THE FACE OF DIGITAL LEADERSHIP

How would you describe your organization's enterprise-wide digital transformation strategy?

Smart's strategy has always been and always will be focused on our customers. Digital transformation is a daily struggle that involves everyone in the organization to become a digital workforce, supporting our endeavor in becoming "Cambodia's Digital Champion by 2020."

To sum up our strategy:

- Identify the skills required of a "digital" organization and then measure the gap between actual skills and desired profile to define the best training program for each employee.
- Focus on customers rather than competitors; live and breathe customer needs. Make interactions with customer easy and transparent. Try to anticipate future customer needs and strive to satisfy them.
- Enable an ecosystem around the longtail of customer needs, leveraging the telecom network by opening it up to partners through APIs.
- Foster a local startup ecosystem with Smart Axiata Digital Innovation Fund

What targets does your organization have to guide this strategy?

- Better customer intimacy (via NPS)
- Becoming a digital ecosystem enabler (via quantity of partners in various fields)
- Level of digitization (set of metrics to measure level of process automation)

What's the biggest 'win' you've achieved so far?

The sheer fact that more than half of Cambodians selected Smart as their telco service provider of choice is the biggest win for us.

What are the biggest challenges you face in achieving your digital transformation aims?

Cambodia is a country that is still recovering from the genocide of Khmer Rouge. Pol Pot literally killed most educated people and destroyed the educational system back in the 1970's so Cambodia was thrown into dark times for several decades. Hence simply hiring an educated employee let alone becoming a digital business in Cambodia is not an easy task. On the other hand, there is certainly an issue with focusing on short-term goals like churn, revenue and costs rather than betting on future needs, and recognizing that IT staff are not a cost but an enabler.

Digital transformation is not just about changing processes and technology; it also involves a shift in organizational culture. How is your teamwork changing and what's your role as a team leader?

Basically, I give enough freedom for people to act on their own without too much micromanaging from me; I see that managers become more independent and satisfied (according to employee surveys), but this freedom has to be balanced with a rigid framework of goals and targets and be constantly aligned internally and externally.

In terms of the wider societal impact of digitization, what are you looking forward to over the next decade?

Connectivity will empower people, and their efficiency will grow tremendously allowing them to achieve much more with much less, creating whole new industries along the way while enhancing the quality of life for the majority of people, from the highly skilled to the farmers in the field.

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