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Krishnan Vadivelu

General Manager & Director
Alex Stewart International (M) Sdn Bhd
Member since 2006
VEE-37

MAKING SOUND DECISIONS

Krishnan Vadivelu acknowledges that Vistage has helped him to avoid mistakes and become a better decision maker. He is grateful to have a Chair who guides him through thick and thin situations in business. In a global network of companies, he has steered Alex Stewart Malaysia to be an industry leader.

Krishnan Vadivelu grew through the rank and file in the company he joined in 1980, from a Surveyor to General Manager today. The company was rebranded on three occasions: Trident Malaysia to BSI Inspectorate and, in 2004 renamed as Alex Stewart International Malaysia or ASIM. It is a member of Alex Stewart International Corporation which has a global network of professional inspection and laboratory analysis services in 40 countries. It provides a stamp of quality assurance to Governments and businesses which is accepted in over 100 countries.

Krishnan's interest in Vistage was sparked through his meeting its founder Richard Wong. "I was flying back to Penang from KL and was lucky enough to sit next to Richard. At that point I was at the beginning of taking the company to the next level, and the 35-minute conversation with Richard was enlightening."

The company's core business is in inspection (to meet contractual specifications) and analysis (laboratory analysis and testing). Over the years, it expanded to logistics and warehousing as well as structure trade finance.

He believes that the Vistage process has helped him steer the company to greater heights. In 2005, the company turnover was hovering around RM1 million. With great dedication and support from shareholders and colleagues as well as peers in VEE-37, the company will be able to achieve a turnover of between RM18 to RM20 million this year.

According to Krishnan, global clients perceive Alex Stewart Malaysia to be an industry leader. Krishnan's desk is responsible for Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar and Cambodia.

On how being a Vistage member has helped him to become a better leader, he notes, "I now make decisions based on intelligence and after fact-gathering rather than on emotions. Previously, I would have jumped the gun but now am more organised." He credits this change to his Chair Hong Khay Chai.

"He's like Mr Google – I can call him anytime and he's a great sounding board. This has helped me to avoid mistakes," expresses Krishnan. He adds, "Never before have I seen such a person who can sail through any rough weather. His ideas, vision and mission are truly awesome."

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Krishnan Vadivelu with investors at PT MNC Energy Coal Mine at Palembang, Indonesia



11th Year CSR: Krishnan Vadivelu distributing food for 2000 pax during Thaipusam in Penang, January 2019



At Inner Anchorage Langkawi on board vessel MV CL ALICE – Discharge 50,000 MT Pet Coke



With a participant from Japan at the 19th Ferro Alloy Conference in Hong Kong

A valuable lesson he learnt from his Chair is that of aiming for quality-based business rather than undercutting the competition and to delegate work so as to have work-life balance. In business networking, Krishnan adds, it helps when meeting like-minded Vistage members as they know they possess shared values.

“My Vistage group’s nickname for me is Santa Claus as I am very giving and love to share and help my fellow peers,” Krishnan reveals. “I have become a better listener, am more organised, and am a better motivator. I listen to all sides before I give solutions to my management team. I have learnt to see things more holistically and avoid any unnecessary pitfalls.” This, he says, has helped him to create a better working environment among staff, managers, and partners.

Krishnan has applied these skills at home. “Now my siblings see me more as a leader as I have become more responsible at home.” In his mid-50s, he is now able to communicate better with his wife and his three grown-up children who are all doing well. “We write genuine words in daily WhatsApp messages, on birthday cakes, and thank you notes. This keeps me healthy and happy,” he discloses.

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On his future plans, Krishnan, who is one of three locally-based shareholders (holding the voting rights for one of them with the remaining shares held by Alex Stewart International Corporation), is looking to expand the company’s business model.

“As we grow, we need to look at things differently and transform,” he notes. In this regard, he suggests that there be more interactive events organised at Vistage and more opportunities for members to meet with Richard.

Krishnan Vadivelu has over 36 years work experience in the surveying industry and is extensively trained as a Certified and Qualified Palm Oil and Agri Surveyor by MPOB, FOSFA, GAFTA. He holds Certificates in Marine Cargo Inspection, Pipeline Coating, IOPP-Oil Pollution, and Finance. In a previous role, he was Deputy General Manager of BSI Inspectorate and has specialised experience in handling and managing Governmental Customs Contract and CMA for Petronas (MITCO) and Maybank.