

Trading places

Ian Moyes

In 16 years with Siemens, Ian Moyes can count up at least eight career moves that span sales, marketing, product management and customer services. He started out in Sunbury running the electromechanical components business, spent two and a half years in telecomms in Munich, and then returned to Luton as marketing director for the joint venture company formed by Siemens and GEC, later to evolve into Siemens Communications. One year ago he moved from his post as customer services director to become managing director of Siemens Information and Communication Mobile.

From day one at Siemens I got the clear message that this was a company that believed in investing in people for the long-term. I could see that for those with the right attitude, there were real opportunities to be seized, and that really attracted me.

I've had about eight career moves in Siemens in 16 years. To do that and still feel you're developing is great. I have been fortunate but if you stay open to opportunities, then they'll come forward. I've been up for most of those presented to me, though I did decline the chance to head up Siemens in Vietnam . . . somehow Luton seemed more appealing, and it was a shorter commute.

Whether you're selling components or mobile phones, the fundamentals of business are the same. The issues I saw when I joined the mobile business a year ago - poor supply chain management, weak customer relationships and bringing products late to market - are issues you could find in any business I've worked in.

The day you join a business you look at adding value by applying what you've learnt elsewhere. The competitive advantage - and increased profit - that you get from slick processes is a valuable lesson brought from Siemens Communications. In mobile, we've completed process audits, we've introduced the balanced scorecard and we're running customer and employee surveys.

I began by spending many hours listening to our people and our customers. Being open and honest with customers helped win them over; they knew they

weren't getting flannel. The fixes weren't hard to identify and I could see the rewards would be huge.

One challenge we've set is to treble our share of the mobile phone market in three years. After four weeks in the business, I knew we could do it. In 10 months our market share has grown from five to 12 per cent, and in the quarter before Christmas we sold 701,000 phones compared to 321,000 the year before, even though the market size was unchanged.

In the past we were typically four months late delivering new products to our customers. We delayed the launch of the C45 to Orange four times because we couldn't make the product to their requirements. Contrast that with our latest phone, the A50: we launched it one week early and we're now their benchmark supplier.

Another essential focus for us is building a third generation mobile network for Hutchison and our partnership with NEC. It's a very complex contract that involves teams from the UK, Germany and Japan working together. Managing cultural differences and political sensitivities is something I've had a lot of exposure to in different parts of Siemens, and that's helped us move this project forward. The relationships are now far stronger.

I've always believed the real challenge at Siemens is to help the company realise its full

potential. Early on I was tempted to leave for a job in the States. My boss worked on me for two days and persuaded me that the best way to change Siemens was to stay.

I've never looked back. If you've got the right approach and apply yourself, the opportunities in Siemens are huge. This organisation needs good people and is prepared to invest heavily in them, but it's a two-way deal: you've got to give a lot too.

I do believe, though, that we need a more systematic and open approach to identifying young high flyers and moving them around the company. If we don't continually stimulate people, we simply won't keep them. Succession planning hasn't been high enough on our agenda, and nor have we been good at bringing on board and developing graduate talent.

Too often we're still blinkered, questioning whether a person is worth the investment if they're likely to move on to another Siemens business. We have to take a long-term view and think about what's good for the wider company. The fact you can move between businesses is one of the biggest attractions of working for Siemens.

I've always used the staff dialogue process to make clear to my manager my aspirations and my appetite for a challenge. There are so many exciting opportunities within Siemens that wherever my next move takes me - whether it's in this business or another, in the UK or overseas - I look forward to it.

