

It all starts from within for DiGi

Work ethic combines openness and respect

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DiGi.com Bhd's corporate responsibility (CR) initiatives are not just an external affair, especially those involving the community but also an internal issue involving its staff and how it runs its business.

As a mobile telecommunications company that prides itself in providing innovative services and products, its working environment is anything but conventional.

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Combining a set of values, work ethics and conducive environment, DiGi has shown the way in defining a work setting that exemplifies how employees should be treated and are expected to behave.

Being one of three mobile telecom-

munications operators in Malaysia, DiGi is often regarded as the smallest in terms of market capitalisation and subscriber base.

Despite its size, DiGi has certainly made itself heard through the creative ways it has found to reinforce the brand's image, and product and service offerings that constantly challenge the market share of its two bigger rivals.

Its radical transformation journey started in mid-2004 when Morten Lundal joined DiGi as chief executive



One of the many work areas in D'House. There are no partitions and each day, staff can choose to sit anywhere they like

officer and introduced changes that continue today.

In his New Year's message, Lundal made a major statement in reference to CR, said DiGi Telecommunications Sdn Bhd strategy and corporate affairs director Tunku Alizakri Alias.

"He said it is not good enough for us to do business just for the sake of doing it but we must do business in the right way. We have to live our values," he told StarBiz.

CR head Vimal L. Kumar said there were internal values (how staff see the company) and external values (how the company is perceived).

"Externally, we want to be seen as daring, dynamic and different in everything we do. We also want to be seen as (providing) best value, simple and innovative in our service offering.

"Internally, we should be committed, open-minded and respectful," she said.

The journey was not easy, as it required a lot of hard work and passion to instil these values into the staff.

DiGi does not just hire staff based on skills alone but also their value system and how they would fit into the company's way of doing things.

Alizakri said communicating and inculcating these values was sometimes a challenge.

"We have to be willing to let go of very good staff if their values do not fit our culture. Some left as terms and conditions changed in the company," he added.

There were sacrifices among those who remained; senior management took cuts in pay and benefits.

From more than 440 managerial positions, about 210 remained. Hierarchy in the company was almost non-existent.

Vimal said the number of grades was almost flattened to four or five depending on divisions from 16 grades. Job titles did not matter any more.

Alizakri added that reducing hierarchy actually unleashed a person's core competency.



Tunku Alizakri Alias

"We look at a person's core competency and place him where we think he can best serve," he said.

DiGi's headquarters, named D'House, sealed the company's transformation.

Housing about 1,900 staff, the glass and steel structure with lots of open space was a physical embodiment of DiGi's values.

Vimal said it fitted in the transformation as transparency and openness were high on the agenda in the way the company dealt with people, and managed business and organisation.

The open work environment "enables better communication and helps collaboration," she added.

A newcomer would feel the buzz and difference, as DiGi's corporate values are quite apparent. Without barriers, communication flow is improved. Staff are more relaxed and work together.

Happy people work well, said Vimal.

"We work well and it is very evident in our market share, revenue and growth. We would not have done all that if we did not have people who are committed and engaged to work towards our goals," she said, adding that the transformation happened because there was business imperative involved.

For DiGi, the people are its assets. By ensuring that it is a good place to work, staff will naturally feel motivated to do the right things.

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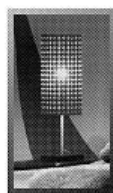
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Promakmur donates land for school

KUALA LUMPUR: Promakmur Development Sdn Bhd has donated a 6-acre site and RM3mil for the construction of a Chinese primary school in Rawang.

The school, Sekolah Rendah Jenis Kebangsaan (Cina) Emerald, will be located at Kota Emerald and will be the third Chinese-medium school within the

Rawang town centre.

To be completed in two years, the new school will house 30 classrooms and various educational facilities that would accommodate about 1,200 students.

Promakmur Development is a joint-venture company between Guocoland (M) Bhd and Hong Bee Group.