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Reinventing the organization for faster growth

MásMóvil has been able to accelerate its growth by fostering a culture focused on growth and killing off emails, among other things.

In this interview, McKinsey's Dennis Spillecke talks to MásMóvil CEO Meinrad Spenger about the company's approach to growth. Launched in 2006, MásMóvil is now a top four telecommunications operator in Spain, serving eight million customers and generating nearly €1.5 billion in revenue in 2018.

What is your approach to faster growth?

If you want to go faster, you have to revise how the organization works, meaning not only processes but also the way people work. For instance, I try to eliminate most emails. This may seem provocative, but in a company where 85 percent of employees work in the same building, I want people to talk with each other; I don't want them to send long emails. Emails kill a lot of time, and sometimes they are just an excuse for someone to say, "I did my job." We don't want that.

In addition, a quick organization needs new agile ways of working. For us, it was a mind-set change from working in silos, in departments, to working in cross-functional teams, with the aim of delivering tangible results in the short term.

How do you empower your workforce with a growth mind-set?

If you want your company to grow, the first principle is to do everything to make your clients happy. Because if you have satisfied clients, then growth comes almost automatically.

In addition, you need a talented team and to enable a culture that fosters growth. This means quick decision making, no penalties if somebody does something wrong, meritocracy, no formalism, an 80/20 approach. Enable speed and quick decision making and foster new initiatives. I want MásMóvil to be full of entrepreneurs. I want people to take initiative.

Also very important is shareholder alignment. If our shareholders would not have had a clear idea that this is a growth story and they needed to support this growth, our growth would not have happened.

Almost nobody at MásMóvil has a big ego. We are a great team, and there is a good atmosphere, a good spirit, a good culture, no envies, support, good collaboration, and that produces great results. Look at the people who you are hiring for key positions. It's not so much about experience; it's a lot about attitude. Hire people that fit into your culture.

Can you learn about growth from the outside?

We challenge our team to see what we can learn from other sectors—for example, to uncover what our clients prefer as a service. And sometimes this can lead to things that are disruptive for our sector.

For example, we disrupted the process of installing fiber broadband connection in the homes of our Spanish clients. In the past, if you ordered broadband service, you needed to schedule an appointment for a technician to come to your house, and then you needed to take the day off work to wait for the technician to arrive. There was no interaction with the technician; you didn't know what time he would come, so there was a lot of frustration. So what we did is quite easy. We copied what apps such as Uber or mytaxi do, where we first send an exact appointment time to the client and then a link to the technician, so the client knows where the technician is, his name, his phone number, and then can coordinate with him. This was very easy to incorporate, and it was also very practical.

So being able to learn from other sectors is very important, because in terms of client experience, a lot of other sectors do it better than the telecom sector in general. For example, Netflix doesn't have a call center for customer care, so why do we need practically everything to be done in a call center? We try to learn from that. In two of our major brands, about 80 percent of the client interactions are already digital, and by the end of the year, it will likely be more than 90 percent. It's saving time, it's improving quality, it's increasing speed of incident resolution. It has a lot of advantages.

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