

**INTERVIEW
DR. GÜNTHER LOIDL**



Innovative strength has been a cornerstone of Bachem's business success since the founding nearly 50 years ago. A new innovation management system will further heighten the importance of innovation in the future.

What does «innovation management» mean to you?

Dr. Günther Loidl: Bachem Innovation Management is part of a comprehensive approach spanning every business unit. In accordance with the corporate strategy, we are generating the necessary space and implementing lean structures and processes to improve the flow of new ideas within the organization. The most important basis for innovation is a corporate culture which is positive and open to change.

How is Bachem strengthening its innovation culture? What elements need to be in place?

GL: Each and every Bachem employee is allowed and encouraged to be innovative. We want to get our employees excited about innovation and raise awareness of the importance of innovation for our future success. We will open up the space

where ideas can be generated and provide the necessary resources to support their implementation. We recognize the best suggestions, implement improvements, and celebrate important advances together. We clearly communicate our goals and empower our employees through coaching and mentoring along with focused education and training.

Do you innovate strategically, following a roadmap? How does that work?

GL: Our innovation management system is built on three pillars. A strategic team continually collects ideas for improvements in our production technology. The key areas here are chemical know-how, automation of our production processes, and developing and improving machinery and equipment. At the same time, we continually analyze our business processes and implement digital solutions in a focused way along the entire value chain. The third element consists of a broad initiative to promote continual improvements in all business units and across all hierarchy levels.

Where do you find innovation triggers? Do you work on an interdisciplinary basis?

GL: A number of very valuable improvements in recent years have been based on ideas from our employees. Our technology scouting program also conducts strategic searches outside the organization. We often get key ideas from our customers. The legal and regulatory environment is also an important driver. And finally, we collaborate with academic groups on breakthrough solutions such as using artificial intelligence to identify optimization potential in production processes.

Can you give us some examples of recent strategically important Bachem innovations?

GL: Since many of our active ingredients are highly biologically active, developing sealed trays for product containment during freeze-drying was a very important win for protecting our employees' health. We are currently developing a fully automated peptide synthesis system in-house. This will enable us to expand production capacity while also cutting costs. We protect intellectual property such as production processes with a strong and properly focused patent portfolio.

How do you see things developing around the world as a whole? Who will be tomorrow's innovation leaders?

GL: The successful businesses in the future will be those that spot global trends early and develop effective and efficient solutions across disciplines. Digitalization and artificial intelligence are opening up new opportunities in data collection and analysis, which will facilitate better decision-making and enhance entrepreneurial agility. At the same time, the human factor is becoming an evermore important focus of our thinking and interaction with our customers and partners. In our industry in particular, the goal of all innovation is to better serve the customer. ●