at novel solutions, it was important to "get people on board" right from the start – and to always think and act in context. Environmental protection and occupational safety were important. An orientation trip to Southeast Asia and Japan confirmed to him the already high level of Siemens technology.

ENTREPRENEURIAL ON THE MOVE – SIEMENS SPIN-OFF

In the research and development departments of major companies, processes and products are often created that no longer fit the corporate strategy. Taking this into account, Siemens launched an initiative that was unique at the time, giving entrepreneurial employees in Research and Development the opportunity to bring developments to market maturity and later to sell them via a spin-off. At the age of 50, such an opportunity arose for Reiner Habrich to set up a business in an internal venture and to prove its commercial viability. There, materials for heat meters and other applications were developed, cable fittings were cast, and an automatic casting plant was designed and built.

EPOXONIC - A QUALITY COMPANY

EPOXONIC GmbH was founded in the fall of 1990 with six employees. The focus was on the development, production and marketing of innovative epoxy resin solutions. The guiding principle was to do "things simpler, more directly, differently" than was possible in a large company. A principal aim was innovation leadership, which demanded a huge development effort accompanied by exclusive, long-term relationships with leading electrical engineering/electronics companies. Specialties were and still are highly thermally conductive potting and masking compounds and highly flexible, high-purity materials mainly as chip adhesives. After the move to Landsham-Pliening in 1994, materials for robotic processing in the construction sector were added.

The company was one of the first to issue batch-related certificates to ensure traceability. As early as 1996, EPOXONIC received a DIN EN ISO 9001 certificate, and later numerous awards from customers. Great importance is attached to the "ecology of the products", which means that all products are solvent-free and contain no carcinogenic substances. "Helping the customer to be successful" is the promise that was made and demanded by Reiner Habrich.

This orientation is only possible with a cooperative working atmosphere and an experienced team that is used to working independently. Long tenures and an international workforce are standard for EPOXONIC.

EPOXONIC - A COMPANY BUILT TO LAST

"EPOXONIC must still exist in 25 years" has been a guiding principle from the very beginning, and Reiner Habrich has always reaffirmed it. An important step in this direction was the transfer of management to long-time employee Ludwig Guggenberger in 2011. A second step in the same year was the establishment of the Reiner Habrich Foundation, whose purpose is primarily the further development of reactive resin technology. The majority shares in EPOXONIC GmbH were transferred to this non-profit organization. The option of selling the company, which arose several times, was excluded in agreement with the minority shareholders. EPOXONIC is managed in a financially conservative way and independence is constantly taken into account. The founder describes the company as a "rough gemstone" with many innovative cuts still waiting to be made.

IMPULSE GENERATOR - VERSATILE INTERESTED AND COMMITTED

Reiner Habrich also helped others to become entrepreneurs. After deciding to restrict his own pursuit to materials development, the exploitation of the patents and know-how was then handed to Erich Scheugenpflug, a Siemens employee who was closely involved in machine development at the time. In 1990, Scheugenpflug GmbH was founded in Neustadt a. d. Donau. Over the years, an internationally active process specialist emerged, which was eventually sold to Atlas Copco in 2020.

25 years ago, Reiner Habrich was one of the founding partners of the firm 3D-Coatings GmbH in Reichenberg, Würzburg. Ever since he has contributed to the business which specializes in adhesive coatings on paper, film, fabric and tiles.

Reiner Habrich sees the success of his life and work as the necessary outcome of a desire for independence, while deeply embedded in faith.