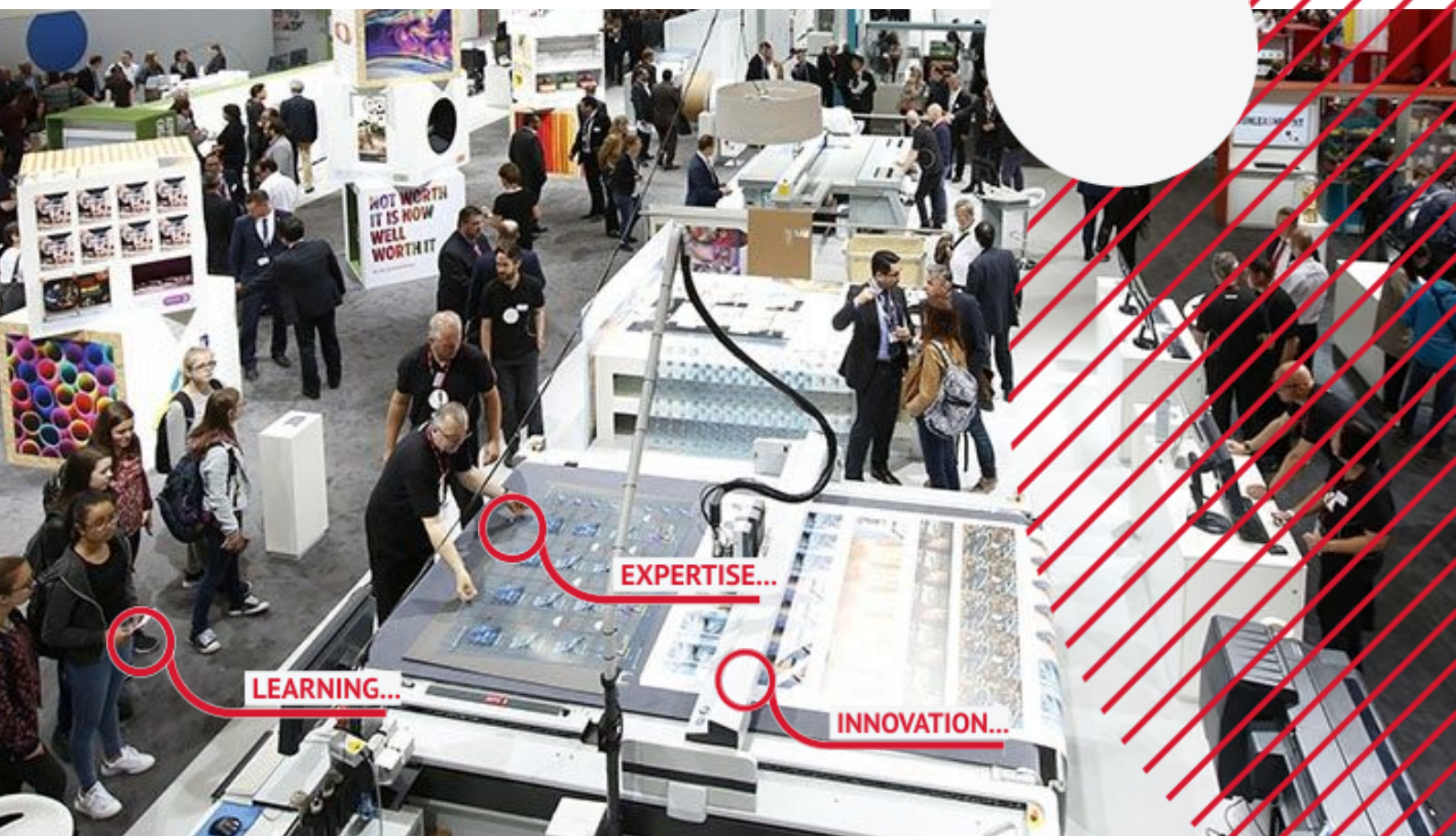**VAN HOORDE Fanny**

Engineering student at **Grenoble INP-Pagora**

Graduate School of Engineering in Paper, Print Media and Biomaterials

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How will print develop in the future?
What kind of working environment are you looking for? How could a printing company provide this?

Introduction

Keeping pace with the technological innovations from around the world, the printing industry, which is not to be outdone, is in constant evolution. Traditional techniques and the latest innovation are skilfully mixed to match with consumers needs and new trends.

Before we look at how the printing industry will develop in the coming years and decades, let's look at where it has been so far.

The printing industry is closely related to the development of culture. The first purpose in printing with automatic mechanical tools was to give access to knowledge to a wider range of the population. As the scribes gave way to the printing presses, this made it possible to reduce production costs and also the prices of books. Since then, printing techniques have become indispensable for knowledge disseminating. Over the years, it has also found new vocations with the development of the plastic industry. Responding to a new demand for personalization, actors of the print sector have started to print on all possible media in order to create more and more opportunities for printers and choices for consumers.

How will print develop in the future?

Today, the printing sector is inescapable. Could you imagine your supermarket full of goods without any indications ? The most minimalist of you would moderate this question, however we would probably all agree that information on provenance, ingredients and precautions for use are not removable to the point we reached in consumption. Even with a RFID code, this is still printing.

On one hand, whatever the velocity of digital technologies growth, the printing industry continues to serve services and products to consumers. Not against digital but with a deep collaboration between each other. They would need each other because there would be an acceleration of **customized demand** and **lean manufacturing**.

One the other hand, the race to cut-down costs has reduced the storage area of many companies. Therefore, the printers have to be even more responsive to deedlines. And this trend is unlikely to be reversed.

Furthermore, to fit with new **habits of consumers**, print would also accelerate the transition to **eco-management**. Inks, material losses, steam rejections. Every printing company would work closer and closer with laboratories, research centres and professionals of green-transition at least to fit with new gouvernementale recommandation, at best to anticipate the debate. For sure, this point could endanger some ancestral techniques. They are going to be replaced for the more innovative and "green" ones. Following, the perception of quality for clients might inevitably evolve. Perhaps the very white writing papers would give way to more yellow ones when people will realize all the chemicals and energy-consuming steps that are necessary to make a non-recycle-looked paper for example.

What kind of working environment are you looking for? How could a printing company provide this?

I.   Transparency

The printing industry is like other industries. In the next few years, it will attract many new collaborators with fresh ideas but also a clearly different vision from that typical of the 20th century generation. These new minds are used and not afraid of change. They are also used to technologies that give dopamine and rewardness all day long. To feel filled, they would probably need more micro-rewardings with a more individual and less straight team management… This goes through more transparency. Greater transparency on certain work methods may encourage the company to think a little more about them and perhaps make fewer mistakes. The quest to the mean of work is increasingly marked and redefined. Not only the new generation… See the many reconversions and new entrepreneurships. Understanding the company you work for and the guideline is essential in everyone's interest. But to understand it, information must be available and accessible.

But how exactly can your company be transparent ?

Communication on some results so that employees get an idea of the impact of their work is likely the best way. These could be concrete examples of successes but also failures, explanations and solutions. Being transparent means communicating on key points with employees - certainly not saying everything -, just enough to involve them in the work of the company as a whole. On another side, there can be positive effects on decision-makers, such as a better perspective on projects when employees can sometimes reveal unanticipated issues.

II.   Continuous training

The acceleration of innovation includes acceleration of new standards in terms of quality but also in terms of environnement. In order to adapt to new processes that the company may have added to meet these new standards, employees may sometimes not really understand why they have had and would again change the way they work. This can lead to discontent and protests.

The idea is to ensure that employees' knowledge evolves with the time by following the company policy. If the employee is not a person who likes to be aware of what's new in the printing industry or does not have the time or resources to keep up with it, then the employee might be completely rejected by progress. It would then be the task of the employer to create an effective learning environment so that the collaborator feels involved and interested.

This is also an opportunity for the company to be competitive. If it communicates well about its projects, if many employees have the same **common knowledge base** and if processes are established to collect their ideas, then feedback and solutions could be more diverse, fruitful and impactful in delivering initiatives.

Finally, trying to raise awareness means taking time for people. They would certainly appreciate it for different reasons (motivation to learn, to feel included…) depending on their personality. Let us substantiate these last sentences in the following point.

### III.	New teamwork culture

People no longer blindly follow their company's operations. They tend to trust individuals and teams more than an institution as a whole. For the development of this trut, barriers will have to be broken down.

In companies with more than about 10 employees, tasks are beginning to be divided up in a compartmentalised manner. This is the fastest and most efficient method for the direct implementation of projects. However, in this way, the person knows his or her own objectives and may not be aware of what his or her less close colleagues are doing. It is at this point that the different professions start to become blurred and therefore, people do not realise how much work the colleague is actually facing. There may then occur frustration and sometimes unnecessary conflicts.

Solutions are numerous. Starting from **long-term integration** to a new colleague from discussion rooms to switching days to be up-to-date about new technologies, new offices and all what can not be seen at an individual workstation. Obviously, an entire profession can not be discovered in this short period of time, but at least it could give a better overview and more empathy. This can also be completed with an **internal newsletter** where these professions could be explained gradually.

I personally think that a teamwork culture which matches with the expectations of inclusion of collaborators is going to be the most important reason for new employees to stay in a company. Because the reality is that future graduates and those from the last decade are more attached to their **teamwork** than to their company.

To strengthen this team cohesion, valuing outdoor activities between colleagues can be a way of progress in this direction : with special prices when activities are done between each other (sports, culture, relaxing moments...) for instance. Sometimes people's skills can be very surprising and impressive. Allowing them to express their personality through extra-professional abilities is certainly a strong and pleasing way to build this loyalty which is likely to become a rare and precious resource. Finally, seeking the help of a communication expert could perhaps help if there is lack of time or simply a lack of communication methods.

Conclusion

In conclusion, monitoring innovation plays a major role in the development of the printing industry. But a company which has the ambition to flourish at the right time should also know how to follow the evolution of habits of workers which are today moving, among other things, for current and future generations of workers, to high expectations of recognition, an increase in **personalised careers** and an **aspiration for conviviality** and **more well-being at work**.

With the development of social networks and the fast spread of information, my last piece of advice as a future graduate in printing communication would be to involve the incoming generation as much as possible to get fresh and new ideas, a lot of **motivation**, **ambition** and more **neutrality** from minds still free of the specific working atmosphere of a company.

Thank you for your time and consideration.