

A Short Survey about Environmental Issues, Human Resource Management and Japanese Partners at Vietnamese Companies

Phung Dinh Trong

Masayoshi Toma

[Abstract]

So far appearance of many enterprise types in Vietnam can represent for developing economy of country. In order to consider about entrepreneurial activities, problems related to the environment and their partners, short interviews were conducted at two companies and one state institute in Ho Chi Minh City. This paper introduced briefly the interview survey's content and thereby we can understand about current activities of Vietnamese companies.

[Keywords]

Environmental issues, human resource management, Japanese partners, Vietnamese companies

1. Introduction

Since the reform policies conducted in 1986, Vietnam's economic situations have changed. Various sectors such as state, private, individuals, foreign direct investment, household business sectors have appeared continuously. After the equitisation was carried out from all over the country, a lot of state companies have turned to joint-stock companies and limited liability ones. Moreover, enterprise law's change makes many Vietnamese companies operate more effectively and expand scope of business activity for example of cooperation with other domestic and international partners.

Recently Vietnam's economy has grown significantly and a large number of Vietnamese companies have obtained great achievements. Based on these circumstances, this paper introduces a short interview survey's content at two

companies and one state institute and shows business activities of these companies, their concerns about environmental issues, training ways for human resources, some thoughts about Japanese partners and some problems they are facing. Through this survey content, we can understand more or less about the current business activities and operation of Vietnamese companies.

2. Content of the survey

As mentioned above, the survey was conducted at two Vietnamese companies and one state institute in Ho Chi Minh City: Long Hai Chemicals, Co., Ho Chi Minh City Public Lighting Co. and Ho Chi Minh Information and Communication Technology Institute. Each of them was investigated its brief profiles, environmental issues, human resource management, concerns about Japanese customers, etc.

2.1. Survey at Long Hai Chemicals Company

2.1.1 Brief profile of Long Hai Chemicals Company

Long Hai Chemicals Company was started up in 1996. Formerly it was a No. 1 chemical store and then because of its development, it became a company specializing in buying and selling chemicals for laboratory, chemicals for industry, medical equipments, lab equipments, anatomy model such as benzoat benzyl, indicator, paper test, acid, inorganic salt, plastic ware and glass-ware, etc.¹⁾

With 100% private capital, it has worked as a limited liability company independently. Currently, its employee number is about 20 people and it has become an official distributor of many famous brands of England, Germany, Japan, France, India, China, Chile, etc. Its well-known product brands are Merck Darmstadt, VWR Prolabo, Bukle, Vitlab, Hirschmann, Xilong Chemical, Johnson, etc.

Thanks to effective business activities and with nearly 20 years of experience, it got lots of achievements and has been recognized as a prestigious supplier whole of the country.

2.1.2 Concerns about environmental issues in business operations

Presently, it buys and imports a large number of chemical products from internal and external partners and then supplies them to customers. Due to characteristics of chemical products, it always recommends customers to pay attention for using, storing, etc.

Regarding used bottles, equipments, garbage, it does not collect and process directly but it often persuades customers to handle properly to protect the surrounding environment. In general, chemical products are ones greatly toxic to

the environment if there is not proper using method. As one concern about environment in business operation, it always puts safety of human and environment above all else to recommend its customers to use products in the most effective and efficient way.

2.1.3 Management of human resource

Being a limited liability company with a small number of staffs, it always sets up training programs for its employees after recruitment. Because of work related to chemical products, training about safe, knowledge, etc. about its products are indispensable. In addition, building a comfortable working environment for its employees is also its' objective.

Although it has remuneration system for employees as other companies, management of human resource is really a difficult issue. Quitting of some employees due to various reasons after working for a time makes hiring and replacement become difficult in this company. However, to serve its customer needs efficiently and its development, it has set a target of selection, training, and has tried to maintain enthusiastic, responsible and experienced staffs.

2.1.4 Thoughts about Japanese partners

Until now it has imported many products from various countries like England, Germany, Japan, France, India, China, Chile, etc. Each foreign partner has specific characteristics but among them, it always appreciates Japanese partners.

According to Vietnamese consumers, quality of Japanese goods is always very good. Regarding collaboration with partners, it thinks that once gaining high reliability from Japanese partners, business activities with these partners will flourish. Up to now, there have not been many Japanese partners or customers but it is looking

forward to cooperating with many Japanese partners or customers in order to bring prestige products of Japan to Vietnamese consumers in future.

2.1.5 Summary

Specialized in purchasing and supplying various chemical products in the country and overseas nearly 20 years, it always follows all provisions and rules of the state, considers issues related to the environment, the safety of using and storing of chemicals. Despite some difficulties in stabilizing its human resources, it always orients itself strategies to get experienced and skilled staffs to meet customers' demands for a long-time growth. Regarding partners and customers, it wishes to serve all of various customers at home and abroad. Desiring to cooperate with many foreign partners especially Japanese partners have become its important target.

2.2. Survey at Ho Chi Minh City Public Lighting Company

2.2.1 Brief profile of Ho Chi Minh City Public Lighting Company

Ho Chi Minh City Public Lighting Company has been established and operated since 1993. It has one headquarter and one public lighting control centre in Ho Chi Minh City with more than 500 staff members. To ensure activities of operation, maintenance, execution of technical infrastructure and meet various customers' demands, it has established many subordinate enterprises throughout Ho Chi Minh City. Currently, it is a company with 100% state capital. In future, it will become a joint-stock company with 51% state capital and 49% public capital. It has operated as the unique company specializing in managing, operating and maintaining public lighting systems traffic signal systems,

traffic surveying camera systems, guide sign systems whole of the country. Also, it designs, constructs and installs new public lighting and traffic signal lights, and consults about construction of urban public lighting, etc.²⁾

Until now, Vietnam has constructed a large number of traffic projects like Sai Gon East-West Highway, Thu Thiem Bridge, energy saving center and other projects. To serve these projects, it has managed, consulted, produced many traffic signal lights, control systems, power lines and transformer stations, etc. With more than 20 years of operation, it has achieved significant growth in personnel as well as the quality of specialized engineer teams, has obtained a large number of projects, has had high credibility of the institutes, partners inside and outside the country, and has been awarded the third Labor Medals by the Vietnamese government.

2.2.2 Concerns about environmental issues in business operations

Being a company to operate, manage, construct, maintain public lighting projects, of course it always considers environmental issues. For example, it often sets up lighting equipments, light bulbs, power lines, control systems, camera systems, transformers, etc. for their projects. Once these equipments are broken, it has to collect them and check whether they can be reusable or not. In case, they are wastes or garbage and cannot be reused, it brings them to handling process to prevent danger for surrounding environment.

Furthermore, it always monitors and checks the level of light of lighting devices, traffic signal systems, etc. If the light is not good, it will consider and improve to fit the traffic environment. According to the company, climate is a factor related to the light. Therefore, it also

regularly observes climate of regions to install suitable lighting systems. Moreover, the installation of a huge number of lighting equipments also causes bad influences to the earth. Nowadays, it is said that the earth is warming due to carbon dioxide emission from gases, light, etc. To restrain carbon dioxide emission, it always considers environment issue and installs safety systems.

2.2.3 Management of human resource

Being 100% state-owned company, it applies remuneration system under framework of state for its staffs. Now, it has over 500 professional staffs obtaining master, bachelor, college degrees and technical skills. It always set up the target to carry out training for its staffs with skills and experience to meet demands of projects. It has held regular professional training courses at domestic and abroad including Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Singapore, etc.

Regarding training's content, in addition to technical training, it has also focused on training about enterprise culture, quality management, politics, etc. through short-term and long-term training course. With the goal of striving to become a company having teams of professional staffs, it continually considers strategies and releases compensation packages to attract and retains talented staffs.

2.2.4 Thoughts about Japanese partners

To date, it has managed operation, maintenance of many lighting systems, has executed construction of public lighting system, traffic lighting system, traffic camera system, traffic information display system throughout Vietnam, especially in Ho Chi Minh City. For these duties, it has put into use a lot of equipments of various countries for examples USA, Japan, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Korea, Germany, etc.

Simultaneously, it has taken in charge of design, operation, management, control and maintenance of public traffic lighting of ODA projects.

Because of projects invested by foreign investors such as Japan, France, America, etc., it always put quality, efficiency and reliability as leading factors to execute. Among foreign investors, it greatly appreciates Japanese investors based on some following reasons.

Firstly, it is said that Japanese people have fully consciousness. We can understand Japanese people's sensitivities on dealing in business activities. Through news from newspapers, television, etc., we can learn a lot from Japanese people. Although a lot of tsunami and earthquakes often happen, Japanese people still calm, go ahead, rehabilitate and strengthen the economy of country.

Secondly, Japanese partners and customers always seriously regards on prestige and reliability. Reliability maybe is a key factor for Japanese people. Once obtained by the trust of Japanese partners and customers in business activity performance, it is possible to have a good relationship for a long period of time with them.

Thirdly, up to now Japan has been considered as a nation having advanced science and technologies. Furthermore, Japanese companies often have effective working process. Ensuring timely with good product quality is a main factor that other foreign companies want to cooperate with Japanese companies and vice versa.

Finally, Japanese partners are thought as transparent, obvious and fair partners. In business activities, clarity and straightforwardness are crucial to maintain the relationship between two parties. They are considered as a bond to connect businesses of two companies for a long period.

2.2.5 Summary

After more than 20 years in business, it has obtained significant achievements. Being a unique company nationwide in operating, supervision, maintenance of traffic lighting projects, it strives to serve nation's public projects. Concerns about environment issues in business activities, selection of devices or equipments, design of safety systems for regions, etc. always are the most important issues for it. Also, it focuses on management and training of personnel to build technical teams including skilled and experienced engineers, workers who are willing to perform effectively for customers' demands. On the subject of partners, it appreciates foreign partners. In particular, it has a deep interest to Japanese partners, their products, business culture, etc.

2.3. Survey at Ho Chi Minh Information and Communication Technology Institute

2.3.1 Brief profile of Ho Chi Minh Information and Communication Technology Institute

Ho Chi Minh Information and Communication Technology Institute is a unit operating under Department of Information and Communications Ho Chi Minh City. Therefore, it inherits all advantages about mechanism, relationships and maintains flexibility during operation³⁾.

It is currently a pioneer in deployment and implement of application items and development of information technology of Ho Chi Minh City. With diverse partners systems and its prestige, it can understand and carry out successfully implement of IT solutions required by other enterprises.

In addition, it is also playing an important role in holding large media events of Ho Chi Minh City from information technology field to com-

munity culture. Thereby, it has obtained a lot of experiences and strives to be able to provide communication services with the most effective and competitive prices.

2.3.2 Concerns about environmental issues in business operations

Its main activity is information technology. Hence, consideration of security in system environment becomes its important matter. Nowadays, in the modern working environment, almost all communication activities and administration of each enterprise are done via internet and intranet. Consequently, establishment and maintenance of specific network will enhance enterprises' performance, thereby they contribute to improve profitability of business activity.

To meet this demand, it has launched service packages to deploy network, has supported solutions for design, building strong, modern networks according to the needs of customers. Also, it has offered design system services to deploy LAN, WAN and LAN to WAN systems with technologies and products from vendors such as Cisco, IBM, HP, Juniper, etc.

Particularly, it has supplied service of security system deployment for business environment to avoid failure or loss of information. This is a useful service package for enterprises to establish a comprehensive security system and protection for servers, to exploit security features of all components in system environment, to set up the overall security policies and to provide recovery ability in case incidents occur.

2.3.3 Management of human resource

Because of state institute, its management and training of employees are in accordance with state regulations. With 60 employees, it has operated in building technology system, maintenance service, consulting for IT projects, com-

munication services, etc. To supply information technology services with high quality to customers and enhance skills for staffs, it always focuses on training sessions to its staffs. These training sessions are often held at a large scale with many attendances from departments, enterprises, other institutes, etc. Through these sessions, its staffs will understand nature, scale and method to handle information security issues, etc.

2.3.4 Thoughts about Japanese partners

It mainly provides information technology services to domestic enterprises and almost it has no cooperation with any foreign customers. However, regarding foreign partners, it thinks highly of Japanese partners' work and their management styles. Japanese people always leave a positive impression for Vietnamese people. Security techniques and information technology of Japan are very advanced and they are worthy to learn.

2.3.5 Summary

Being a member of Department of Information and Communications, it has operated mainly in information technology as in supply, deployment and implementation of application items and development of information technology. It has acted as investment owner of many projects concerning information technology as well. Up to now, it has developed many services for instance system development, maintenance, consulting about IT for customers. Focusing on development of security systems in enterprise environments has regularly been placed emphasis in order to help customers operate efficiently. To promote its performance and enhance knowledge for its staffs, it has also carried out training sessions actively. It appreciates business culture, working styles of Japanese part-

ners as well.

3. Conclusion

To consider briefly about business activities of Vietnamese companies, their concerns about environment, training ways for their staffs, some thoughts about Japan and problems they are facing, interview survey conducted at two companies and one state institution were introduced as above.

Generally, this interview survey showed that currently Vietnamese companies are putting emphasis on environmental issues. Environment issues are often understood in a wide range. Since the objects of this interview survey are companies specializing in chemicals, public traffic lighting operation, their concerns about life environment, surrounding environment are realized easily. However, as mentioned above, the state institute has operated in information technology fields, environmental issues are understood as enterprises' environment. Development and operation of security systems to prevent loss of information in business environment has been as essential tasks.

In addition, through this survey, we can recognize that Vietnamese companies always pay attention on human resource management. Staffs are considered as valuable assets of company. Thus, trainings about techniques, enterprise culture, etc. are carried out in these companies to promote their achievements. Although there are still some difficulties for example turnover of employees, they continuously strive to overcome and stabilize their human resource.

Furthermore, it is reasonable to say that today Vietnamese companies are promoting business activities under various types. Selection of products and cooperation with partners

at home and abroad seem to be their target. Regarding foreign partners, Vietnamese companies appreciate Japanese partners about working styles, enterprise culture, clearness in business activities, etc.

The above content is considered as a conclusion of interview survey at Vietnamese companies. Certainly, there are still limitations about its content. More investigation to clear up problems Vietnamese companies are facing today and solutions to keep the talents in organization are future subjects.

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[Notes]

- 1) The interview was carried out on November 30th , 2015. Mr. Nguyen Dai Hai, Director of Long Hai Chemicals Company, helps us answer for this interview.
- 2) The interview was carried out on November 30th , 2015. Mr. Nguyen Huy, Director of Public Lighting Control Center of HCMC Public Lighting Company, helps us answer for this interview.
- 3) The interview was carried out on November 30th , 2015. Mr. Ly Minh Tuan, Director of Ho Chi Minh Information and Communication Technology Institute, helps us answer for this interview.

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