

How Lupin promotes culture of innovation from top to bottom and bottom-up

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Aarushi Bhargava • ETHRWorld • Updated: March 16, 2022, 11:48 IST



Yashwant Mahadik, President - Global Human Resources, Lupin

Change is constant and considering the age we are living in, it is more frequent than ever. We are constantly innovating and trying to come up with something new, better and more efficient.

It is not just the technology that is getting updated but also the systems and processes in place that are becoming more

efficient and innovative. It is needless to say how important it is for any company to keep innovating in order to keep up with the emerging trends.

Lupin, a leading pharmaceutical company, has built a culture that promotes innovation at every level that not only allows the company to come up with better and new things, but also allows its employees to solve any problem or inefficiency they may face.

[Yashwant Mahadik](#), President - Global Human Resources, Lupin, believes that creativity and innovation are at the centre of wanting to drive growth and customer satisfaction.

“Innovation is industry agnostic. Earlier, the notion was that innovation is only at the centre where you are doing research and development, designing products or designing solutions, but over the past decade and a half, it has become a norm everywhere in every function,” Mahadik said.

Explaining the Japanese concept of [Kaizen](#), Mahadik told ETHRWorld that this entire concept of Kaizen, which was popularised by the Japanese manufacturer [Toyota](#), was all about innovation. The company believed that even incremental improvements and innovation activity have a much larger cumulative effect on the company's growth and customer satisfaction, as compared to [quantum innovations](#).

The concept of Kaizen in a workplace means how a person working in an organisation can improve and innovate the process to deliver high quality products with less effort and become more efficient.

“The belief here is that a person who's working on something is best suited and best knows how to improve it, whether it's a machine, a coding of a software, or whether it's designing an induction programme in HR,” Mahadik said.

How does the company promote innovation?

According to Mahadik, innovation is one of the core competencies and values at Lupin. “And when you make it a competency you get a lot of processes and systems, and you design a lot of programmes to make and sharpen that competency in your workforce,” he said.

Mahadik suggested that there is also a need to build a culture where innovation is actually the bedrock for wanting to make transformation, improvements, and making sure that growth and customer satisfaction are at the highest.

He said building an innovative, high performance and value-based culture is very important. The leaders and all the employees are expected to role model that competency and that value.

Suggesting ways to build a culture like that, Mahadik said organisations should offer formal education and training around it. The second is by putting the right kind of programmes in place.

Sharing the latest example of such programmes, Mahadik said, “Hackathons have been used by companies largely to crowdsource and engage people. We design it in such a way that not only our technical teams, but our business teams, and even other stakeholders are brought in. We give them a set of problems and they keep hacking at the problems and come up with solutions. They could be process solutions, system solutions or practice changes. Then, once they bring out all these ideas, they are presented to the stakeholders.”

“Hackathons are focused on various topics and subjects. We recently completed a hackathon on how to be more digital and data-driven as a company. We got 168 ideas across the globe when this hackathon finished, and then out of those 168 ideas, the stakeholders shortlisted 12. And out of those 12, three have already been embraced,” Mahadik added.

Mahadik believes that when people see their ideas being recognised and implemented across the company, they feel valued and there is an excitement for such programmes which exudes a lot of positive energy.

“So, organisations need to come up with programmes and design such programmes, which help them to create that culture,” Mahadik said.

Lupin has six values at the core of the organisation. The first value is customer focus, the second value is entrepreneurial spirit, which includes innovation and creativity because that's a key towards being an entrepreneur, the third is integrity, the fourth is a passion for excellence, the fifth is respect and care, and the sixth is teamwork.

“These six core values were propagated by the founder (Dr Desh Bandhu Gupta) almost 54 years ago, when the company was founded, and they are so well ingrained now. These are the core values around which the entire foundation of the culture, the operating model of the company is based upon,” Mahadik said.

Based on these values, [Lupin awards](#) its employees with the DBG Spirit of Lupin Awards (named after the founder DB Gupta) where six role models of six values are awarded. The DBG Spirit of Lupin Award is equivalent to an Oscar that one gets at Lupin.

Maintaining the flow of the innovation culture

Just building a culture is not enough. There is a need for communication, culture dissemination and popularisation so that the flow of culture is both top to bottom and bottom-up.

“Once you are a multinational, you don't have a choice but to be professional. Otherwise, you cannot manage a global company. So, we have a very structured communication, cadence process and systems and our corporate communication team actually anchors it as the custodian of it,” Mahadik said.

Lupin also conducts monthly LEADx through which different CXOs and Country Heads connect with their teams across the company. This allows the leaders to talk to the entire company, at least twice a year where they are given insights into what's happening. This also allows for international coordination among the employees, as a person from a different region also gets to know about what's happening in the India region and those in the India region get to know about what's happening elsewhere.

Mahadik believes that whatever an organisation does has to be very well designed, structured, and fairly communicated across the company so that everyone can participate. But the most important thing is “It has to be done with very high energy and passion because passion exudes and it's infectious.”

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