

Future of Work: We have to provide a career path for the next generation

Technology is developing at an accelerated pace, and reskilling pathways for human capital in Europe is mandatory. This calls for business and academic institutions to work together to guide and prepare young professionals to the changing work landscape. Michel Croisé, President of Sodexo BENELUX and speaker of the upcoming Conference “Equipping Youth & Business for the Future of Work”, shares his views on the role that companies can play on workforce management.

Has Sodexo been faced with specific challenges related to youth skills and higher demands on the workplace?

As most companies, Sodexo faces a number of challenges related to youth skills and specific workplace demands. Finding new ways of working and giving sense is more than ever a top priority. Attracting talents with a focus on the younger generation is key for all companies in general. As a service provider however, we are a true people company and attracting the right people is even more important. We have to adapt our workplace, work on flexibility and provide a real career path for the next generation at the workplace. We do this by offering permanent training and education.

2. Which projects/programmes has Sodexo implemented to meet these challenges?

In several countries, Sodexo has launched a youth network called Young Sodexo. With a target group of employees under 36, this network offers challenges to the new generation. For example, conferences, team buildings, key note speeches are being organized and new ways of management are being emphasized. Another project includes the launch of the Sodexo School in Germany: food services training and skills are offered to young people without a degree in order to obtain an officially acknowledged chef's degree that will help them move up the ladder.

3. Did Sodexo set up/participate to specific Business-Education partnerships to meet the challenges?

We offer a vast array of opportunities for students and graduates. We want to be growers of talents, even of those who are true beginners: internships, apprenticeships, there are many different ways to start a career. Sodexo also have different partnerships, one of them "Alliance for Youth", has been created with other major companies. Through this initiative 50.000 young European were given the opportunity to find a suitable job opportunity (job, internship,).

4. Do you have any best practices you would like to share?

Development programs are at the heart of our practices as an employer. They enable anyone who has the wish to grow the opportunity to broaden expertise, acquire new skills, change professions or prepare for internal mobility. For young managers, Sodexo has launched a mentoring program combining the experience of senior leaders with management aspirations of the new generation on the work floor.

Michel Croisé will be speaking at the CSR Europe's conference “Equipping Youth & Business for the Future of Work” on December 7. He will be joined by other experienced members of the business industry, education and policy institutions to devise ground – based solutions to address the higher demands of well-skilled and better educated people in Europe.