

Growing with the Company

Kai Patjas works as R&D Specialist in one of Halton's Innovation Hubs that operates in conjunction with the company's Kausala plant in Finland. He joined Halton in early 2000, a few years after gaining vocational upper secondary qualification in information technology, and right after completing his military service in the Finnish army. He has been with the company since then.

Over the years, Kai has worked on a number of activities and in different positions, allowing him to gain extensive insight in demanding indoor air systems from the product assembly phase to customer installations, product development and system automation. With an open mind and willingness to learn on the way, he has taken his career steps firmly and seized opportunities with the company as they have emerged.

"I started my Halton career in the cylinder workshop in the Kausala factory, and after six months or so, I moved to the chilled beam workshop to work as an assembler. Soon after that, I became a coordinator to look after the work done on the assembly line, as a sort of right-hand man for the team leader," Kai tells about his early days in the family business.

In the course of time, the list of his tasks grew and responsibilities became more demanding. In 2006, Kai was assigned Research Technician in the Kausala R&D team.

"I was working on a lot of different activities ranging from product data measurements, customer solution tests and product development to the development of measuring software and tools, and research facility maintenance. Besides work, I participated in several programming courses over the years. Some of the work and courses took place abroad, which also gave me an opportunity to improve my English," Kai explains.

In his view, progressing in one's career requires a proactive mindset:

"No one will come and drag you from the end of the production line to offer you new tasks. You have to indicate yourself that you are interested in developing your skills for the benefit of the company. Applying for vacant positions in the company can also help signal your interest towards career development to your superiors and management, even if you may not be selected."



In 2016, encouraged by his manager, **Raimo Parkkila**, and alongside his work, Kai started his second education, this time at the South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences. His studies for Bachelor of Engineering in electrical and automation engineering are now in their final stages. Kai sees that the employer's part in his professional progression has been significant:

"Halton supported my studies by allowing me to use one day per month work time for my courses. At the same time, I also learned that my work had actually already provided me with even deeper understanding of certain areas compared to my courses at the university."

The new education brought with it new assignments and positions. In 2016, Kai started working as Systems Specialist on a number of tasks ranging from building automation system development and solution commissioning to sales support and handling of complaints. In 2019, he became Project Engineer with an even stronger focus on the customer interface in terms of project design, commissioning and user training, to name a few. In early 2020, Kai moved on to work as R&D Specialist with building automation development as his main task.

"In all, I feel fortunate that the development of my tasks has been regular and upbeat. This gives me a positive feeling about Halton as an employer. From Halton's point of view, I think it is a great asset for the company to have staff with extensive, customer-centric knowledge and a holistic understanding of what high-end indoor climate solutions are all about," he concludes.