

# GRAMMER AG SEES FASTER TIME TO MARKET WITH BETTER LEVELS OF ENGLISH



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**Gerhard Koch**  
FORMER VP GLOBAL HR, GRAMMER

*While it was selling to markets around the world, emerging markets such as China, Brazil and Russia just to mention a few, Grammer was not working in English as their corporate language.*

## THE TRAINING NEED

Language training was provided to Grammer employees, but only to a very limited number and not in-depth, which meant that many employees spoke a level of English, but the standard was often different in each of the offices. This was causing delays in work and heavy costs in translations.

Senior management at Grammer realised that English language proficiency needed to improve across the board if they were to compete more effectively in their international markets. This meant they needed to get hundreds of employees all around the world enrolled into a training programme in a way that made it easy to monitor progress.

"Project managers, engineers and international sales people needed to achieve a higher level of fluency in English," said board member Manfred Pretscher at Grammer. "Traditionally, interpreters were required on projects, which was slowing lead times. Basically, we were losing time and money."

## THE SOLUTION

Grammer's board directors mandated that Grammer would become an international, English-speaking business and they chose EF as their training partner to help them to achieve this ambitious goal.

"EF was the one company who truly showed they wanted to help us do this and it was no small thing," said former VP Global HR Gerhard Koch at Grammer. "With their cloud-based school, EF Efecta, they could roll out the same training programme in each of our markets at the same time in the same way. This makes benchmarking global training programmes a lot easier to manage".

"EF helped us to understand our local situation," said Stephanie Wirth, international training and development. "We learned that while Brazil is one of our key growth markets, it was also where we had our lowest level of proficiency. Similarly in China, another key market, only one person was enrolled into language training, so this year an additional 41 people have started classes in that market."

"We are helping Grammer to focus the

training on the right regions" said Silke Müller, Country Manager for EF Corporate Solutions, Germany. "The next step is to ensure that everyone has the right type of training for their job function. We find this speeds up the relevancy and uptake of training."

## RESULTS

The programme – in its second year - has seen EF providing online English-language training, with EF Efecta, to 300 people per year in all positions and levels of the company.

Grammer has seen an extremely positive reaction to the online training from their employees so far; 94% of the students learning with EF Efecta said they were happy with the school and 96% agreed that helped them to learn effectively.

"For Grammer, better English equates to being more efficient and competitive in different countries," said Stephanie Wirth. "We know this is an advantage for all relationships with our clients, especially when we don't need a translator to sit between us. We can certainly get to faster decisions now."

So far, the programme has delivered better relationships, more direct communication with clients and higher levels of collaboration between cross-border and cross-functional teams. It is also helping Grammer to be seen as a more international manufacturing company.



Based in Germany, **GRAMMER AG** manufactures components and seats for the interiors of cars, trucks, busses and trains. Millions of people around the world rely on Grammer's innovation as more people travel at high speeds and need as much safety and comfort as possible.