

60 seconds with...

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How does your role in Operational Excellence fit into a consulting environment?

It fits everywhere. I personally think that Operational Excellence is needed by every tangible and intangible business, especially nowadays when changes are happening faster than expected in companies, industries, and even countries. I think the ideal scenario of consulting is simply a reverse mentoring – top companies knowledge-source from other companies/individuals that are comfortable with ambiguity and change, are unconventional thinkers, can address problems and engage with them, can take initiative and are free to act. Usually businesses and their Heads and employees have been in the area too long to see the wood for the trees and have become inflexible and conventional. No matter how many transformations and projects a company has initiated, there is always a striving for excellence, and that is where my role fits in.

What challenges are you facing?

The resistance to change is an issue I face in every project, regardless of its size or geography. All the other challenges are temporary and they are part of each phase of the project.

What has been your most satisfying project to date?

It is yet to come. I learn from each project and I believe that that is the way towards continuous improvement. My last project involved working on a Solvency Data Governance Framework, which may be considered difficult and complicated, so I was satisfied with what we achieved. My current project is an internal HR and back-office improvements one and I am happy to discuss, analyse, envision and bring changes together with and for our internal team. This will bring a direct benefit to MBE processes and to MBE costs.

How do you handle unforeseen issues and problems?

I just start asking questions – as many as possible! I have learnt to ask ‘Why’ at least 5 times and after each question I dig deeper and deeper to the root cause of the issue or the problem. What I have seen till now in my projects is that there is no problem is that severe when you have a great team and hands-on people.

If you could pick anyone, who would you like to be trapped in an elevator with?

Recently I went back to the Business School I graduated from in 2011 and I had the opportunity to attend a free elective. My choice was ‘Disruptive Business’. The lecturer was Professor Mike Grandinetti. He is an inspiring personality – a catalyst of changes, ideas, knowledge, innovation and...disruption, of course. So, let it be him – maybe we will think of a solution that will replace elevators in the near future (i.e. Drone-operated ones).

Which personalities/schools of thought/concepts do you admire most in your industry and why?

Currently, I admire my other half. He has that rare combination of soft skills and highly technical ones that allows him to build a highly complex model, and then explain it in a way that makes it seem completely logical and straight-forward.