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Every employee is a pioneer: 100 years of idea management at Siemens

Over 1.5 million implemented ideas boost the productivity and innovative strength of Siemens

Ideas from Siemens employees have been contributing to the company's constant improvement for the past 100 years. The 3i Program, the name given to the system for submitting suggestions in 1997, encourages ideas and suggestions from employees and rewards these initiatives. "Siemens has a huge number of motivated employees and thus enormous creative potential. This is what we want to exploit through the 3i Program," said Siemens Head of Corporate Human Resources Brigitte Ederer. Thanks to the more than 1.5 million ideas from employees that have been put into practice, the company has saved over €3 billion. This commitment has been rewarded by premiums totaling €300 million.

History shows the extent to which idea management at Siemens has expanded. Premiums for "improvement suggestions" were offered for the first time in October 1910 at Siemens' Kleinbauwerk in Berlin. The earliest list of suggestions in existence dates from 1913 and contains 21 implemented ideas. Around 50 years later, the number had risen to 10,000 suggestions and today 100,000 3i suggestions a year are put into practice – at Siemens AG in Germany alone.

However, it is not just in Germany that employees are working constantly on ideas for improving their work surroundings, optimizing processes, saving money or enhancing competitiveness. Employees all over the world have excellent ideas. "With the increasingly high qualifications of our employees in the growth markets, idea management will assume a more important role there too. For this reason we will also be reinforcing the implementation of the 3i Program on a global scale," said Brigitte Ederer.

Siemens AG (Berlin and Munich) is a global powerhouse in electronics and electrical engineering, operating in the industry, energy and healthcare sectors. For over 160 years, Siemens has stood for technological excellence, innovation, quality, reliability and internationality. The company is the world's largest provider of environmental technologies, generating €23 billion – nearly one-third of its total revenue – from green products and solutions. In fiscal 2009, which ended on September 30, 2009, revenue totaled €76.7 billion and net income €2.5 billion. At the end of September 2009, Siemens had around 405,000 employees worldwide. Further information is available on the Internet at: www.siemens.com.