

# What does practical experience teach us about the Cesar Tool?

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*You always get the best feedback from users. That's no different for the Cesar Tool. We are happy to share the learning lessons and some critical reflections that we were able to discuss with a number of users in the meantime.*

Recently we launched the **Cesar Tool** to help companies make meaningful and feasible decisions to take short-term steps towards a circular economy. This is done by making acquired knowledge, insights and tried and tested methods widely accessible. In the meantime, the first user experiences are a fact and both users and we, as developers, have learned a lot.

## What do users learn?

Most users obtain a number of additional insights or perspectives by filling in the Cesar Tool and reading the report. In particular, blind spots in approaching the circular economy come to light or are questioned. After all, it is very logical that this theme is approached from your own business context and thus pays less attention to certain aspects of the circular economy. For example, there may be a great deal of attention and focus on product development with a view to extending the lifespan, but little insight into what happens to the discarded products after use.

The intended goal to increase the involvement within your company is reported to be a valuable element. The Cesar Tool can be used by different people within one, and they may even obtain very different results. By talking to each other and finding out the cause of the differences, the insights will start to converge and broaden the support.

After that, positive feedback can be given on the definitions and terms provided. The terminology used in your company does not necessarily match the terminology used by others. Typical differences in the interpretation of terms such as 'remanufacturing', 'refurbishing', 'reuse' and 'recycling' regularly cause confusion. Especially if you are also looking to collaborate with other companies to further develop circular value chains, it is wise to check this terminology with your partners as well.

It was also rather surprising to learn from the feedback that pioneers also consider the Cesar Tool useful. In their case, it's less about gaining new insights, but more about asking the right questions in their projects and processes and keeping an overview.

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## What have we learned in the meantime?

We too have our blind spots and assumptions that are not necessarily always correct.

The most important lesson is that while the Cesar Tool can be helpful, it is certainly not the engine of a transition process, even if the tool has been used by several people in the company. The step from an *ad hoc* action to a structured approach (e.g. integration of CE projects in monthly R&D, Sales, ... meetings) remains key. It is definitely not so that every company can now take all subsequent steps through the Cesar Tool. In many cases, some form of project guidance is required.

A second lesson is related to the different results that can be obtained within one company in function of the perspective of the respondent. In addition to the positive effect that we described earlier, a number of users also experienced this as an obstacle. Someone who is looking for unambiguous (possibly) numerical values of the circularity of his company will be disappointed. Unfortunately, there's nothing we can do about that. Circularity is, in this sense, comparable to safety or quality; it cannot be summed up in a single figure. Controlling the processes that help achieve these objectives (safe, high quality and circular) are the measure of success. Just like the circular economy, various different aspects (cooperation, transparency, innovation, ...) and processes (product and service design, service provision, design and management of the revenue model, ...) are interacting with each other. Small changes in these different components can lead to large differences. This reflects the systemic character.

This lack of simplicity and clarity appears to be an obstacle for a small number of users to take concrete action. Here, too, customised project guidance may be a solution.

*Do you have any questions about the Cesar Tool or the next steps you can use? Please contact us ! Together with you, we will determine which form of support is most suitable for you.*




## Authors



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