INSIDE MICROTECH

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MTI at 5th Pak-China Business Forum

Chairman's Message

It is indeed heartening that after a lapse of almost ten years we are launching our newsletter. The main objective of this revival is to showcase our most valuable asset- our Human Capital and to recognize its contributions in turning MicroTech from a startup to one of the leading research- based technology company in the country. Over the years we successfully overcame all obstacles and hurdles that came our way and we steadfastly forged ahead to reach greater heights. Today, by the grace of Allah MicroTech is a brand name to be reckoned with and the credit goes to the entire MicroTech family!

It is matter of great pride and honor for all of us that we have, over the last few years, successfully launched and implemented Advanced Metering Infrastructure Systems at various Electric Distribution Companies across the country. A positive and encouraging customer feedback vis-à-vis quality, performance, expeditious delivery and prompt customer support service is indicative of MTI's commitment and professionalism.

We have now launched an aggressive change management program to re-organize and re-align our organizational structure, procedures and practices. The intent is to develop and imbed best practices in our operations. The aim is to sustain growth, foster a spirit of innovation, and to develop leaders and teams having the desired skill sets to achieve what we want to accomplish in the years to come.

I am hopeful that in not so distant future MicroTech will launch itself in international arena as one the most professionally managed organization coming from Pakistan. We, as a team, have the will and resolve to be the best at whatever we do. We have proved it in the past and we shall In Sha Allah once again prove it as we venture into new domains.

In the end I wish to express my gratitude for all the hard work and long hours put in by MicroTech Team and I believe this to be the key to MTI's success!

MTI Implemented the Largest AMI Project in South Asia

More than 50,000 smart energy meters have been deployed along with complete infrastructure

MicroTech Industries has successfully implemented the largest AMI roll out in two major utilities (MEPCO & PESCO) of Pakistan. In these separate AMI networks more than 50,000 smart energy meters have been deployed along with IT infrastructure, network management system and customer interface. This project has been deployed on turnkey basis, with MTI's indigenously developed smart metering end-to-end solution.

The smart meters have been successfully integrated into the billing system of the respective utilities. This system has automated and streamlined the utility operations from energy recording to the collection of revenues which in effect is increasing billing efficiency and reducing aggregate technical and commercial losses.

For this project, MTI provided 3-Phase Whole Current & LT/HT Smart Energy Meters, Smart Eye Meter Data Collector (MDC), End User Interface (MTI Galaxy) and 3rd party hardware & software. MTI also provided installation, implementation, communication and hosting services. Dedicated regional offices and separate Project Management Units in both utilities helped to complete the project in record time. More than 70 field installation teams provided efficient meter installation services in geographically distant areas.

Keeping in view the stringent implementation timelines and vast scope of the project, MTI utilized a specialized tool, Asset Deployment & Management Suit (ADMS), developed in-house, for field implementations. This real time project tracking tool facilitated in live tracking, feedback and project status updates which allowed different management tiers to gauge the progress of assets. It also helped in planning, monitoring and managing field network deployments by using a GIS based automatic mechanism for progress tracking utilizing dashboard views and progress graphs.

Two separate AMI cells have been established in both utilities to make the system robust and problem free. Different rights and privileges have been shifted down to the Strategic Business Units (Sub-Division level) that are facilitating the utilities to make use of different functionalities such as load limitation, remote connect/disconnect etc. by a single click.

MEPCO and PESCO has started reaping the benefits of a fully automated AMI system. The deployed solution enhanced load control & load management, provided automated consumption data for monthly billing & monitoring and facilitated in improving revenue collection. Moreover, this project is acting as a stepping stone for the launch of future AMI projects in MEPCO.

An inspirational story of a hardworking employee at MicroTech Industries

HARD WORK PAYS!

Kashif Iqbal
Assistant Manager Stores

It was a cold and misty January morning in 1997 when an eighteen-year boy walked in Saleem Chambers, McLeod Road; the birthplace of MicroTech Industries. He had no idea what to expect all he knew that he was there for a job. He met the man who would turn this one room project office into a leading technology company in the country. The man was none other than Nauman Saeed the founder of MicroTech Industries and current CEO. Kashif was over the moon when he was offered a job at a salary of Rs. 1300 per month. The entire 'organization' comprised of five to six people as Kashif recalls.

Kashif Iqbal, had earlier decided to quit studies and instead embarked upon a journey to find his own way in the world. He had the will, determination and above all a burning desire to prove everyone wrong about his decision to quit studies and enter the job market at such a young age. He had completed a television technician certificate and was working as one at a shop prior to joining MicroTech. He was given an assembler job, and his 'experience' came in handy and he picked up the trade in no time. At the time Kashif joined MTI was working on various prototypes. The first breakthrough came when MTI got an order for digital panels for washing machines. A team of twenty-five assemblers was put in place at a rented place near Temple Road. Unfazed by his lack of experience and encouraged by his mentor, Kashif proved his mettle and caught the eye of his superiors. Good things would soon follow. The team was disbanded as the project ended and Kashif moved back to McLeod Road. MTI had acquired two additional rooms and was working on Line Production Units for a telecom company. Kashif was given the task of managing the production team as well as a tiny store that had come in

being in his absence. Kashif fondly recalls that in addition to the afore-mentioned duties, he delivered orders to the customer and attended customer complaints.

MTI tuned a new leaf and moved into Payphone business and the office was shifted to Shimla Towers. A robust organizational structure was designed to meet the challenges of staying competitive in the business. R&D, Production and Stores department came into being and innovative products started rolling out. A strong foundation was laid which would eventually have a huge impact on the future growth of the company. Kashif had by then cemented his position as an experienced production professional and was promoted as Assistant Manager Production. The end of payphone era led MTI to venture into Smart Metering business and the operations moved to the present location. Kashif growth remained unabated and his craving for learning intact. He may have acquired the necessary skills to oversee production activities and a strong grip on production planning regime, but he lacked one skill that stood between him and his future prospects. Cognizant of his shortcoming, he was always on a lookout

to find someone who could teach him the much needed computer skills. He recalls that he had a template made in Microsoft Excel by someone and would manually punch in the numbers for the daily report to be sent to CEO.

A much awaited opportunity knocked on Kashif's door when MTI hired a person for Inventory Management who was well versed in Excel and other Microsoft applications. Kashif was able to extract whatever knowledge he could from that person, and in no time he mastered Excel and eventually other applications. To my utter surprise, he managed all this while on the job which at the time had no fixed hours. "We used

to work from nine in the morning to 9 and beyond at night'. It was through sheer determination and hard work that Kashif managed to learn the tricks of the trade but more essentially remove one obstacle that stood between him and his future growth.

Kashif may not have risen the career ladder as he may like to but to his credit he has earned unparalleled trust of his superior. His eagerness to learn, his desire to excel, and his appetite to obtain knowledge has enabled him to 'think out of the box'. He may not possess a university degree but he possesses something more valuable: decades of multi-functional experience. And this precisely the reason that he has

been entrusted to conduct final quality check before the products are shipped to the customer.

Today, Kashif is a happily married man with three kids and heading Stores department of MTI. He is an integral part of MTI Supply Chain Management function and have successfully managed a stores with over twenty-five thousand items valued at millions of Rupees. An amiable person, and fondly known as KT, Kashif symbolizes the spirit that has brought MTI to the fore of leading technology companies of the nation.

Kashif growth remained unabated and his craving for learning intact.

Why photographers keep going back to Hunza

As professionals, we often get distracted by things which do not necessarily inspire us.

However, the season of autumn in Hunza serves as a reminder for myself that it's always great to go back to my photographic roots — where my inspiration was born.

Documenting fall in Hunza has always been a tricky subject for me. The months of October/November were always the time for college or university submissions as an architecture major; and I would inevitably miss the exquisite season every year.

Hence, it remained an elusive dream for a very long time.

The promise of seeing the lush green valley in colours which would completely transform its face was the biggest reason behind my return. Hunza, as always, did not disappoint.

Arriving in Hunza, after a gap of seven years — during which I left architecture school, started a photography company, got married — it was almost surreal how the landscape unfolded in front of my eyes as if it was my first time here.

Almost everything had changed; where once there was green, now wondrous shades of orange stroked the valley.

The poplar trees swaying under the breeze that gently took its yellow leaves to the ground below and up again, into the air.

Standing amid such vivid colours, I became intrinsically aware of my appreciation for fall.

Some days, when the sun comes out, these same leaves appear
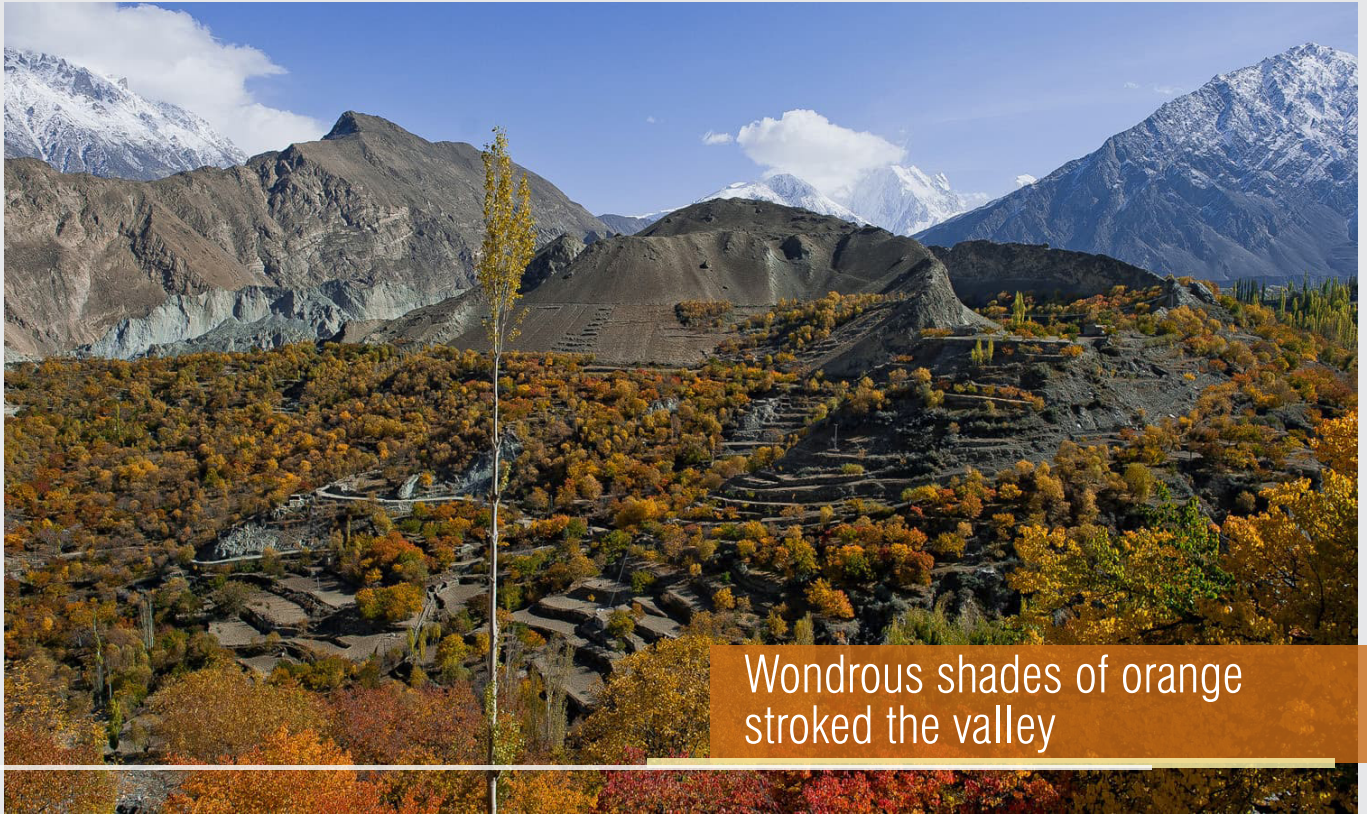
Wondrous shades of orange stroked the valley

to be painted in gold. The river that roars in the summer is now only a timid whisper, coming from somewhere far behind the mountains.

I recall unpacking my bag upon arrival, when I caught a glimpse out of our hotel window of a view of orange, red and yellow trees that only animated Japanese films can best describe.

But the thing that struck me the most in the valley was the silence, and how every so often it was broken by the song of the breeze. At that exact moment, the leaves too would begin to fall, like rain

A large group of Koreans had booked the entire hotel out. To my surprise, I discovered that they had come here to worship this event, the heralding of fall. This sight was for them powerful and healing.

My own senses were in for a treat on a short walk down one of the easy treks in the valley. I was still overwhelmed by the colours, when I stopped to pluck the juiciest of apples, probably the best I've ever had.

As a person from the city it was hard to imagine anything so good as the apples of Hunza to be free of cost! But, they were. One could eat these delicious apples all day and no one would be bothered. That's what Hunza had to offer; that's what it always has in store for you.

We had the good fortune of visiting a lot of nearby places and also met another group of photographers and travel enthusiasts from Karachi, who we joined on their official tour of the Passu Village.

The points we touched this time around were the largely favourite ones: Hopper Village for the leaves, Eagle's Nest for the view. We also crossed Attabad Lake to get to Passu and stayed overnight in a hotel in the middle of nowhere.

Perhaps our most memorable moments of the journey were spent at the Borit Lake, which hidden behind three major glaciers, is a beautiful olive green in the month of November.

- By Ali Khurshid - Courtesy DAWN

MTI- A Catharsis of Organizational Culture

Organizational Culture

Organizations are similar to a particular group of people or a society, which share common ideas, customs and social behavior, otherwise known as 'culture'. Just like societies, each organization has a unique culture and things that work or are acceptable in one organization do not necessarily work in another organization. The values and and behaviors that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organization is its culture. Organizational culture includes an organization's expectations, experiences, philosophy, and values that hold it together, and is expressed in its self-image, inner workings, interactions with the outside world, and future expectations. It is based on shared attitudes, beliefs, customs, and written and unwritten rules that have been developed over time and are considered valid.

Importance of Organizational Culture

A healthy corporate culture improves overall performance of an organization in various areas:

Employee Retention

In an organization where workers are valued for their contributions and are respected, cared for and trusted, the level of commitment is higher and thus reduced turn-over rates. This helps organization in reducing human resource cost and retain valuable employees.

Status

A healthy and positive corporate culture helps create a positive outlook of the organization which may attract talented and skillful workers to the organization. Additionally, a well-regarded business reputation allows organization to price their projects on a higher side, as customers prefer to conduct business with well-reputed organizations.

Productivity

A employee friendly corporate culture helps create a committed work force which in turn results in higher productivity, increased profits, and higher benefits to the employees.

Service quality

Companies with cultures valuing the highest standards create an atmosphere for workers to deliver products that meet those high standards. The cultural standards for excellence are an important factor for creating a product or service with a reputation for high quality.

Understanding Culture

In order to suggest appropriate intervention, a Human Resource Manager must realize that each organization is unique in terms of culture, values, and norms, it is therefore imperative that HR Manager assesses the culture of the organization he/she has just joined before the Manager embarks upon mapping HR interventions. I learned this the hard way when I tried to bulldoze a change management program, in one of the organizations I worked for, which backfired and ever since, I have made it a point to observe, listen, and let all of it sink in before rolling out the program, as was the case here at MTI.

Three Indicators of a Healthy Culture

Organizational culture is gauged against three indicators developed by S. Chris Hammond in his article "Three Healthy Indicators of a Healthy Culture". Employing these indicators as benchmarks, Management will develop a better understanding of how things work in an organization and will go a long way in facilitating the managers in charting future course of action. Hammond's list of indicators is easy to comprehend and put to

use'

Quality of Relationships

First and foremost is the "Quality of Relationships", which primarily focus on relationship matrix of 'leaders to leaders, leaders to employees, employees to employees and employees to customers'. My assessment of MTI on Organizational Relationship revealed interesting results. During the course of informal meetings with employees across the board, it was indeed encouraging to see that without exception, MTI workforce is committed as opposed to compliant. They carry out their responsibilities not because they 'have to' but because they 'want to'. This speaks volumes about the quality of leadership and its leadership style, because it is easy to force employees to comply, but the end result is that the employees rarely perform up to standards required for business growth and it also creates an underlying unease that leads to under-performance.

Caring seems to be the hallmark of MTI leadership which resulted in evolution of committed employees. This fact alone has helped MTI to grow as an organization, as employees

realized that 'good enough' is not good enough so they go an extra mile to excel at whatever they do. This fact is augmented by the fact, that peaks and troughs that MTI went through over the last decade did not deter employees' resolve and commitment and hardly anyone jumped ship when going got tough. The retention rate at MTI is a testament to that!

Quality of Promises

Hammond's second indicator is 'Quality of Promises'. Once again, I observed that a strong sense of trust and respect prevails across the organization, which is indicative of the fact that employees and leaders are making and keeping their promises, questioning peers when commitments are not met, and are willing to extend helping hands to ensure that internal delays do not jeopardize commitments made to the customer.

Quality of Delivery

Lastly, "Quality of Delivery". It appears that MTI holds the word 'Quality' as sacrosanct. I came across a number of employees and managers who narrated stories about how entire MTI team pulled together to ensure that identified glitches and bugs were rectified before the goods left MTI premises. This again is a sign of a 'committed' rather than compliant team!

Future Course of Action

Of course all is not well, surely some gaps do exist in the overall scheme of things and the leaders are cognizant of this and steps are already underway to take corrective actions to strengthen the system. For us to achieve excellence, we need to inculcate a proactive rather than reactive thought process in our collective mindset. In order for MTI to equip itself to meet the upcoming challenges and to prepare itself to compete in the international market few plug-ins are required to further strengthen our corporate culture. It is my belief that if we were to successfully launch the following interventions we shall overcome that lies between us and success:

• A robust and meaningful Training & Development regime

• Enhanced presence and interaction at various forums

• Extensive formal and informal intra-departmental interactions

• Further delegation and autonomy for employees to foster ownership

• Detailed and comprehensive documentation on modern lines to improve systems, procedures and practices.

MicroTech participated in 5th Pak-China Business Forum held in Lahore Expo Center

New Joiners of MicroTech Industries

Mr. Khurram Ahmad has joined us as Manager Customer Operations. Khurram is a graduate of Lahore School of Economics with a major in Marketing. He brings with him a rich experience in Customer Service, Customer Operations, Marketing, and Customer Lifecycle Management. He has worked with Nishat Dyeing, Northway Investment Limited and WorldCall Telecom Limited.

Mr. Muhammad Saad has joined us as Embedded Design Engineer. Saad is an Electronic Engineer of Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology. He secured second position during final year project in Industrial Open House at GIKI and also won innovation award at 4th IRP innovation summit held at Punjab University, Lahore. He has been on Dean's Honor roll in 3rd semester. He has worked with PTCL as an intern.

Mr. Faheem Ul Hassan has joined us as Assistant Store Keeper. Faheem is a graduate of Punjab University with majors in Commerce. He brings with him experience in material handling. He has worked with Agrow Limited.

Mr. Shahzad Hassan Khan has joined us as System Support Officer. Shahzad has a bachelor degree from Punjab University. He brings with him experience in Customer Services and after Sales Customer Support. He has worked with Warid Telecom and InterSoft BPO Solutions.

Mr. Muhammad Tahir has joined us as Technician. Tahir is an Associate Engineer with majors in Electronics.

Mr. Umar Daraz has joined us as Loader in Store.

Annual Cricket Tournament

Product Line

ENERGY METERS (GPRS, RF & Static)

Single Phase Meters

3-Phase Whole Current Meters

3-Phase LT/HT Meters

SOFTWARE

Smart Eye Control

Smart Eye MDC

Smart Eye Desk

MTI Galaxy

PDC Live Monitor

ADMS

Smart Eye Mobile

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