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PERSONAL BACKGROUND & CAREER JOURNEY

Can you briefly introduce yourself and describe your role at AmCham?

I am an entrepreneur and Group Managing Director of IAS Holdings (Pvt) Limited, a logistics and supply chain management company I founded in 2016, leading it to significant growth through joint ventures with multinational logistics firms. IAS Holdings includes partnerships with Kerry Logistics and APS Logistics, along with APEX Logistics. We also operate Inter Air & Sea Logistics as a wholly owned subsidiary that represents notable global agencies and partners. The company employs a team of 300+ personnel and has expanded its operation in Bangladesh as well.

My responsibilities as an AmCham Board Member include participating in board meetings to discuss key issues, setting organizational goals, and providing oversight and feedback to ensure that AmCham's activities align with its objectives. I also engage with various stakeholders, including government officials, industry leaders, and our member community, to advocate for policies that create a favorable business environment.



Being part of AmCham Sri Lanka allows me to contribute to the economic development of the country while strengthening international business relationships. It is both an honor and a responsibility to serve in this capacity, and I am committed to leveraging my experience and expertise to further the interests of our members and the broader business community.

What inspired you to take on a leadership role at AmCham?

I have always been driven by a deep-seated commitment to facilitating meaningful connections and fostering economic growth between Sri Lanka and the United States. Becoming a board member was motivated by the desire to leverage my experience and insights to support initiatives that promote bilateral trade and investment. I envisioned a role where I could actively contribute to creating opportunities for businesses to flourish in a dynamic global market.

How does your career journey align with the mission of AmCham SL?

The prospect of engaging with diverse stakeholders—ranging from industry leaders to policymakers—excites me, as it aligns with my passion for building strong networks and fostering innovation. Being part of AmCham SL allows me to contribute not only to the growth of individual businesses but also to the broader economic development of Sri Lanka, reinforcing the importance of international collaboration.



DAILY ROUTINE & RESPONSIBILITY

Walk us through a typical day in your life as a corporate leader?

My day begins with waking up at a reasonable time, kicking things off with a workout, followed by a comforting cup of tea. I then check my emails and prepare myself to face the day ahead! Once in this office, I maintain an open-door policy, allowing my team to approach me at any time. Given the nature of my work, we frequently engage in team discussions to strategize effectively.

As the day progresses, I find myself juggling various projects, each requiring a different set of skills and attention to detail. The diversity of tasks keeps the day engaging and challenges me to think differently. Whether it's negotiating with partners, reviewing financial reports, or brainstorming new initiatives, each activity contributes to the larger goals of our organization.

What are the key responsibilities you handle daily?

My daily responsibilities include overseeing the seamless operation of various business functions to ensure everything runs smoothly. This involves coordinating with my management team to discuss strategies for optimizing our supply chain processes and addressing any challenges that arise. I am in constant conversation with our partners and clients to maintain strong relationships and to tailor our services to meet their ever-changing needs.

Additionally, I like to spend a bit of time focusing on innovation and technology integration, as I am always looking for ways to enhance efficiency and reduce costs through newer and better solutions. I also prioritize the professional development of my team by encouraging continuous learning and providing opportunities for training and development.

Part of my role includes strategic planning, where I assess market trends and identify growth opportunities to expand our business footprint. By staying informed about industry developments, I can make informed decisions that align with our long-term objectives. Ultimately, my goal is to lead with vision and purpose, ensuring that our company not only achieves its business targets but also contributes positively to the community and supports the growth of the logistics industry as a whole.

LEADERSHIP & DECISION MAKING

How would you describe your leadership style?

I have an open-door policy, which means that my team can approach me at any time with their ideas, concerns, or questions. I believe that an environment of open communication is crucial for building trust and collaboration within the team. By being accessible and approachable, I encourage transparency and ensure that everyone feels valued and heard. This allows us to address issues very quickly and work together to find workable solutions. I am also very mindful of creating a positive and inclusive workplace where team members are empowered to contribute their best and feel confident and safe in their roles.

What key principles guide your decision making process?

My personal and business values are rooted in transparency, integrity, and collaboration. Open communication and trust are paramount, enabling my team to feel valued and heard. By prioritizing these principles, I ensure that decisions are made collectively, taking into account different perspectives and expertise.

Another essential principle that we all need to embrace is adaptability. In a rapidly changing post pandemic world, being flexible and open to new ideas is crucial. I have pushed myself to be more agile in my approach, ready to change things around when necessary when faced with a challenge. This is only possible with a continuous commitment to learning and growth, both personally and within my team.

Ethics is also a very important focus for me. I believe that business success should be measured not only by financial performance but also by the impact we have on our community and environment.

Lastly, I am guided by a long-term vision. While short-term gains are important, sustainable growth that benefits our organization and stakeholders over time. By balancing immediate needs with future plans, I aim to create a legacy of resilience and success for my businesses.

Can you share an instance where you have made a tough business decision?

The most challenging business decisions often revolve around people and the difficult choice of letting them go. Throughout the years, we have had to part ways with individuals who no longer maintained our values and ethics. Regardless of the impact to the company's bottom line success, if they do not operate within our ethical framework, we have let them go. True sustainability in business goes beyond merely generating profit. It involves cultivating an environment where integrity, respect and fairness are prioritized. This means making decisions that uphold these principles even when they are difficult or unpopular.

What advice would you give young professionals looking to develop leadership skills?

My advice is to continuously learn and seek diverse experiences. Leadership evolves with time, and self-awareness is crucial for personal growth and effective leadership. Learn from mentors who can offer valuable insights and feedback, and focus on developing strong communication skills by practicing active listening and adapting your style to different audiences. Take on challenges and step out of your comfort zone, as every experience is a learning opportunity. Learn about empathy to build strong teams, show adaptability in changing circumstances, and lead by example to inspire trust and respect. Remember, leadership is a lifelong journey, so approach it with enthusiasm and a willingness to grow.

How do you maintain a work-life balance in your demanding role?

Exercising daily and making time to connect with family and friends whenever I can is very important to me. This routine

WORK-LIFE BALANCE & PERSONAL INSIGHTS

helps me recharge and ensures that I remain focused and energized when I am at work. It's essential to make time for activities that bring joy and relaxation, as that is what keeps you sane in our crazy world. Ultimately, achieving a harmonious work-life balance is

about finding what works best for you and making intentional choices to support a purposeful lifestyle.

What hobbies or activities do you engage in your free time?

Working out everyday is a top priority for me. I enjoy running outdoors and also attend workout classes once in a while. Other than that, reading or catching up on Netflix shows is what I do over the weekends.

ADVICE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF AND FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

If you could go back in time, what advice would you give your younger self?

Don't trust too many people - but rather focus on building a core group of trusted individuals who genuinely have your best interests at heart.

What key lessons have you learned throughout your career?

To embrace adaptability, resilience, and collaboration is crucial. In an ever-changing industry, adaptability helps me tackle challenges and seize opportunities confidently. Resilience teaches me to persevere and see failures as learning experiences for growth. Collaboration emphasizes the value of diverse perspectives and collective strength when achieving common goals. Open communication and respect lead to innovative solutions and achievements. Lifelong learning is essential for my career development. Staying curious and open to new ideas keeps me informed and helps me make decisions aligned with my objectives. Integrity and authenticity are vital. Building trust with colleagues, clients, and partners is key to lasting relationships based on honesty. Staying true to my values inspires trust and has a positive and sustainable impact with all stakeholders.



CONCLUDING MESSAGE

Together, we stand at the forefront of innovation and opportunity. Through our collective strength, we can tackle challenges and build a brighter future for everyone. Let's collaborate, innovate and motivate one another to achieve new heights. Keep in mind that every significant accomplishment begins with a single step taken in the spirit of collaboration. Together, let's forge the path toward success and excellence for the communities we serve and for our country.

