

## Press release

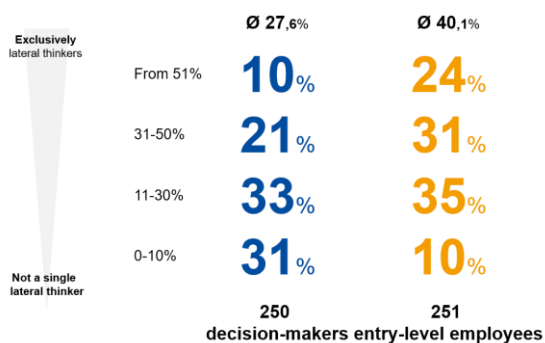
### Entry-Level Employees and Managers at Variance about Lateral Thinking

- Every fourth entry-level professional believes that workforces should consist mainly of lateral thinkers so that a company can be innovative
- In the eyes of most decision-makers a significantly lower share suffices
- Only every second young employee receives appreciative feedback to unconventional ideas

**Wesel, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017** – Top decision-makers and entry-level employees in German companies are at cross purposes when it comes to the significance of lateral thinking for a company. In the view of nearly every fourth entry-level professional, at least half of the workforce must consist of lateral thinkers for a company to be creative. Only 10 percent of managers are of this opinion. Most managers (33 percent) think a share of lateral thinkers between 11 and 30 percent is sufficient. Another third (31 percent) believes that a 10-percent share is enough. Here, too, there is a big gap between managers and career entrants. Only every tenth entry-level employee believes that a share of less than 10 percent is enough for a company to be creative.

These are the results of the Industry Innovation Index 2017, a study conducted by the market research institute Kantar Emnid on behalf of ALTANA for which 500 managers and entry-level employees from industrial companies were surveyed. ALTANA defines lateral thinkers as people who take unconventional paths or question putative certainties.

**Optimal share of lateral thinkers in the workforce: Entry-level employees are significantly more open to lateral thinking than established decision-makers.**



Source: ALTANA Industry Innovation Index 2017 – [www.industrie-innovationsindex.de](http://www.industrie-innovationsindex.de)

### Top hiring criteria: a thirst for knowledge and mental agility

“Companies benefit from lateral thinkers because they are an extremely stimulating factor, open up new perspectives and thus trigger new ways of thinking,” says Martin Babilas, Chairman of the Management Board of ALTANA AG. “Basically,

#### Date

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#### Page

1/2

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every employee and every manager should and must be allowed to think outside of the box. Only then can innovations arise.”

The much lower need for lateral thinkers in the eyes of the managers surveyed is reflected in the hiring process. Among twelve qualities listed for the selection of an employee, lateral thinking is in third to last place. The top quality that managers want new employees to have is a thirst for knowledge and mental agility (88 percent), followed by professional expertise (86 percent).

The low acknowledgement of unusual approaches is reflected in day-to-day work. Only 58 percent of entry-level professionals have experienced their boss reacting appreciatively to unaccustomed suggestions. This corresponds to second to last place when it comes to the question of actually practiced management behavior that can promote innovative work. Connected with this is the insight that only every second (50 percent) entry-level employees sees his or her boss as a role model for lived innovation culture.

“To be internationally competitive, there is no way around taking unconventional paths and promoting inventiveness,” says ALTANA’s CEO Martin Babilas. “The prerequisite for this is a corporate culture based on openness and trust, as well as empowerment to act, and appreciation.”

## Background to the “Industry Innovation Index” study

In the spring of 2017 the market research institute Kantar Emnid conducted telephone interviews with around 500 representatives of industrial companies with at least 250 employees on behalf of ALTANA. A total of 250 board members, managing directors, and divisional heads were interviewed. In parallel, Emnid surveyed 251 entry-level professionals from industrial companies between the ages of 18 and 35 with professional experience of between one and five years.

### **About ALTANA:**

ALTANA is a global leader in true specialty chemicals. The Group offers innovative, environmentally compatible solutions for coating manufacturers, paint and plastics processors, the printing and packaging industries, the cosmetics sector and the electrical and electronics industry. The product range includes additives, special coatings and adhesives, effect pigments, sealants and compounds, impregnating resins and varnishes, and testing and measuring instruments. ALTANA’s four divisions, BYK Additives & Instruments, ECKART Effect Pigments, ELANTAS Electrical Insulation, and ACTEGA Coatings & Sealants, all occupy a leading position in their target markets with respect to quality, product solution expertise, innovation and service.

Headquartered in Wesel, Germany, the ALTANA Group has 49 production facilities and more than 50 service and research laboratories worldwide. Throughout the Group about 6,000 people work to ensure the worldwide success of ALTANA. In 2016, ALTANA achieved sales of more than 2 billion euros. About 6 percent of sales are invested in research and development every year. Its high earning power and high growth rate make ALTANA one of the most innovative, fastest growing, and profitable chemical companies in the world.

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