

## Professor Hamouda Khaled: "We need to treat students as our own children"

Dr. Hamouda Khaled, Professor of the Graduate School of Mechanical Engineering at the Institute of Machinery, Materials and Transport, has been working at the Polytechnic University for two years, educating a new generation of engineers.



— **Professor Hamouda, tell us how it all began?**

— I arrived in Russia in 1990, enrolled in the postgraduate program at the Don State Technical University, and became a Doctor of Technical Sciences. Then I returned to Algeria. At first, I worked in a company, but after two and a half years, I left to develop in the academic environment. I was attracted by the fact that research at the university is more relevant and specific. I defended my doctoral dissertation in Algeria in 2010 and became a professor in 2017. After that, I taught for 20 years at the University of Science and Technology Houari Boumediene, served as the chairman of the faculty's academic council for 12 years, and also headed the postgraduate program in mechanics.



— **Is there a difference between the educational process in Algeria and Russia?**

— Overall, the educational processes are similar, but there are differences in exams. In Algeria, students take exams simultaneously, whereas here they do it in a traditional manner, one by one. I believe the Russian method is more effective, as it allows for a better assessment of students' knowledge levels.



— **Do you have many foreign students?**

— I have two groups of Russian students, and the third group consists of Chinese students. I am a French speaker, so I communicate with them through a interpreter. It was not easy since they did not study at a foundational program. By the end of the year, it became clear that there were results: they want to learn.

— **Is there a big difference between Russian and foreign students?**

— Apart from the language barrier, I don't see a significant difference. There are students who have not adapted to the new environment, but overall everyone strives for knowledge.

— **Professor Hamuda, aside from exams, what teaching methods are currently most relevant?**



— Currently, teaching methods have changed. After the pandemic, many universities implemented online education and emphasized self-study. In my opinion, this is a positive trend, as students come with minimal preparation and expect additional material. Earlier, we used classical methods, but I actively employed the workshop method, which I learned during my internship in France. It really helps create an interesting atmosphere in class. I also used it in Algeria. Instead of traditional Q&A, we conduct discussions, which students really enjoy.

— **Can you tell us how the game burning method works?**

— It is just beginning to be implemented in some countries, such as Sweden. This is learning through play, which significantly increases student interest. We have the technical capabilities to apply it, and I believe it could become an important addition to our methods in the future.



— **Are there conflicts and misunderstandings with students?**

— A teacher must be able to manage situations to avoid disagreements. Sometimes misunderstandings can arise among students, but there should be no conflicts with the teacher. I always try to explain everything gently and respectfully. You need to treat students like your own children. A good teacher should find a way out of any situation.

— **You mentioned problems with practical skills among students. How can this be resolved?**

— I believe it is necessary to create a link between the university and industry. If students intern at factories and work on real problems at the university, it will create valuable experience for both sides. It's important that production tasks are addressed during the educational process.

— **You studied in the early 90s and have experience teaching then and now. What would you like to bring back from old practices?**

— I studied for a year and a half during the USSR and witnessed changes in the education system. The new system turned out to be less effective for both Russia and Europe. In Bachelor's degree studies, students often lack practical experience until their master's degree, which is insufficient. In the old system, practical

training started in the second year, and I believe we need to take the best from old education and combine it with innovations.

— **Why did you choose the Polytechnic University?**

— I had other options, but the Polytech is one of the best technical universities in Russia. I decided to give it a try, and I was lucky to stay here. A person always seeks better opportunities, and I chose this university specifically.

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