**Dialogue with CXO: Mr. Yeo Teck Guan**

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• **Objectives of the dialogue**

Mr. Yeo Teck Guan, as the Chief Business Technology Officer of Singapore Pools (SG Pools), shared digital transformation journey of SG Pools and his experience about how to manage multiple projects in one year with us. This dialogue has provided us with profound insights into project management from a business standpoint.

• **Introduction with regards to the company mission, structure and IT function**

1. Singapore Pools, established by the government in 1968, dedicates to creating a safe and responsible gaming environment for the public. Nowadays, out of every dollar collected from customers as lottery revenue, 70 percent is allocated towards providing returns to customers, while the remaining 30 percent is dedicated to benefiting Singapore.
2. SP’s staff and service structure. For stuff structure, consisting of board of directors, management team and employees. For board of directors: 1 Chairman and 9 board members. Management teams includes 13 team leaders, while there are employees for 3 main lottery games: TOTO- a 6 out of 49 lottery; 4D - a 'pick four' lottery; Singapore Sweep - sweepstakes/raffle-style lottery.
3. Since 2012, SG Pools has accelerated the pace of the use of digital technology. For example, customers can manage their accounts and place bets online from 2016. In an increasingly digitalized world, technologies not only offer the potential to better meet customer needs but also provide opportunities for creating a work environment that enables remote work. During the pandemic, most employees were able to successfully transition to remote work. In future, Singapore Pools aims to remain relevant and continuous efforts to digitalize operations under the SP2025 strategic plan.

**• Challenges and achievements of projects implementation**

1. At the very beginning, SG Pools implemented projects at a conservative pace—about one project per year, while later Mr. Yeo changed the state and promoted multiple projects simultaneously. Now they complete nine projects per year. Mr. Yeo emphasized the importance of changing the mindset of employees. He shared his experience when handling his first project: data center relocation. At first no one followed while after six months of hard work, the project went live successfully, employees started to change gradually, which earned trust from staff. Another important change is to distribute bonus based on individual performance rather than equal distribution.
2. The role and attitude of IT needs change during digital transformation. The traditional relationship was that someone asked for A, the IT department delivers A. In the progress of digital transformation, IT department should empower the whole company. And employees receive a lot of training, such as data analytics and the use of artificial intelligence. These are not just new technologies but a huge shift within the organization.
3. There will be no perfect and worriless project. Every project will have problems, big or small. The key is the ability to recover quickly from setbacks. Mr. Yeo shared experience recovering from Red Pocket Drop due to website stuck which was caused by too many users flocking. This incident highlighted the importance of anticipation. In the context of project implementation, looking beyond refers to the mindset of considering risks and factors beyond the immediate project scope. Adopting a ‘looking beyond’ perspective, project teams can proactively identify potential risks and guarantee a more resilient project implementation.

• **Insights and lessons learning from the dialogue**

1. **Break project into by-products.** Mr. Yeo emphasized the benefits of breaking a project into smaller, manageable components. In future, project managers will turn into product managers while project management office will turn into product management office. In the old pattern, project teams are organized around projects and responsible for specific sections. But a product-based approach organizes teams around specific products to create end-to-end owners of everything related to that product. The product-centric mindset changes the company’s focus to outcomes and growth instead of activities and programs.
2. **Leverage on technologies to the organization.** 10 years ago, technology was regarded as a cost center. Nowadays, it can bring value to the company. Mr. Yeo said that 15 million dollars was spent from 2015 and generated around 16 billion dollars now. Technology is developing fast. When deciding on what certain technology can bring to the company, you can start with proof of concept. The application of Metaverse was not supported by the management at first, but they proposed that it could be used for experiencing, such as the excitement of a live sports event. This innovative use case captured the approval of the management.
3. **Capabilities Governance and Delivery (CDG) Framework** Mr. Yeo shared about Singapore Pool’s Vendor Lifecycle Management Process using the CDG framework. This framework joins the vendor selection process and project implementation process into a single view. This allows holistic consideration by all stakeholders.
4. **The Strategic partners extend beyond work & projects.** Mr. Yeo recognizes the importance of building relationships with strategic partners that goes beyond work and projects. Team bonding events like a football match or town hall not only create an opportunity for vendor and client to understand more about each other professionally, but also create trust in the longer term.
5. **Seek alignment with key stakeholders.** In answering one of the questions on how to approach regulators for Singapore Pool’s changes, Mr. Yeo shared about leveraging sandbox and proactively invite the regulator to the demo session. This allows the company to advocate new initiatives under a control environment and invite feedback from regulators for wider consideration at different angles. On a similar question to get buy-in from internally, Mr. Yeo shared that internal alignment may be more difficult to achieve. It takes effective communication and presentation to demonstrate why the management should care and how mission and vision are delivered.