

What all strategies have been adopted by Uno Minda to become a globally sustainable and profitable automobile company? What is the road ahead for Uno Minda?

Uno Minda's success lies in its core values and its organisational culture. Our core values which has tested the times and still remain relevant are Customer is king, live quality, encourage creativity and innovation, respect for individual and work place ethics.

Customer centric culture is fundamental to our business. We continue to prioritize customer voice which provides amazing reservoir of insights not only in customer needs but also on industry trends and new business opportunities.

Besides customer centricity, Technology and Innovation are two pillars which lays the strong foundation for Uno Minda and continue to drive our future roadmap. We encourage innovation culture where we recognise and reward innovation across the group.

Another ingredient for our success is our focus on our people and their development. You have to find the right people and empower them so you can harness the power and potential of their talent. Investing in the team, building up the people, and creating the ecosystem where everyone can grow not only facilitate company's growth but also provides a great leverage point for the company to face any market challenge fearlessly.

Sustainability comes from an ethical practice which takes into account all stakeholders. We have set up a robust governance framework based on principles of transparency and trust. Our leadership team lead by example so that these values permeates everything from organisational culture to work environment at the shop floor.

Going forward, having built the solid foundation based on our core values, Uno Minda would want to lead the future of mobility with cleaner and safer technologies.

What is the biggest leadership challenge you have faced till now and how have you dealt with it? Also share the learning out of it.

It is not about "a" challenge, rather it is about "a journey full of learnings, challenges, and accomplishments" – it is a transformational and inspirational journey of the company and our every stakeholder (at all the levels). It is highly difficult to point out as any one being the biggest because we at have seen the different phases of growth and development.

In early phase of growth i.e. around 1990s, the challenge was to move the organisation from loyalist to professionalism. We hired professional to set up systems and process. Subsequent challenge was to attain global standard quality of products in India. To bring advance technology in India, we did our first Technical Licensing Agreement in 1992 with Tokai Rika Japan which later got converted into Joint venture partnership. This joint venture partnership continues successfully today even after 3 decades.

Post first joint venture, Uno Minda Group had undertaken a number of joint ventures in order to gain access to latest technologies and customer bases. Although, these initiatives helped the Uno Minda Group grow in stature, they led to the creation of a number of legal entities who have some kind of JV or strategic alliance with technology partners. the time was ripe to consolidate these companies under single listed entity i.e. Uno Minda Ltd to transform itself into a bigger, better and more efficient organization. With this in mind, we started consolidation exercise in 2016. This was a behemoth exercising covering more than 15 legal entities spanning over 4-5 years.

Today, Uno Minda has transformed into multi-billion dollar organisation and a leader of auto component and systems. We have diversifying product portfolio of 20+ products line with more than 72 manufacturing facilities in 6 countries supplying to leading global two wheel and four wheeler OEMs across the world.

Success do require hard work and perseverance. But I strongly believe that sincere effort never goes futile.

What all initiatives have you taken to match with rapid technological changes in the industry?

Change is inevitable and also, the necessity of today's world; however, we believe "change" might be a minimalistic way of denoting it, and "evolving/evolution of technology" is much better. We as an organisation has always been focused on advance technologies and innovations. We have been making continuous investment in R&D over the last few decades. We accelerated our effort by setting up central R&D centre in 2017 and christened it as CREAT (Center for Research, Engineering and Advance Technologies). The objective of the centre was two-fold, first to make our existing product lines smarter and second to work emerging technologies.

As R&D takes substantial time, where ever we had to expedite the time to market depending upon the need we have also collaborated with foreign joint venture

partner. Today we have 15 foreign joint ventures partners from Japan, Korea and Germany providing us cutting edge technology.

Our central R&D center CREAT has helped us to stay ahead of technology curve in recent times. We have developed solid futuristic product portfolio encompassing the mega trend of Personalization, Autonomous, Electrification, and Connectivity. On the Personalization front, we believe that in the future, people will regard the car as the third living place beyond home and work because it is where people spend much of their personal time. So, we believe this is one area where we believe many products based on personalization will arise one example is our range of integrated in-vehicle infotainment (IVI) and UI, UX, and visual design for display-based products like instrument clusters. The second is Autonomous future, which is where we believe vehicles with ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance System) will come into play. As a result, we are investing our research efforts into developing components like cameras, radars, and ultrasonic sensors for various autonomous and safety features. The third pillar is Electrification. We already have numerous products where we see that electrification is needed going forward. We are currently doing a lot of work on the low voltage electrification side, 48 volts, 96 volts, and 60 volts rated chargers, motor controllers, DC-DC converters, wall mount chargers, etc. Finally, there is the fourth pillar - Connectivity. On the connectivity front, we're focusing on the connectivity required for electric vehicles, fleet management, and shared mobility, among others. We provide an end-to-end solution on connectivity, beginning with the Telematic Control Unit (TCU) and continuing with the cloud-based solution for data capture and analysis and end-applications. Thus, our whole market opportunity is cantered on these four critical PACE trends.

We have established our position as auto-tech system-based company with our efforts to innovate and re-invent.

Is there any scope of tie ups between Minda group and academic institutions for the development of research and start-up accelerator programmes?

Yes, we have been actively involved with India's leading academic institutions for the development of research and accelerator programme, involving various initiatives where we visit to the colleges to run diversified development programmes. We have also invited students and professors to our company for shop-floor exposure to boost their learnings, and make them understand the practical implementation of theories.

We also conduct joint study with leading academic institutions to monitor and validate emerging technologies and their use cases. Our Senior leadership team hold numerous advisory positions in different colleges, to engage closely with students and professors. Not only this, we have formed a dedicated team at Uno Minda to look at the start-up initiatives, and understand how can we synergize with them for an accelerated growth, yet sustainable model development.

What suggestions would you like to give to our young budding professionals.

It is a competitive world, yet we are in the most amazing time of Indian economy – I believe that young professionals should take the advantage of this time by keeping pace with technological changes.

Perseverance is key and there are no short cuts to success hence be patient. I would also like to advice student to not forget their roots. It is very easy to be swayed by fancy titles and offices however those are not sustainable. It is imperative that young professionals should spend time understanding the business models, before jumping to opportunities – they should align their learning curve in gaining industry competitive knowledge. We have the tendency to focus on the output, however we don't realise that the process is more important to reach to a certain goal, we can be result-oriented only if we are process/system-oriented; it is not an overnight fame game rather it is a long hour, hard-work in combination with smartness – that allows us to attain greater heights in life.

Keeping the hunger alive to constantly learn, will eventually help them to grow and develop themselves.