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Employees

Employees go above and beyond during Covid and show a lot of solidarity. Coop promotes digital learning platforms, which employees use for self-study to gain valuable knowledge. By launching the one-year basic apprenticeship, Coop opens up new avenues in vocational training and is certified for its equal pay.

90 825

employees of
the Coop Group

The Covid pandemic placed great demands on all employees of the Coop Group, and their flexible and unbureaucratic response to the exceptional situation was very impressive. Along with their great commitment in all areas, there was also a strong sense of solidarity across all the different formats. During lockdown, many employees from the temporarily closed trading formats, catering and wholesale helped their colleagues in the supermarkets, production and logistics. Their assistance went a long way towards fulfilling the mandate to uphold supplies and to protecting employees and customers at all times. Other em-

ployees had to switch to short-time working. Coop made good the 20% drop in pay that this entailed for them. Furthermore, in line with the FOPH recommendation, Coop ordered its employees in administration to work from home. Thanks to the flexibility of staff and of the IT systems, business processes were maintained at all times. The unparalleled dedication shown by everyone involved enabled us to cope with the difficulties encountered and, against all the odds, place the focus squarely on customers' needs. Coop paid all of its employees a special bonus for their outstanding commitment during Covid.

In 2020, the Coop Group had a total of 90 825 employees in the Retail and Wholesale/Production business areas, including 3 365 apprentices. In the year under review, 63.3% of jobs were in Switzerland and the remainder abroad. Coop plays an important integrative role in society, by employing people of all educational levels and nationalities.

The latest developments on the labour market make sustainable HR work a challenging task. Chief among those developments are the skills shortage, growing competition for qualified employees and rapid technological advances. Demographic change, particularly with regard to the low birth rate generations and the retirement of baby boomers, also requires companies to be highly adaptable. Professional activity is far more significant among women, the world of work is becoming increasingly multicultural, and working models are becoming more flexible. In this environment, the Coop Group positions itself as a diverse, attractive and sustainable employer. This is particularly important in order to attract and then retain the best qualified job-seekers as employees.

In its HR work, the Coop Group's strategic priorities are: attractiveness as an employer, enterprise and management and change management. One of the main aims of Coop's HR work, besides recruiting new staff members, is to enthuse employees for and impart to them the skills they need in order to deal with technological change and digitalization.

Attractiveness as an employer

CPV/CAP Coop Pension Fund still making very stable progress

Despite the very tough and volatile environment, the CPV/CAP Coop Pension Fund generated a positive return of 3.9%. The target yield was thus exceeded and, as at 31.12.2020, the funding ratio had risen to 118.2% (previous year 116.1%); the target for the funding ratio is 115.0%. The old-age pension assets of active members accrued interest of 2.0% in 2020. This is twice the level of the minimum interest rate under Swiss law. The provisional interest rate for 2021 is 2.0%. Pensions remained unchanged, and this will also be the case in 2021. At 38 431, the number of active members was slightly higher than the previous year (37 266 active members). The number of pensioners rose by 224 people to 20 712 at the end of 2020.

Transgourmet France named one of the best employers in 2020

For the second year in a row, the French edition of the magazine “Capital” chose Transgourmet France as one of France’s best employers in 2020. In the “Wholesale” category, Transgourmet took 17th place (out of 98) in the ranking, for which an independent survey institute surveyed 20 000 people at companies across France with more than 500 employees.

Training and staff development

Introduction of more digital technology in Human Resources

HR continued to adopt new digital technologies in 2020, with the introduction of more SAP SuccessFactors modules. This move eradicated various paper-based processes for Coop, such as recording targets, the employee performance review, and the pay negotiation. In the area of learning, more than 450 internal training courses are now available online. The Coop Access app, which was launched in 2020, enables all employees, including those without a PC workstation, to easily, quickly and securely access the Coop network and, with it, numerous Coop applications such as the Coop address book, mobile deployment planning, or SuccessFactors. In addition, the new PEP 2 staff deployment planning tool offers line managers new, contemporary planning options with straightforward graphic tools.

Coop Campus: New avenues in vocational training

On 1 August, Coop launched its new action-oriented and forward-looking training concept. In its first year, 616 apprentices completed the basic training in 2020. Basic sales outlets and basic trainers were identified in the supermarkets sales channel, to provide training for 8 to 12 apprentices in the first year. After this, the young people move to a training sales outlet. The rapid pace of change in the world of work makes it vital for apprentices to independently acquire new knowledge and new skills. Self-regulated and self-organized learning is therefore pivotal to the new concept. The government’s strategic guidelines for “Vocational Training 2030” require graduate apprentices to also demonstrate responsible professional actions in specific situations. Therefore, in its Coop Campus basic training Coop promotes traits such as individual responsibility, enthusiasm, an action mindset and being a role model.

Digital learning media for practical assignments “beook” app and Coopilot learning management system

Since 2020, apprentices have been using the new digital learning media training concept to complete and reflect on their practical assignments. They prepare documentation on the individual practical assignments in their personal “beook” app, supplement these with video, audio and image files, and submit them to the vocational trainers using a notebook or smartphone. For their part, the trainers work on a learning management system which apprentices have christened “Coopilot”. Using a practical checklist, apprentices rate their own competencies. Every three months, in addition to their self-perception, they receive a third-party evaluation from their vocational trainers, which is discussed in detail and adjusted as necessary. This means that each apprentice has their own portfolio of competencies and skills.

Live online training courses and webinars

Covid has also left its mark on training. Suddenly, in-person training in seminar rooms was no longer possible and various courses run by the Coop Campus had to be switched online, so they could be attended from any location. The platforms used to achieve this were Teams, Webex and Adobe Connect. The popular Meet & Eat lunch events which took place in the auditorium at head office, and were routinely attended by up to 100 participants, continued as a webinar. This has made it easy for employees from the regions to enjoy exciting content.

CAS Management and Leadership

Thanks to a partnership with the Kalaidos University of Applied Sciences, employees now have the option of obtaining a Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) on completion of their management training at Coop. The first 13 participants will be awarded their UAS certificate and 15 ECTS points in March 2021. The CAS in Management and Leadership is comprised of a combination of modules, self-regulated learning, transfer tasks and a practical case study. With its practical orientation, this part-time training enables participants to really engage with what they have learned in their daily management activities, increasing their self-efficacy. Coop's new offering is very popular with employees: with 15 participants, the second CAS intake also got off to a successful start.

Equal pay certification

At the start of April 2020, the Swiss Association for Quality and Management (SQS) awarded Coop the "Fair Compensation" certification for the Coop business units. The "Fair Compensation" certificate confirms that Coop's remuneration policy satisfies the criteria for compliance with fair compensation. Coop has been tackling this issue for a number of years, and has now become the first big Swiss retailer to be rewarded for its commitment with the certificate - proof that, at Coop, all employees have the same opportunities, regardless of gender or background.