

STRATEGIC AGILITY AND AUTHENTIC CULTURE AT DIMO

GROWTH, MERITOCRACY, AND THE COURAGE TO BE FAIR

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DIMO operates across many different industries, so it cannot measure every business or every employee in exactly the same way. However, the principles behind its performance management system must always remain the same: *clarity, fairness, transparency, and accountability*.

Employees should know what is expected of them, how their performance will be measured and how their role contributes to the organisation. The company looks at financial results, but it also considers customer service, operational excellence, people development, sustainability, and governance.

“For me, meritocracy is not only about what a person achieves,” says Dilrukshi Kurukulasuriya, Executive Director at DIMO. “It is also about how they achieve it and the quality of their delivery. Strong results cannot excuse poor conduct, non-compliance or unfair treatment of others.”

Meritocracy also does not mean treating everyone identically. It means giving people an equal opportunity to perform, applying standards consistently and ensuring that recognition and progression are based on contribution not hierarchy, visibility, or personal influence.

Promises vs. Reality in Organisational Culture

According to Kurukulasuriya, culture is not written on a wall, published in a brochure or communicated through an employer branding campaign. Culture is what an employee experiences on an ordinary working day.

It is reflected in how managers speak to people, how fair decisions are made, whether employees feel safe to express a different view and what happens when someone raises a genuine concern.

DIMO listens through employee engagement surveys, town halls, discussions, exit interviews, grievance channels, and employee resource groups. But simply asking for feedback is not enough. People must see that their feedback leads to action.

The company’s recognition as a Great Place to Work for fourteen consecutive years is meaningful, but she says it cannot become complacent because of an award. The real test is whether its employees experience respect, fairness, and consistency across the organisation.

An authentic culture requires leaders to listen, respond, and sometimes accept that the employee’s experience may be different from the organisation’s intention.

The Strategic Appeal of Meritocracy

Today, talented people have choices, Kurukulasuriya acknowledges. They are not only looking at salary or designation. They are also asking whether an organisation is fair, whether leaders are credible, and whether good performance will genuinely create opportunity.

That is why meritocracy has become a strategic advantage.

When people believe that recognition, development, and career progression are based on capability and contribution, they are more likely to trust the organisation and give their best. It also helps DIMO retain capable employees and build stronger leadership pipelines.

Fairness does not mean that everyone receives the same outcome. It means that everyone is assessed against clear and relevant expectations and is given a reasonable opportunity to succeed.

Meritocracy is therefore more than an HR practice. It is a matter of good governance. It reduces favouritism, strengthens accountability, and helps the organisation place the right people in the right roles.

Over time, this creates resilience, improves performance and delivers sustainable value to employees, customers, shareholders and society.

World Class Capability Building as a Growth Engine

DIMO works with some of the world’s most respected



Dilrukshi Kurukulasuriya,
Executive Director at DIMO

Employees should be able to ask questions, challenge an idea, admit a mistake, or raise a concern without fear. This does not weaken accountability. It helps DIMO identify problems earlier, make better decisions, and reduce organisational risk.

At the same time, Kurukulasuriya notes, empathy should never mean lowering standards or avoiding difficult conversations. People need clear expectations, honest feedback, and fair consequences. They also need the support, tools, and development required to perform.

“Our work on inclusive leadership, unconscious bias, employee resource groups, and stronger harassment-resolution mechanisms is intended to ensure that dignity and performance exist together,” she says.

Equity is not about giving anyone an unfair advantage. It is about identifying barriers and creating a fair opportunity for people to contribute.

A sustainable organisation needs both humanity and discipline. Accountability without empathy damages trust, while empathy without accountability eventually damages performance.

Architecting Continuous Learning and Growth

At DIMO, learning does not begin with a training calendar. It begins with the business strategy and a simple question: *What capabilities will its people need for the organisation to succeed in the future?*

“We identify competency gaps, succession risks, and emerging business requirements across technical, managerial, and leadership roles. We then build development plans around those needs.”

She adds, “Our approach follows the 70:20:10 *philosophy*. Much of learning happens through real work stretch assignments, challenging projects, new responsibilities and cross-functional exposure. Coaching and mentoring provide guidance, while formal programmes build specialist knowledge and broader leadership capability.”

Employees must take ownership of their development, but leaders also have a responsibility to provide access to opportunities fairly. The same few visible people cannot receive every important assignment.

Ultimately, learning and development must produce measurable value. We should see stronger performance, better succession readiness, greater internal mobility, improved service quality, and employees who are confident enough to take on larger responsibilities.

Kurukulasuriya concludes, “Our goal is not simply to conduct more training. It is to build capable, agile, and responsible people who can grow with the organisation and help the organisation grow with them.”●

global principals, such as Mercedes Benz, Siemens, TATA, Bosch, and many others. That requires the company to maintain high standards of technical knowledge, safety, service quality, and professionalism.

However, international standards only create value when they become part of the daily way of working. They should not remain in manuals or be understood by only a few specialists.

DIMO translates global knowledge into technical training, professional certifications, on-the-job learning, coaching, project exposure, and locally relevant operating practices. It also develops internal trainers so that knowledge can be shared more widely and retained within the organisation.

DIMO Academy for Technical Skills is another important part of this commitment. It supports young people in developing internationally relevant technical capabilities while creating stronger pathways from education to employment.

DIMO does not measure the success of learning simply by counting training hours, Kurukulasuriya says. It looks for improvement in competence, productivity, safety, service quality and customer experience.

Training creates value only when it improves performance and the quality of delivery.

Humanising the High-Performance Enterprise

“I do not believe that empathy and high performance are opposites,” says Kurukulasuriya. “In fact, people perform better when they feel respected, included and psychologically safe.”