

Ascertaining IT function's effectiveness – Competency Catalysts gives a leading Service Provider a comprehensive dashboard

Client Context

The client, one of India's leading telecom service providers, had entered into an innovative, strategic IT outsourcing agreement to manage the company's IT needs. The role of the internal IT function was to act as a bridge between the strategic outsourcing partner and business, and also to drive strategic initiatives. The IT function faced the challenge of not being able to decide on metrics to evaluate its own performance, which largely focused on strategy and program management. In addition, they did not have a robust way to measure the effectiveness of the strategic outsourcing relationship. The company's corporate IT had recently availed of the services of Competency Catalysts for a similar exercise and had recommended them to the CIO of the telecom service provider. The CIO spoke to Dr. Yegneshwar of Competency Catalysts, and after satisfying himself on Dr. Yegneshwar's context understanding, decided to engage the latter to carry out a comprehensive dashboard for the IT function.

The Scope

The scope of this assignment was to help define ways to measure the functioning of the IT function in its new role. As a corollary, Competency Catalysts also had to put in place a set of metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic outsourcing partnership. This also involved understanding the bigger picture and the nuts and bolts of the arrangement.

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The Solution

The success of the exercise hinged on getting a detailed understanding of the context, including scope and boundaries of the strategic outsourcing relationship. And that is exactly what Dr. Yegneshwar started with. The internal point contact and the Vice President of IT helped expedite this process by providing the background and facilitating meetings with the business and the strategic outsourcing partner. Dr. Yegneshwar also studied the strategic outsourcing contract in detail and grasped its nuances.

Dr. Yegneshwar understood the role and KRAs of the managers in the IT function by both studying the job descriptions as well as having detailed discussions with the CIO and role holders. He then had detailed discussions with the business as well as the strategic outsourcing partner to understand their perspectives. Subsequently, he drafted the IT dashboard that measured its impact on business, as well as effectiveness of the IT department in engaging with business and leveraging the strategic outsourcing partner's expertise. He conducted a three day workshop where he gave the client a draft dashboard with multiple options as a starting point. The workshop was a forum to understand, discuss and debate the proposed dashboard.

At the end of the exercise, Competency Catalysts helped the IT team arrive at a measurement framework that had eluded them thus far, owing to the complexities and inter dependencies of their current role.

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Outcome

The engagement brought the much needed clarity into the IT function's functioning. This helped strengthen the governance process by clearly segregating the responsibilities and expectations of the IT department and the strategic outsourcing partner.

The company attributes the success of this exercise to Dr. Yegneshwar's knowledge and skills. According to the VP, IT, Dr. Yegneshwar's ability to bring out the real issues was the key. In addition, his outstanding facilitation and exceptional listening skills helped bring in role clarity and a solution acceptable to all.

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