

P4a: 1 hour with Vinod KUMAR

Vinod Kumar joined Tata Communications in 2004, after having worked in different countries such as the US, Japan, Hong Kong or Singapour. He is now the Managing Director of Tata Communications Limited and Tata Communications Limited Group CEO. He tackles the following topics:

Challenges:

One of the main challenges of the group, operating in 52 different countries, is the difference in our cultures. Mr. Kumar thinks they are wonderful and make business more exciting.

M&A:

Tata Communications is developing worldwide using M&A. When they acquire a new company, their approach is to keep and value the people in the company. It's a partnership model where the new company joins the Tata Communications family. Thus, Teleglobe (Canada) joined the "family" in 2005, which resulted on a 100% retention and expanding responsibilities for the employees of the Canadian firm.

Diversity of the group:

The group is composed of approximately 100 different companies. They have different economic values but share a **common branding** and a **common value system**. It's a joint-venture situation: every company has got a board managing it, and every board has got an independent director.

Philosophy:

The philosophy of Tata Communications is to make profit for business but also for **nation building**. They want to contribute to the rise of their young nation. The Nano car is a good example: a low cost and sustainable car was designed for these Indian families who used to drive motorcycles and had difficulties on the rainy roads for instance.

Communication inside the group:

Tata Communications has got a cross-border communication service for internal news. Moreover, they use Telepresence, an enhanced version of videoconference which is a powerful tool of collaboration. It's an innovation of the group. At the same time, it reduces carbon emissions since it avoids unnecessary travels.

CSR:

In terms of CSR, Tata Communications privileges projects with a long term payback, bringing both recognition and financial returns.

Competition with China

Mr. Vinod Kumar thinks that it will be very difficult to compete with China in the low-cost industry. However, India could take the lead in more advanced industries. For instance, they have a more developed sense for the respect of intellectual property compared to China.

In conclusion

For Vinod Kumar, the most important thing in leadership is to be able to inspire and energize people.