

Inauguration of the new innovation and production center in Biel/Bienne

13 September 2019

The spoken word applies.

Speech by Vincent Mohni, Head of the Biel site and Head of Technical Unit Milling GF Machining Solutions

Dear Mr. Ammann;

Dear Mr. Fehr;

Dear GF Management, Customers, Partners, Colleagues, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's my turn to have the honor and great pleasure to welcoming you today in Biel/ Bienne for the official Grand Opening of our new innovation and production center. I'm especially grateful for the time you are taking and for the very long trip most of you did to celebrate together with us this prominent day in our company history.

Well, it's not easy being the last speaker and I was sweating a lot while thinking about what I am going to be able to say, avoiding repeating what has been said already and trying to keep you awake, if possible. Finally, I realized I have so many things to share with you but have only a few minutes. So let's start!

While many people see this day as an achievement or the end of a phase (which it is in fact), I personally see it the other way around. It is actually just the beginning of our journey or somehow the first day of our new professional life. It is a little bit like a newborn, you start counting the age from the birthday, even though the maternity is not a less important phase. Similarly, it is not an end when a machine leaves our factory toward your company but just the beginning of its life cycle!

That's the reason why I'm so excited today! We are now combining under one roof several locations, more than 450 employees coming out from 24 different nationalities, becoming the headquarters of GF Machining Solutions as well as a master piece for innovation and production of high tech and high quality 3 and 5 axis milling centers, spindles and laser machines among other products, all underpinned by digital intelligence.

Nowadays, the world and business environment is changing and moving so fast that we need to adapt in order to better and faster understand and fulfill our customer requirements, becoming more agile, improving communication, increasing flexibility and developing innovative customer oriented solutions.

In the ICT segment (electronic), for example, the technology development leads to the requirement to produce molds within +/- 2 μm to meet the demands for smaller parts and more complex items. As a comparison, the diameter of hair is ranging between 60 to 100 microns. It means that we have to produce components with tolerances 15 to 25 times smaller than a hair on a repeatable and reliable manner.

On the other hand, customers in industries such as automotive and aerospace also need to be able to achieve high accuracy and surface quality on big parts up to four tons. Moreover, to increase our customers' competitiveness and improve their flexibility, automated processes are a must.

To cover these needs, GF Machining Solutions will introduce two new high-performance Milling machines in 2020: The Mikron MILL P 500 and the MILL P 1400 U, both with a state-of-the-art thermostabilized machine body and unlimited automation possibilities, will support customers in meeting their daily challenges. Today, you are going to be able to discover both machines in our shop floor as a Grand Premier during the company tour in a few minutes.

What we also will see and feel during the tour: people still make the difference! No efforts were spared to offer our team a state-of-the-art working environment enabling collaboration, communication and faster decision taking. This is a key to attract new talents and qualified employees arising out of our outstanding educational and vocational system in Switzerland and especially in the region, supported by a strong collaboration with the local and cantonal authorities.

Finally, the last ingredients and key success factors remain passion and team spirit. Both are the engine and the inner fire that let us feel that we can move mountains together and that no challenge is impossible to tackle. This is what makes us proud of our achievements, proud of our products and proud to be a small part of the success of our customers.

While remaining humble, fully conscious, and dedicated to continuously improve, we are delighted of our successful move into our new innovation and production facility. This is another testimony of our team spirit.

We are now ready to deliver and ship machines to the world!

With these few words, I would like to thank all of you and your teams who contribute to our success and make this possible!

Thank you.

Vincent Mohni

Head of the Biel site and Head of Technical Unit Milling GF Machining Solutions