

# Applications Development Apprenticeship

By Heiko Breitenstein



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## Why Computer Science?

There are for sure a lot of different motivations to choose an education in Computer Science. The base however should be a fundamental interest in Hard- and/or software. When I started at PIKON in March 2001 for an internship I had no experience in programming at all, but I knew that I enjoyed dealing with the PC, by means of computer games, internet or hardware-optimizing. Besides as a software-user I was always curious about how programs work.

## Why education and not study?

I preferred the on-job-training to a more theoretic study, because I drew the conclusion, that I for myself acquire knowledge more efficient in practice.

## Why PIKON?

After I had decided for the education as Computer Scientist, I had to find an enterprise, which harmonized best with my imaginations. For the selection it was important, that the company should be young and not too big, but also it should

already be established in the market. I consider it for more interesting, to grow with a company, where everybody knows everybody. Besides I wanted to get into programming business as fast as possible instead of wasting my time with making coffee. By taking a look on the websites of the candidates it was quickly possible to separate the wheat from the chaff. When I read the report from the former trainee and I throughout found conformity which my assumptions. From that point PIKON was my favorite.

### **Why education at PIKON?**

Shortly after the interview I got the promise and in March 2001 I started at PIKON with an internship. First I read books about object-orientated-programming with JAVA and took part in an internal JAVA-training. A short while after that I was already introduced into the ?Maintenance-Tool? – project, which deals with the maintenance of product data on a database, that are shown in a webshop. As this project was realized as a java-application which communicated with a database, I was at once able to put my knowledge into practice. When an authority-concept for this programm should be planned and implemented I was already part of developing team before my education even had started. During this project I designed a complete software cycle for the first time by means of planning (concept, functional specification), implementaton (programming, tests), documentation, installation and maintenance. After finishing the Maintenance-Tool, I was put in charge of the user-training, what was a pleasant change for me. As a programmer one always is curious about how happy the customer is with the created programm.

The Maintenance-Tool should become the essential part of my education. So in the next months the tool was enhanced to a browser-based Content-Management-System. In this way a wider scope of functionality could be covered. To get the necessary basics, I first took part in an internal PL/SQL-training. After that I visited a training at IMPRESS Software AG in Hannover, who provides a middleware, which is responsible for the the communication between front end (user-interface) and back end (database). Because we were given plenty of rope for concept and implentation, besides logical understanding

creativity was demanded. So I was able to implement the suggestions of our customers as well as own ideas, which made work more comfortable for our customers. In July 2002 the project was generally finished, so I could present it to the customers and train them.

### **Atmosphere**

There is a very good sentiment at PIKON, which is helpful for an enjoyable teamwork. Especially as a trainee one often depends on the support of one's colleagues. You get this help fast and without limits. Because of the good tune it is obviously that friendships develop among the colleagues and one hooks up with one another for a beer after work. Further more there are regular events organized by PIKON like ski-holiday, bowling- or dart-competitions and of course lan-parties.

### **My future by PIKON**

When I finished my education in January 2003, it was absolutely clear to me to stay at PIKON, last but not least because of the promotion prospects even without academical degree, but mainly because I feel all around comfortable.

Since that time I gained a lot of project experience and programming skills.

I shifted my main focus from java to abap objects which is the object oriented programming language of SAP and did some projects in the Business Warehouse environment of SAP. Even though my education finished a long time ago, there are still a lot of things to learn. But that just brings the job about.