

Q&A: PepsiCo on why agility, creativity, and investing in employees is crucial

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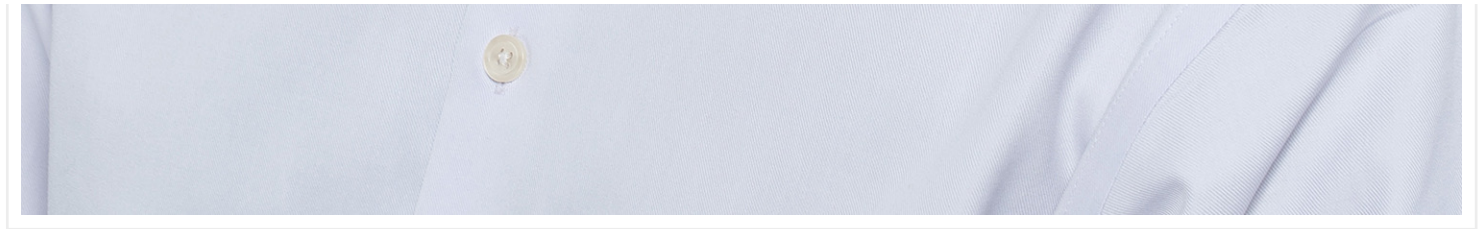
In times of economic uncertainty, it's essential to foster an environment that both nurtures and challenges employees. In this discussion, Parth Raval shares strategies to nurture a more

collaborative, creative culture among employees, and how Frito-Lay is undertaking a digital evolution.

Parth Raval

Chief Growth Officer, PepsiCo Foods North America





Your session at Shoptalk is about creating and maintaining a culture of excellence. What are some takeaways for attendees?

First and foremost, to create and maintain a culture of excellence, organizations must first focus on their people. For Frito-Lay, the true heroes of the business are our frontline workers—they are the ones that make the business go every day. Other successful companies should stay unapologetically focused on this “center of gravity.”

I would also encourage attendees to walk away with the philosophy that there is no deterministic view of the future and that society remains fluid. Our team spends time scenario-planning and creating opportunities that allow us to be agile, resilient, and most importantly, able to evolve. Frito-Lay created a new functional organization—called the “Growth Office,” which I lead—to improve our end-to-end commercial processes, better wire our strategies end to end, and enable future growth opportunities through cross-functional collaboration. The other thing is that we’re having more discussions about data and analytics—and how we can use them to drive business benefits—than we have ever had.

What are some strategies companies can use to foster a culture of collaboration and creativity?

It is clearer than ever before that we can no longer operate in silos. Whether it is between business units and functions or even society at large, silos stifle success, collaboration, and innovation. Organizations that break down these silos and react nimbly and quickly will come out on top.

To foster creativity and unlock true potential, leaders and organizations must ask themselves, “Is there a better way to operate? Can we challenge notions that we have long held? And what is the true risk?”

How does the employee experience impact the customer experience?

The employee experience is directly correlated to the customer experience. We believe in having well-trained, motivated, and diverse employees that represent the communities we operate in. Diversity of background, thought, and style of work all create healthy tension that leads to growth when it is resolved by a deep understanding of what intrinsically motivates our people. Motivated, well-trained employees are happy employees.

That's why our employee experience at Frito-Lay is undergoing a digital evolution to make everything simpler, more intuitive, and mobile-first. This includes raising our ambitions to positively impact our people through upskilling and reskilling our workforce with future-compatible competencies, which will ultimately optimize teams. For example, in 2022, PepsiCo launched "myeducation," which enables employees to upskill and reskill through specific interventions and paths, including certificates, bachelor's degrees, and programs in trades like machine and maintenance mechanics, all without going into debt. We also have a digital ambassador program that helps drive digital literacy.

What are you excited to try or accomplish professionally in 2023?

I'm looking forward to continuing to advance our goals and continuing to evolve as a digitally intelligent company.

We are also working hard to transform important operating elements of the business, including streamlining commercial processes and driving go-to-market efficiencies in our operating business.

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