



Adopting a Common Corporate Language

AAC Global helps Ruukki to implement SAP with a tailor-made global language course.

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SAP and AAC continue to expand their co-operation

SAP and AAC will continue to expand their co-operation in customer projects. Since 1995, AAC has provided software translation for SAP into Finnish and since 2003 into Swedish, today AAC is Certified Translation Partner for SAP in both languages. Now SAP Education will include AAC-produced language training to support the implementation of the SAP system.

– We are extremely satisfied with this agreement. It enables us to offer our Nordic customers an even more complete service

package, says Mika Tanner, director of SAP Nordic Education.

Efficient language training also allows SAP to improve their customer satisfaction.

– Most difficulties experienced by SAP users during the system's implementation phase are directly related to the business process language used in the SAP system. Language training provides a quick and efficient means of facilitating the implementation, Tanner concludes.

Rautaruukki Ltd is one Finland's main operators in the metal business as well as one of the country's most well-known companies. Established nearly half a century ago, the company has grown, developed and become more international throughout its history. One of its most significant developments during the last few years was the launch of a Group-wide process to change existing operating methods. The process, based on the strategic policies defined by the company's executive management, aims to standardise the operational methods and systems used throughout the Group during the next few years. The project is a major one – Ruukki operates in 23 countries and employs as many as 14,500 people at any one time.

A separate project organisation, ROUTE Projects, has been established to facilitate the change process. In addition to assuming responsibility for the implementation processes for functions and systems, this organisation will also oversee and co-ordinate associated training.

– The inevitable changes in one's job routines may at first appear inconvenient, even intimidating. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to inform employees of the reasons for the change at an early stage. Training can make it easier for employees to understand the underlying reasons for the change and help to diffuse any suspicions. Change often creates positive opportunities also on the individual level, says Training Manager **Minna Warjoavaara** from the ROUTE project organisation.

Currently, the most visible part of the change in Ruukki's operating methods is the ongoing global implementation of the SAP

enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. Learning to use the system alone requires from employees a great deal of concentration, and having to learn the proper English terms used in the SAP English-language operating system further intensifies the challenge.

– Common language and communication are key issues for any organisation, and they are all the more essential when the goals involve standardisation. For this reason, it has been especially important to provide language training in parallel with the implementation of the new system. The ERP system is a major investment, and in order for the organisation to be able to utilise the system in full, all employees must properly grasp its basics, says Warjoavaara.

Language skills facilitate implementation

The "Understanding SAP" language training course was created as a result of co-operation between the ROUTE project organisation, HRD experts, and AAC Global, Ruukki's trusted partner in language training. Training packages were developed to respond to two kinds of needs. Those employees who need more training in English are offered a weekly course with a total of 15 sessions. For more advanced learners of English, there is a tailored two-day intensive training programme. Employees can assess their language skills with the help of a language level

test developed by AAC Global.

The training is supported by training materials developed in co-operation by AAC Global and Ruukki. Minna Warjoavaara is satisfied with the material, which totals 130 pages, and the training package as a whole.

– It is very useful and comprehensive. With employees managing the English language, the implementation of the system will be considerably easier. In addition to language skills, the training also provides an excellent view of the system itself – for example, on how navigation works in SAP, she says.

The project is growing and becoming more international

The first language training courses were held last autumn, in parallel with the first phase of SAP implementation process in Finland. Language training was conducted in eight different locations. According to Ms. Warjoavaara, the majority of feedback concerning the training was positive.

Minna Warjoavaara believes that the need for language training will increase as the implementation of SAP proceeds inside the Group. The next step is to extend the training to cover the whole Group. AAC Global is in the process of training its international language training partners to become course leaders. At this point, the course material has been translated into nine different languages, including Estonian, Russian and Polish.

– Standardised language training ensures that terms are used in a standardised manner throughout the organisation. Our course material does not provide translations for the terms used in SAP – only the term explanations are translated, Warjoavaara says.

In her opinion, encouragement and motivation of employees by their supervisors is an extremely important factor in employee education. Supervisors should motivate employees and make them aware of their ability to affect their own work assignments through education.

– The support and enthusiasm of supervisors is a key factor in motivating employees. If there's no motivation, there's no point in providing education, emphasizes Warjoavaara.

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