

report

meeting
budapest
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Preparing the Way for the Next Generation



A meeting of families: FEGIME Future and Bettermann at the OBO plant in Bugyi near Budapest

What is “Mittelstand”?

Germany has a very long and successful tradition of companies that belong to the so-called “Mittelstand” (substantial, independent, family businesses – from the “middle ground” between small independent businesses – SMEs - on the one hand and the huge multinational concerns on the other). OBO Bettermann, which now turns over more than half a billion Euros worldwide, is one of the stars of this sector.

FEGIME Future were invited to visit the OBO Bettermann plant in Bugyi near Budapest – where OBO now produce more than in Germany – to meet fourth-generation CEO, Andreas Bettermann as well as FEGIME European KAM, Global Account Manager and family member Frank Dahl.

These two gentlemen have many years’ experience of family business behind them - and were willing to share it with the group. So the insights into the developments at their own family companies were very

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interesting and a perfect introduction to the discussions around the Family Protocol planned for the meeting.

This topic had been introduced at the FEGIME Advanced Management Programme (FAMP) in October last year by Prof. Hari Mann from Ashridge Business School. The Family Protocol (also known as a family charter or family constitution) is a written statement that serves as a record of the family’s heritage, culture, hopes and ambitions for future success, as well as a plan for how to achieve them. At its core should be the mission statement for the family and their clearly stated hopes and aspirations for the current and future generations.

But of course there was also time for a guided tour of the plant where - for the impressive galvanization facility – “OBO-look” was required (see photo on the left).



Andreas Bettermann showing FEGIME Future the way forward into the next generation

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Andreas Bettermann in the Family Protocol discussion with FEGIME Future during the group work in Bugyi

The Family Protocol Workshop

As families and family businesses develop and grow, relationships often start to become more complex, more difficult and in some cases, more fragmented. As well as personal relationships between family members (whether of the same or of a different generation) there will often be complicated relationships between the various parts of the family inside or outside the business. Building a mutual understanding of the rights and responsibilities of all persons who have an interest in the business is key to its preservation and growth. With this in mind FEGIME and OBO discussed in groups different aspects of the problems and conflicts facing all families in business and above all ways of resolving them – ideas that could then flow into a FEGIME company’s own Family Protocol in future. The results were then presented to the group.

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Future meeting for the first time. So for this autumn we all want this success to continue.

To ensure this, the focus will be on all things digital that affect our working lives and our sector. So offers were requested - and received - from leading Business Schools throughout Europe.

After some intense discussion prior to and during the meeting an offer from Berlin was chosen as the most promising.

Being based in the German capital the topic of the “Mittelstand” (see Page 1) is a big plus on the proposed agenda for the Family Business section of the offer from this School. The rest of the tuition time – and the Take Home Tool - will be devoted to the digital topics requested by FEGIME Future. More details are soon to follow.

See you in Berlin!

NEXT FEGIME Future MEETINGS

FEGIME Future Meeting with Hellermann Tyton: 05.04. – 07.04.2017, Hamburg

FAMP Module 2017: 09.10. – 15.10.2017, Berlin



Presenting the results of their group discussion: FEGIME Future members Chiara Cereda from Italy (left) and – at his first FEGIME Future meeting - Ricardo Caixinha from Portugal

Work on Current Projects

What are the sources of conflict in a family around a family business? What are the sources of conflict in a family business with integrated family members? What should be the conditions and rules for a family manager in a family business?

These were the questions – and of course their solutions – that FEGIME Future worked on in groups with OBO Bettermann in Bugyi. And the answers flowed straight in to the discussions on the Family Protocol.

This will be part of their presentation at the Congress where they will be picking up these themes again and also reporting on the practical “Take Home Tools” that they always work on together at the FEGIME Advanced Management Programme (FAMP). And it was discussions of the FAMP in 2017 that rounded off the final day in Bugyi.

29, 38 and now 51 – this is how participation at the FAMP has developed in the three years of its existence. In 2016 it was attended by 51 next generation entrepreneurs from 15 countries – 13 were at a FEGIME *(Continued centre right)*