Building Corporate Culture to Improve Competitiveness of Small and Medium Enterprises in Vietnam

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Abstract:
The article has analyzed the experiences in building business culture and corporate culture of some businesses in Vietnam and internationally. From there, the author gives lessons for small and medium enterprises in Vietnam. Finally, based on lessons and experiences on building a corporate culture to enhance the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises in Vietnam, the author recommends specific solutions to help small and medium enterprises. While in Vietnam, building a business culture in order to improve the competitiveness of these businesses.

Keywords: Corporate culture, competitiveness, SMEs, Vietnam

1. Introduction

In the current context of regional and international economic integration, the competition will be even more fierce. Vietnamese SMEs will have to quickly change their business methods, improve their competitiveness, adapt to the new situation, otherwise they will have to give up at home.

There is a new competitive trend forming in the Vietnamese market that is competition for services, competition by tangible factors. Gone are the days of "fully dressed and warmly dressed", people only care about the price, just buy it cheap. Nowadays, people turn to the trend of "good clothes, nice clothes", consumers have started to pay attention to the quality of the business first. When there is money, people want to be "god" and the problem of service, the intangible factors that make up the business value become very important in attracting and retaining customers. Foreign businesses are not only strong in capital and management skills but also are very professional in service and after-sales service. The tactics of promotions, massively discounting with poor quality products are no longer an effective method of competition in globalization, especially when the level and pocket of consumers has increased a lot. Foreign corporations have brought the method of competition by intangible factors, by business culture to Vietnam, bringing benefits to consumers and being supported by consumers. Vietnamese enterprises that want to survive and develop cannot be outside this competition law.

The survey results of the Vietnam Standards and Consumer Protection Association (Vinastas) show that more than 70% of Vietnamese consumers are not satisfied with the after-sales service. The Vinastas investigation also revealed that most consumers are not satisfied with the sellers' attitude. When customers complain to the business about the purchase of counterfeit goods, 31% cannot be resolved, 49% are exchanged for goods by the enterprise, 20% cannot be resolved explicitly for a prolonged duration.

Warranty "customer" is also a matter of "knowing it is hard to say forever!". Vinastas' social survey said that with 94% of customers requiring warranty, only 8% of businesses are thoughtful to customers, and 36% of businesses are not responsible for warranty. Regarding the resolving attitude of employees, only 24% were happy, 42% were upset, and 34% did not show any attitude. In addition, many salespeople also show challenging attitudes, causing inhibition to discourage consumers and give up not wanting to sue.

Many businesses trade in smuggled goods, goods of unknown origin or have no warranty parts, so they do not perform well their warranty obligations. Some businesses have not fulfilled warranty obligations such as, violating the repair time, forcing consumers to bear the cost of repair and transportation.

2. EXPERIENCE TO BUILD A BUSINESS CULTURE OF SOME ENTERPRISES
2.1. XQ Embroidery Enterprise

Corporate culture values the direction of customers' thinking and actions.

Embroidery is a profession exclusively for women. XQ culture emphasizes professional values and honors women. "For women, embroidery is not entirely a livelihood, but also a tool to find identity". It is "Industry identity" that is the most serious, most valuable, oldest and most powerful possession of XQ.

It is a way of life about thoughts and dreams, struggles, singing, dressing, decorating, and reminiscence. In order to survive and develop, XQ culture requires members from the highest position to the lowest to always seek the identity of the profession. Only then, can an embroidered painting become a work of art that is cherished and cherished by society.

XQ culture emphasizes the difference between Price and Value. Customers will feel value from XQ works. The works are not only the gathering of months and days of hard and meticulous work, it is also the crystallization of ups and downs, hardships, tears and sweat of workers. The construction and development of XQ Historical House is in the program of developing and promoting the cultural values of XQ. Customers who visit XQ Historical House will be able to read choking farewell letters from young women who have to quit their jobs because of the gravity coming from the city lights, the choking words of artisans who have to quit their jobs due to lack of jobs, money to buy medicine for children, frustrating when customers do not recognize the true artistic value of the embroidered paintings ...

All of these have a strong impact on the customer's thinking and thinking. When the customer has understood the truthful value of the work, Price will no longer be the important thing, only Value is enduring. XQ culture honors workers. XQ's mission is to honor the embroidery and bring maximum spiritual and material benefits to the profession. Only by doing well in this mission can each picture become a work of art.

Corporate culture is an important management tool of XQ. Through the development of corporate culture, XQ - Employees - Customers - Society share common values; XQ guides customers' thinking and decisions. It's hard to see a customer "brave" to "pay a low price" for an XQ embroidery.

2.2. Enterprise Sieu Thanh

Honoring customers through honoring workers.

"Customer is God" is always the slogan and motto of many businesses. But the customer can only truly be god when the customer is at the center of the corporate cultural value system. Imagine, if customer satisfaction becomes the joy and purpose of business members, customers will be treated like real gods. Conversely, if customers are considered "able to pay", then they run the risk of being treated like "chickens" for "plucking." In a business with a customer-oriented corporate culture, business members always make an effort to patiently listen to customers' opinions, feel "hurt" when they hear customers complain.

Sieu Thanh is a trading company dealing in office equipment. Unlike other commercial and service enterprises, the company's distinctive value and competitive advantage lie in its after-sales service.

To ensure maximum customer satisfaction, at Sieu Thanh, the role of a technician has been enhanced to the right level, more than in other businesses in the industry. To uphold the role of the craftsman is to uphold the sustainable development of Sieu Thanh. Sieu Thanh people, especially the sales team, always understand that signed contracts play an important role of technicians. Therefore, even though it is a commercial enterprise, the company's cultural activities always focus on improving craftsmanship skills. At Sieu Thanh, the highest annual cultural award is always for the quality of customer care.

2.3. Mai Linh and Transerco Enterprises

Customers must be the beneficiaries of the corporate culture
With Mai Linh Taxi, service quality depends mainly on the number of drivers. Developing corporate culture is an important tool to ensure customers benefit. With Mai Linh, cultural awards are honored for the "cultural behavior" of the driver. When cultural behavior becomes the taxi driver's need and self-expressive needs, customers will feel really secure when choosing the service "Green of life".

The destination of Mai Linh's cultural building is that each driver feels happy and proud after each and every customer returns items, every time we do charity work, each time we support customers with difficulties, every time we participate. In order to do this, developing a socially responsible "citizen" corporate image and portrait of Mai Linh cultural people is essential and essential in Mai Linh cultural value system.

With the Hanoi Transerco Public Transport Company (Hanoi Transerco), building corporate culture must be the number one priority in improving bus service quality. Customers can only enjoy quality services if the drivers and car assistants really consider them "customers". A good corporate culture is the culture for each employee to feel happy when customers are happy. Training in communication and behavior skills can only solve the supernatural. The root part of the problem is to establish the dominant core values system in each Transerco person.

Imagine, a driver was trying to stop the car for 5 seconds to pick up a passenger who was running because it was slow to reach the station. The driver feels happy when receiving customer thanks. On the contrary, there are other drivers who will be happy to see the dull face of a passenger who missed a trip because he was unable to keep up. These two extremes represent a business "has" and a business "does not have" culture to honor customers.

2.4. Experience in building Japanese business culture

There are many reasons for Japan to become a world power. One of the reasons that is typical of Japan is the human factor and business culture. This has also been evident in the culture of Japanese businesses.

The reason that makes the characteristic of Japanese culture

Confucianism entered Japan very early, combined with the spirit of honoring the martial arts world as a top class: Boxers - Intellectuals - Farmers - Traders, has created a class society. Japanese style with the idea of promoting Ceremony - Tin - Nghia - Tri - Nhan. Up to now, that spirit is still very strong in Japan's social relations and organizations.

Japan is a country with poor resources and harsh climatic conditions, but in order to assert itself, Japan tends to introduce and inherit and promote many cultural features to become its own culture. Therefore, Japanese business culture has a peak interference between Western / East / Japanese elements. At a certain point, however, development will reveal many shortcomings and contradictions. All of that is also reflected in the complex character of the Japanese.

The language has many limitations (such as very few vowels, consonants always put before the vowels, a large proportion of imported original words expressed in the form of Kanji and Katakana), making Japanese very careful, important when speaking, expressing opinions, and often through implicit attitudes, non-verbal factors, one's efforts to express itself, to fill the gaps of words. Therefore, to understand, they often have to combine listening to them, observing what they show to understand their personality.

Japan's failure in World War II left Japan with only ashes left, besides being bound by many adverse commitments. This makes the whole of Japan join together and do their best in economic development. During this period, aroused in Japanese society the honor of labor devoted to business and society. The Japanese value labor above all else, stick with the businessman more than their family, and place all of their careers on the success of the organization. Competition and cooperation are promoted in parallel. Over the past decades, those qualities have become new, durable and shaped Japanese Entrepreneurship Culture, thereby helping many
Japanese businessmen to gain success, Japan has become a powerhouse, the second country in the world economy.

**The uniqueness of Japanese culture**

**Business philosophy**

It can be said that very rare Japanese entrepreneurs do not have a business philosophy. That is understood as the entrepreneur's mission in the business career; is the image of business people in the industry and in society. It is meant as a cross-cutting goal, and has a sense of orientation for entrepreneurs in a long period of development. Through the business philosophy, entrepreneurs honor a key value system that defines the foundation for development, connecting people and making customers know the entrepreneur.

Moreover, Japanese businessmen soon became aware of the increasing socialization of production and business activities, so the business philosophy was also meaningful as a brand and identity of entrepreneurs. For example, Matsushita Electric and Gas Company: "The spirit of enterprise to serve the country" and "business is to meet the needs of society and consumers". Or Sony Company: "Innovation is the reason we exist" ...

**Select the optimal solutions**

Relationships: Entrepreneur - Social; Businessmen - Customers; Entrepreneurs - Entrepreneurs partners; Superiors - subordinates often arise a lot of conflicts of interests, criteria and ways. To resolve this, Japanese businessmen often get to know the parties carefully, to avoid causing confrontational conflicts. Both parties can make decisions in the spirit of keeping the word Love on the basis of mutual benefits.

**Treat people skillfully**

In relationships, Japanese people accept that others may make mistakes, but always let their partners understand that it cannot be repeated and that the spirit of correction is always expressed in the end result. Everyone is very aware that it is not necessary to offend others, nor to force anyone to make specific commitments. But the social and ethical standards of entrepreneurship (responsibility placed on emotions) have created an invisible pressure on everyone, making everyone have to define their duties if they want to have a place in the team. function.

This is so obvious that when dealing with Japanese staff, many foreigners feel that they are dedicated and reserved, if something happens, the fault is rarely the Japanese. The Japanese have the following unwritten rules of reprimand and criticism: The person who reprimand is reputable, respected and righteous by everyone; do not criticize arbitrary, petty reprimand, only apply when errors are systematic, with obvious consequences; Criticism must be conducted in a harmonious, non-confrontational manner.

**Promote employee activeness**

Japanese people think that: In everyone, there are both good and bad sides at the same time, although talent is few but is somewhere in each mind, the ability is small but in each hand, the mind may be limited but hidden in every heart. Sometimes still in latent form, or due to objective or subjective obstacles. It is a matter of naming it, positioning it by organizational standards, creating favorable conditions, a favorable working environment, motivated by training, being ready for everyone to participate in team decision making or bottom up.

Japanese businesses all consider people as the most valuable resource, the most important driving force for the added value and sustainable development of enterprises. The Japanese are accustomed to: Initiative belongs to the people, actively proposing an initiative as important as its effectiveness, because, it is essential that people think about improving their work. yourself and someone else's. A business fails when people are not motivated and cannot find a part of what they can contribute to.
Although Japanese enterprises apply a great deal of modern science and technology equipment, for them, the decisive factor for the prosperity and sustainability of enterprises is the people.

The vast majority of Japanese businesses have a common business philosophy that focuses on investment and management of people, emphasizing 4 processes: Sharing / sympathizing with employees (why we work? Why do we live?); share the company's current situation with employees, clarify goals, assign roles; encourage employees with a high sense of independence; properly appreciate highly conscious employees.

Japanese companies especially attach great importance to information sharing within companies. All Japanese business owners believe that providing information only to their employees cannot make them understand the company's overall goals, so they will not accompany the company to create prices for a long time. profit value.

According to Japanese companies, information sharing achieves the desired results by ensuring three factors: specific concept, clear role assignment and clarifying goals. Therefore, in Japanese companies, from employees to leaders, it is clear their duties and roles. While the answer of employees in most Vietnamese companies is common when asked, "What is the goal of the public?" are "don't know, just receiving money is enough", but this phenomenon is very rare in Japanese companies.

Obviously, the strategy of focusing on training people in Japanese companies has brought them great success. This is the time that requires the company to take measures to change the employee's consciousness, so it is a wise policy to share information, benefits, and responsibilities with employees. agreeable ".

Unique and dynamic production and business organization

Modern business ideology is market-centric, customer-oriented and customer-oriented. This is clearly shown in Japanese business style and way of doing business. Large enterprises only account for less than 2% of the total number of Japanese enterprises, the rest are mostly small and medium enterprises. But the linkage between enterprises is very diverse and effective. It is the peer-to-peer linkage between parent companies, in order to promote the absolute advantages of member companies, and increase their competitiveness in large markets, with big international competitors.

But under each parent company is a myriad of vertically linked subsidiaries that promote the relative advantages of member companies, exploit the potential advantages of the local market, and increase absolute advantage. for the parent company, and flexibly adapting to economic upheaval. The association is clearly seen through cross-shares, financial cohesion, research and development, distribution channel system, input supply, personnel support ... Japanese entrepreneurs always recommend satisfying customer needs, business commitments, being ahead of the market as well as a harmonious combination of benefits.

Corporate culture drives the thoughts and actions of business members, influencing the feelings, thoughts and actions of customers, partners and society. In order for corporate culture to really become an effective management tool, businesses need to proactively establish and develop a system of appropriate core values. On the contrary, inappropriate cultural values will be a major obstacle to the development of the business.

3. SOLUTIONS TO BUILD A BUSINESS CULTURE FOR SMEs

3.1. Planning to build business culture

Enterprise culture is a system of main meanings, values, beliefs, perceptions and methods of thinking agreed upon by all members of an enterprise. It affects the way members act. Normally, a corporate culture can be formed after implementing the following 4 building steps:

Step 1: Disseminate general knowledge: This is an important mental preparation for the process of building corporate culture. It is not enough if only leaders understand the corporate culture. Once all employees understand and clearly see the benefits of the corporate culture, the new construction will be successful.
This phase focuses on disseminating general knowledge about corporate culture, constituent factors, and significance of corporate culture to all members.

Depending on the size, businesses can organize cultural talks and courses, or launch contests to learn and build a cultural database for employees to self-study. It is advisable to prepare content that needs to be disseminated throughout this period, from beginner to advanced. The purpose of these jobs is to help members understand about the corporate culture and be aware of its benefits for the development of themselves and the business. Businesses can hire partners for training, or self-training on this content.

Step 2: Shaping the corporate culture: Corporate culture does not form at the same time as the business. Usually, it can only be recognized after 3 or more years of operation. This phase must be chaired by the founder and senior management of the business.

The results of this stage will identify elements of corporate culture, including: ideology (corporate ambition and mission); value system (business philosophy and core values); corporate behavioral standards and logos.

Corporative culture is the "soul" of an enterprise. In this period, that "soul" gradually becomes apparent. It will help the business easily recognize by its differences. Hiring a partner to consult is only a means for the elements of the corporate culture to form, but cannot decide how those elements will be.

Step 3: Deploying construction: In this stage, corporate culture should be carried out step by step but synchronously and persistently, from propagating views and value systems to the implementation of standards of behavior. Skillfully organized. Enterprises can organize movements and modes to honor cultural behaviors, contribute to building culture in the right direction in step 2.

At this stage, businesses have to face a number of changes, and may initially promulgate regulations to be enforced. After a while, from a mandatory position, employees will do it spontaneously. This is a sign of success.

In parallel with the adjustment of the invisible factors, businesses need to change tangible factors such as architecture, color, office furniture, etiquette ... to suit their culture. The results of this stage will gradually form the cultural characteristics of the business, helping members to recognize the cultural values of their businesses.

Step 4: Stabilize and develop culture: Any cultural element is completed, the enterprise must immediately begin to maintain and update so that it will not be out of date and lost. Leadership is the one who determines the corporate culture, but whether it "lives" or not is thanks to the strength of all members. Cultural activities at this time will have positive effects as a tool in the management and operation of the company. Enterprises need to regularly organize internal propaganda activities, promote to the outside, honor individuals, collectives, and behaviors appropriate to the corporate culture. Make members see that it would lose meaning without elements of corporate culture.

Today, to evaluate a business, outside the market, its organizational structure ..., people are also interested in its core values. That is the corporate culture. A business that successfully builds its culture means that it has a unique asset that sets it apart from its competitors and helps it last. When corporate culture is an asset, a resource, it also needs the ability to use it to create value for the business, as well as for each member in it.

3.2. Build a people-centered business culture

Taking people as the base is the focus in building corporate culture. The people here are none other than the employees in the business, the customers and the social community. Some points to note to be able to build a successful corporate culture with a focus on people as the root:
For employees, enterprises need to foster the sense of responsibility of employees to stimulate their passion, initiative and creativity. It is necessary to educate and educate the employees, so that they see the business as their personal "home", thereby becoming the common awareness of the whole team and creating internal resources for business development. In order for employees to really stick with the business, business leaders need to have a reasonable governance mechanism to ensure that those who have contributed to the development of the business are respected and enjoy adequate material benefits. worth the effort they have spent.

For customers, businesses need to start from the concept of customers first because after all, business oriented to the market is customer oriented. Continuously improving the quality of customer service is the prerequisite factor, then the business.

Getting satisfaction from customers is always a challenge for businesses. Completing and developing sales service is also one of the ways to build a sustainable corporate culture.

There is a "really like a joke" story about a business: When you see customers turn "away", the boss of a certain business cannot explain why their products are good, the company has a lot of people, talented but still cannot keep customers. Personally, he saw something different from his company's employees that most of them "could not laugh" when making transactions. After that, he plans to train employees to "laugh", if any employee who does not laugh when performing the transaction will be fired. After serious days of "laughing practice", the company's sales service is much better, with more positive feedback from customers, the number of contracts more, the profit of the company so also increases significantly.

From the above story, it can be seen that businesses want to develop, besides products and good human resources, they must also know to satisfy customers through the quality of sales service. In addition to talent, skill, employees need to have a dedication mind, always conscious of satisfying customers.

The race to develop services, attract customers, win market share is always a difficult problem. Only businesses that know how to put the interests of consumers first, build and execute well corporate culture can endure.

Targeting the social community is a big challenge for all businesses. Because behind the rapid development are the environmental change effects, the waste of resources and many other consequences. This requires businesses to pay attention to solve environmental problems. Building business culture also aims to encourage businesses to pay attention to social and humanitarian issues, to change business activities, to actively apply advanced technologies in production. From there, businesses will be able to provide customers and society with truly valuable products, in order to continuously improve the quality of people's life and contribute to creating sustainable development for the community.

3.3. Honesty is the core to building business culture

In the past, his father always took his business seriously. Today, the meaning of trust has not changed, unbelief means dishonesty and also means failure. The sad thing is that many businesses do not take this seriously at present. A series of events about food that do not meet hygienic standards recently have had a great impact on consumer psychology. Another question is, why do Vietnamese businesses not pay attention to the word TIN and their TAM in business?

Honesty culture

It seems that promoting yourself as a genuine business is just one of the temporary strategies for companies. Only when they see it as a long-term development strategy can consumers have some peace of mind. And when the economy spreads falsehoods, there will inevitably be some businesses trying to separate themselves from the rest to assert honesty.

A culture of honesty is not simply expressed in the company's relationships with customers, but also in the relationships of employees and leaders. The CEO of the business acts as a captain. In many cases, even though...
the boat was sinking, the captain still informed the crew and passengers that it was running ice and unharmed. If honesty is not maintained within the business, there is no guarantee of their authenticity to customers.

The cause of the lie

Why are they trying to lie? The first is under pressure to always create the best products. A good product concept is something very general. It is widely advertised and most of them claim to be the number 1 in the market. Although from shareholders, executives to lawmakers all want to bring the right effect to the product. But the truth is that this pressure always exists, no matter how the economy develops.

The second reason that leads to the spread of lies is that we rationalize ourselves and fear ourselves. We can take the situation of "black" soy sauce containing carcinogenic 3-MCPD which exceeds the permitted standards in us as an example. The reason this situation exists for many years is because the manufacturers believe that their concentration of 3-MCPD is reasonable, it is very small and almost all competitors do. The product is still used but no one has cancer. Taking this opportunity, Chinsu launched a new advertisement, affirming: "Proud of the 3-MCPD toxin-free soy sauce announced by the Ho Chi Minh City Department of Health" with a statement that it will pay 1 billion VND if anyone detected toxins in Chinsu soy sauce. Although a bit hesitant, consumers still temporarily choose Chinsu to eat. But in fact, only the competent authority can test the toxin in soy sauce. When the truth is revealed, every commitment has no meaning. Consumers are in need of another commitment that can ensure the friendliness and safety when using soy sauce.

Please look directly at the truth and apologize to the customer

Mars Chocolate Company (UK) has officially apologized to customers when discovering that the intention to add a little yeast of goat stomach to the chocolate recipe will greatly affect the vegetarian customers. This job demonstrates the absolute respect for their customers. Back in the "black" soy sauce case, the director of one of the production companies said: "I have a deep apology to the consumers who used our soy sauce product last time ..." . The fact that the consumer has been using "poison" soy sauce for many years has only been seen by this man as a problem and made a simple apology. It's hard to accept! Because when things broke up, an apology was no longer needed.

Few Vietnamese SMEs dare to openly take responsibility for their products, because if this is revealed, their viability will no longer exist. Most are unaware that the only way to keep customers and shareholders' trust is to always tell the truth. Truth companies know that honesty is an important part of what they sell to customers. Dishonesty can destroy the trust a business takes years to build.

Up to this point, it is essential to build an honest culture of Vietnamese SMEs in order to regain the trust of employees and customers and prepare for the long-term vision. Honesty must be the highest value that is put on top, as the foundation for the long-term development of the business.

To gain credibility with employees and customers, a business must go through a process of building and striving. Charisma represents competitive power, which is almost impossible to imitate, is easy to lose, and very difficult to rebuild. This is especially important, especially for businesses in the early stage of integration with the world.

4. Recommendations for Vietnamese SMEs when implementing business culture standards

4.1. Make an appointment, meet a business partner for the first time

A meeting between business partners needs to be specifically arranged. Appointments are usually scheduled a week in advance and partners should reconfirm the appointment a day or two before the meeting. Business partners should also contact to learn in advance about the people they will meet, to find out about the position, position and role of each of them.
In the meeting, the handover of business cards is still considered a very important activity. Typically, the exchange of business cards makes business meetings more open and close. It can make a very good impression on a partner if you prepare a business card with one side printed in your own language and the other side in your partner's language, or use English as an intermediary.

Business cards should be given to everyone present at the meeting because it can be difficult to locate everyone in the future. Usually a business card needs to be given to the oldest person first. Seniority is very important in Vietnam, especially in relation to people in state-owned enterprises or the government, whether men or women. When giving or receiving business cards to their business cards, both hands are required. Place the business card face down with the recipient's text so that they can immediately read the information on the face of the card. Two-handed business cards should be given to important officials, or elderly people, while for others it can be given with one hand. When reading other people's business cards, read them carefully and respect them. If there is something unclear, you can inquire more about the position and position of the person. Hastily skipping the information on the face of a business card or putting their business card in a pocket right away can be considered impolite. In the event that you are meeting a large group of people, the initial business card exchange may only take place between two delegation representatives. The other members can exchange business cards after the meeting is over.

4.2. Negotiate

To negotiate successfully, the issue of understanding culture is a very important issue. The results of a number of investigations have shown that the Vietnamese negotiating style is "cooperative negotiation style". This is a style of negotiation that takes place in the direction of mutual benefit "win-win negotiation". In other words, in negotiations, Vietnamese people tend to seek solutions so that both parties to the negotiation can achieve certain results.

Try to create an open, intimate atmosphere right from the beginning of negotiations. If it is not really necessary, they should hide their lawyer "behind the scenes" because Vietnamese culture does not like the introduction of the media related to the law.

Vietnamese people are easily influenced by the atmosphere of the negotiation, so we should avoid impolite or rude behaviors and try to always maintain a warm, polite attitude. During a negotiation, Vietnamese people can always smile and nod even when, in fact, they may not fully understand what their partner has just said.

The most important thing in negotiation is persistence. A look of anger or scowl can be judged as signs of "lack of character". This can be the cause of negative reactions and failure in negotiation.

When negotiating with partners, the negotiation process can be slow because there are often social, informal communications before the negotiation. Business decisions are also often not made right from the first meeting. If you have an immediate response from your partner, please send documents to him before the meeting occurs.

Agreements should be short, easy to understand and accurate. Don't spend too much time haggling over small and detailed issues. Legal experts should be used in the special negotiation process if the negotiation content relates to intellectual property.

Pricing and payment method should be discussed in detail during the negotiations. Consumers often prefer to buy well-known, durable, good items and after-sales support services.

4.3. Business relationships

In essence, business still depends on relationships. Business relationships in Vietnam tend to take a long time to develop. While a partner may agree to offer contact with an unfamiliar person, it is easier if the first meeting is referred from a known investor, through a friend or an official channel. Certain, for example associations, consulting organizations. Nonetheless, direct business relationships and healthy competition are increasingly
common today. Information can be found on the internet, trade associations, advertising services and to reach companies directly by phone or email.

Unlike in Western countries or some other countries, in Vietnam, more and more private matters like family affairs, hobbies, political opinions, etc. are shared. Sometimes spending a lot of time discussing non-business matters is an opportunity to better understand your partner and see how interested he or she is to build personal relationships with them. Do not be surprised when Vietnamese people ask personal questions such as income level, family story, children, personal preferences, etc. because they are questions to create friendliness and intimacy. Vietnamese people want to know who their partners are like before embarking on business cooperation. Their perceptions of who they are about their partners will directly affect their success or failure in doing business with them.

4.4. Orientation of time

Like most Asians, Vietnam has a longer time concept than most Westerners. That is the influence from the concept of traditional agrarian society that focuses on seasons rather than days or weeks. A job usually takes a long time to prepare. Signing a business agreement often takes just as long. Therefore, patience is a necessary virtue when working with Vietnamese people.

However, in the integration trend, people are increasingly conscious of punctuality. In European businesses, the once agreed plan will be followed closely. Each task must be done and completed by predetermined timelines. So in each specific time, each person, each person, try to focus on solving a specific task. But in Vietnamese SMEs plans are often modified for one reason: multiple goals are set at the same time. Therefore, according to the plan, an officer can be deployed many jobs at the same time and the “flexibility” in the plan becomes inevitable. When an employee does multiple tasks at the same time, just interrupting the time spent working by talking with colleagues from different jobs is distracting and significantly reduces efficiency. Many foreign partners share comments, SMEs in Vietnam have many rules and many exceptions. The image that is often used to compare with the ability of Vietnamese officials to perform multiple tasks at the same time is to ride a motorbike on a crowded road while exchanging work via mobile phone with dong business in the office. As such, it is not safe!

4.5. Collective psychology

The Vietnamese consider themselves part of a larger collective, usually family or clan, group or organization. In particular, the interests of families, groups and organizations are often based on the interests of each individual. For Vietnamese people, community benefits are still very important. Many people have a sense of self-reliance also stems from the desire to contribute to the family and society. Vietnamese people like to reach a consensus for the benefit of the group, with a high collective mentality. Therefore, when starting to work in groups, the first goal of Vietnamese people is to create a consensus of the group and build a harmonious relationship between all members. This process can sometimes slow down the team's work and sometimes forget about the work goals. Family plays an important role in Vietnamese society. In Vietnamese history, there have always been close relationships between family, family (extended family) and community in Vietnam. Family and family have many influences on the behavior, emotions, and personalities of individuals. Therefore, traders with business experience in Vietnam, when they want to build long-term relationships with Vietnamese partners, they not only come to meet and visit their customers but also pay homage. Respect to the elderly family members of these people on special occasions.

4.6. Respect for the elderly, rank

Like many countries influenced by Confucianism, Vietnamese people tend to respect the elderly. They conceive of the height of age as a wealth of experience and wisdom. This also clearly affects the human resource factor in production and business. Vietnamese human resources still show very clearly the observance of respect and
order in working style and working environment. Vietnamese workers often have a mentality of obeying their superiors, rarely dare to think and create themselves beyond directives because they are afraid of mistakes and fear of being blamed for abuse of power. This is also one of the very clear characteristics of Vietnamese business leaders. “In my place, we often try to bring together the elders, the experienced, and the young people,” said Walter Blocker, Vice President, Asia-Pacific at the US Chamber of Commerce, to complement each other's strengths. But in Vietnam, you have to be very cautious when doing this. People here respect dignity, so the elderly do not serve the young boss and the young do not dare to lead the elderly. Therefore, there is a phenomenon: “Vietnamese people are hard-working but difficult to become group leaders. They are often extruded, fearful of leadership positions. They fear they will be left alone and envious if they reach this position”. Such notions have made it difficult to promote young, serious people, especially business professionals, to make important decisions. Personal relationships and order above and below (sometimes age) have a huge impact on Vietnamese businesses. An inconclusive proposal can still be passed when the proponent is respected and appreciated by the majority of attendees. This way of working is considered to be very unprofessional by the foreign partner, when decisions are made based on feelings rather than feasibility and performance.

4.7. Business courtesies

Vietnamese people are very polite, always smile and agree with their partners. Smiles and nods are often indicative of their understanding of what a partner is saying, not a business commitment. Vietnamese people are friendly and willing to help foreigners. They also show tolerance towards guests who are not familiar with Vietnamese customs. A courteous attitude towards a Vietnamese counterpart is essential, showing anger or even impatience are both considered rude and awkward. A soft voice should be maintained while conducting business communications, loud voices and excessive hand gestures are often considered rude and make Vietnamese people uncomfortable.

Vietnamese people often like to please others, especially visitors from far away. According to the Vietnamese opinion, blunt rejection to any offer is a manifestation of impolite and rudeness. Therefore, Vietnamese people do not like to say "no" but often affirm "yes", "yes" to every question. They are not dishonest or crooked, but simply to establish harmony between the two partners. Other foreigners will state the conditions first, after the settlement, say "yes"; Vietnamese people say "yes" first and then everything will be gradual later. In the event of disagreement, Vietnamese people often express their views indirectly. They often try to avoid conflict and go head-to-head.

With the object of communication, Vietnamese people have a good habit of learning, observing and evaluating. Age, hometown, educational attainment, social status, family status (parents often die, have not been married, have children, boys and girls ...) are Vietnamese issues. Men often care. This curious habit (completely in contrast to Westerners) makes foreigners comment that they are Vietnamese or curious about private matters.

When engaging in social relationships, there are topics to avoid. For example, issues about sex, politics, religion, etc. Topics to talk about are hobbies, family, partners, sports, international, Vietnamese culture (including literature, poetry, music, language, food, etc.)

Vietnamese names usually include 3 parts: surname / family name, middle name (midle name) and first name (first name). Vietnamese surname is arranged first, followed by middle name and first name. When calling out a person's name with respect, Westerners often call the person's surname / family name. This is different for the Vietnamese. To call each other respectfully, Vietnamese people often associate the first name with the person's position or occupation or associate the name with pronounced pronouns. For example: President A, Director B, Doctor C, or Mr. A, Ms. B, Anh C, Ms. D, Em G, Grandchild H, etc ... Vietnamese women, when married, do not change according to their husband's surname. keep their full name.
Directly calling names (without pronouncing pronouns) is only acceptable when an older person calls someone younger than them, or when the two are friends of the same age. The fact that a younger person calls someone older than him by name (without the pronoun) is considered an indecent, disrespectful, and not acceptable act by society. To avoid unfortunate misunderstanding, it is best to ask a local about the name of the Vietnamese partner, determine clearly what is the surname, what is the name of the partner and ask them to advise on calling the name of the partner. How is that Vietnamese?

The greetings of the Vietnamese people are also very rich and diverse. Young people are usually obliged to greet the elders first. Greetings could be "how are you?", "Where are you going?", "Have you eaten?", Etc. and no one is waiting for a specific answer. These are just social sentences, showing a Vietnamese traditional concern for others. Compared to Westerners, Vietnamese people also say little "thank you" or "sorry". Sometimes, instead of saying thank you or apologizing, Vietnamese people just smile. In rural Vietnam, a person who says too many words of thanks in communication may be considered a guest.

Giving gifts is an important ritual in Vietnam because it expresses the relationship between people and people, according to Vietnamese culture. First, it is important to differentiate between giving and bribery. Bribery is illegal, so it should be eliminated. Vietnamese people have a custom of exchanging gifts as souvenirs to express respect, gratitude or friendliness, especially during the holidays. Gifts are usually exchanged at the end of the meeting and only small gifts are needed. For example: a tie, a company logo or a book, etc. Giving gifts needs to be based on circumstances. If you are going to give a private gift to a Vietnamese partner, you should give the gift in private or during a meeting without the presence of another person. If it’s a gift for all the company or business, give it after the meeting is in the presence of company members. On the occasion of the Vietnamese traditional New Year, give gifts and greeting cards to your partners and relationships.

Do not wrap gifts in black paper because this is the color of mishap and funeral related activities in Vietnam. Gifts such as sharp objects and cutlery should be avoided because they can carry the message of a disconnection.

When given gifts, Vietnamese people often do not open the package immediately upon receiving it, let them do as they want. The partner will also be able to receive gifts from Vietnamese. You should then ask if you can open them now. Remember to be polite when a gift is opened and whatever it is, express appreciation and appreciation.

Hospitality is important in business in Vietnam, it is considered an essential part of community activities and in business in Vietnam. Dinner meals with agents and distributors will help develop the distribution network and strengthen the bond between Vietnamese partners and investors. Dinner dinners with local reps or clients help develop rapport and give your local agent a "pop-up" look. Congratulation at large parties and singing after parties are very common.

Usually, Vietnamese people will arrange a dinner on the first day of a partner's visit at the restaurant or hotel. Partner will be expected to return the favor with another dinner, be it at your hotel or at a popular restaurant. If you do not see a predetermined dinner, you should proactively invite Vietnamese partners to dinner to thank and acknowledge their thoughtfulness. Dinner in Vietnam usually has several stages, dishes are on the table and you can pick up food from them. Chopsticks are commonly used in Vietnam but most restaurants have Western-style plates. Vietnamese beer and imported wines are often used in meals. Congratulatory wine cups will be poured out. When raising a cup with a Vietnamese partner, get up, hold the cup with both hands, and come to the end of the cup with the oldest representative. Briefly say a few words about the beauty of Vietnam, the friendship, the friendliness of the partners, and the prospects for business success. And after that, hang out with everyone. Usually, Vietnamese people say "hundred percent" or "good luck" when toasting. Meals usually end with a fruit plate or a plate of pastries. When leaving, do not forget to shake hands with everyone attending the party and thank them for their generosity and hospitality.
The dress that is accepted and impresses well in business meetings in Vietnam is a dark suit and a light tie for men. Women should wear a vest, skirt over the knee, or a long skirt, the collar is not too late but should be discreet. Jewelry should be light and not too ostentatious. Flat-soled shoes or low-soles should be the woman's choice to increase seriousness, especially if you are taller than your partner. Wearing jeans can be perceived as impolite for both men and women especially when working with state-owned organizations or businesses.

Appearance is a very important issue in Vietnam, it is important to respect a partner depending on his or her position and seniority. For example, if buying gifts for a first-time relationship, it must be certain that the gifts for the top manager / manager are different from the gifts for others in the group. Likewise, the seating position in the meeting room or dining table will depend on rank, role, and seniority.

5. CONCLUSION

Improving the competitiveness of Vietnamese SMEs is an objective inevitable as well as a pressing requirement in the process of developing an open market economy to integrate with the regional and world economies. According to the current assessment, the competitiveness of SMEs is still very low. Therefore, the study of this topic aims to find solutions to improve the competitiveness of Vietnamese SMEs to meet the requirements of the current market.

The subject systematized some basic theoretical issues and clarified the business culture; Small and medium enterprises, in terms of competitiveness, cultural factors affect the competitiveness of SMEs, thereby pointing out the need to objectively build a business culture to best promote the Intangible resources create value for SMEs to develop sustainably.

On the basis of survey results and reference data of organizations, the topic has analyzed and evaluated the current status of business culture and competitiveness of Vietnamese SMEs so that only The limitations and the reasons for the limitations exist as a basis for proposing solutions to build business culture for Vietnamese SMEs.

Derived from the current competitive trend in the market, which is competition with intangible resources, such as the value of trust in customers and employees for businesses. Based on the causes of the limitations of SMEs and the lessons of building a business culture to develop enterprises of domestic and foreign enterprises, the thesis proposes three basic solutions with high feasibility, and 7 recommendations to note in the process of building and implementing business culture for Vietnamese SMEs.

The authors hope that the research results of the topic will contribute to enhancing the competitiveness of Vietnamese SMEs, thereby improving the competitiveness of the economy and accelerating integration with the economy, regional and world economy.

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