

# PRESSINFO

---

## Comment by Petra Steinke: Responsibility



Petra Steinke (Picture: schuhkurier)

For Wortmann CEO Jens Beining, one thing sustainability must never be: just a marketing instrument.

Hardly anything has occupied our society as much in the past year as the issue of sustainability. On many occasions, our industry has also discussed how shoe production can become more sustainable. Whereby the question of a precise definition of the term sustainability must always be clarified. This was also noted by Jens Beining, CEO of Wortmann, when this question arose in an interview with schuhkurier. As difficult as it is to clearly define where sustainability begins and where it ends, it is indisputable from his point of view that it must not be one thing under any circumstances: just a marketing instrument.

While there is currently a blatant buzz across all sectors of industry that people have bought an electric vehicle, are dispensing with the use of plastic cups or will in future use recycled plastic in production, Jens Beining says almost casually that the company has had a Head of Sustainability in the company for ten years, who is a real expert in his field and has made decisive progress in many areas - without any loud PR. In general, Jens Beining would rather replace the buzzword sustainability with the term responsibility. And, according to Beining, this must encompass all corporate divisions. Responsible action includes not only ecological, but also economic and social aspects. Answers must be found to many questions arising from this complex of issues.

This is what the CEO of Wortmann is aiming for: responsibility or sustainability in all decisions that are made within the company. This means always considering the consequences of our actions - not only in ecological terms, but also in economic and social terms. In a survey some time ago, he asked all company employees to formulate their own ideas on the subject of sustainability or responsibility and to submit suggestions for improvement. The result was overwhelming, Beining says. And many things are now to be addressed. Responsibility, he says, starts with switching off the lights and can also include visionary goals such as a completely CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral company. However, he says, it is a "marathon" in which many steps follow one another and it is not done with one or two marketing ideas.

Instead of panic or threatening scenarios, in which disinformation often plays an important role, Beining wants to address the issue of sustainability in the literal sense of the word. For an internationally oriented company with production facilities in numerous countries, this is an enormous challenge. The motto that Wortmann has adopted for this process of change is "We do our best". No more – and no less.

*Author: Petra Steinke*