Digital Podcast Show Notes
Episode 10 with guest Sami Kallio

Hosts: Barclay Rae, Ian Aitchison,
Guest: Sami Kallo, from **Happy Signals**

BR: Intro

IA: Let's start with some stats this week.

Forrester survey: 60% CIO are investing in IT Experience for their employees, 57% see budgets cut, 60% do not have tools to support their remote workforce.

Qualtrics survey - 47% of employees do not plan to go back to an office!

BR: Lots about experience today. Here's Sami, CEO of Happy Signals. Tell us about Happy Signals Sami...

SK: We help enterprises understand the experiences of their end users. We help organisations understand 'how IT and ESM feels', with feedback gathered from employees, plus provide benchmarking insights.

BR: **How did you get into this?**

SK: I was running a service design company. One customer asked us to interview their employees to find out how we should do IT support. I went wider and asked 10 CEOs, and then realised there was a big problem with no one doing anything with their satisfaction surveys or being able to compare with standards, or where to take action.

BR: I have always liked that outside-in view. It's not just about happiness, I guess **it's about engaged employees and ability to work?**

SK: Yes, the pandemic has made this even clearer. Now everyone works from home, it is no longer people telling IT what to do, but IT enabling people to work better from anywhere.

Main Section

BR: welcome back. Sami, **what are some headlines you find across the benchmark data that you offer?**

SK: We see that IT support services are doing really well. IT is doing better than HR and Finance. Of course, IT has been doing this for years whereas HR and Finance are still new to it. There is still a fear of 'ticket' working outside of IT. So we see that Enterprise Service Management is important to improve happiness and service and drive cooperation. Other depts can see the IT scores and see that they need to get their scores up to the same level.

IA: fear-factor comes up again. Other parts of business not embracing things from IT, but **IT reputation is growing and this is changing?**

SK: That's right.

IT satisfaction benchmark score is 88 satisfaction.

IA: **across your clients data, all orgs, they have satisfaction 88%?**

SK: yes. Of course, it depends on who you are asking and we are asking people that appreciate happiness feedback and trying to improve it.

IA: so you are measuring those that already 'get it'. OK. But what about outside of IT?

SK: Yes, we see these other depts improving but they are lagging behind. Starting at about 40-45%, IT tends to start at 60% and improve from there. HR leading on this.

BR: this focus on experience is important. We don't usually present value, we present how we respond to failure. Perception is based on small number of bad experiences.

SK: I remember a customer talking about a bad IT experience and getting angry and red in the face, and the issue was 5 years ago. Also SLAs don't lead to good experiences. A reputation is very important in this, bad experiences with IT lead to bad reputations.

IA: if something breaks with IT it can stop someone working immediately, whereas other departs perhaps it less fundamental ? Does the HR system stopping impact as immediately as Email failing?

SK: It's time based. If finance can't pay salaries that is a very very very bad situation. If that happens end of month or end of quarter, that is an end of life situation.

BR: IT has failed to recognize what's important. It's not just cost and failure, it's **ability to do**. We achieve value by doing this together.

SK: And IT just pushing a tool to the business to do this can cause issues. Other departments need to understand why you are doing this, what is the value. That's one of the big shifts with ESM outside of IT. The human factor is changing. It not the tools it's the human connectors.

BR: yes, sometimes people focus too hard on the tool. I had a case where a whole project focussed only on the tool and we had to stop and reboot the whole project.

BR: Lets go back to some of your benchmark data - **which non IT departments are coming out with highest scores?**

IA: yes, who is 'the best' in ESM?

SK: IT is best at 88%, Finance 78%, HR 80%.

Finance has the most critical audience, it is hard for Finance to get people happy. We also learnt that different cultures have different approaches. Netherlands are very hard to please, Poland you get much higher scores, UK is average.

In some organisations, it's all about the country/culture - compare across your country not wider.

Another point, remote working happiness scores for working from home, started low at 35% happiness, now it is up to above 70%. And working from home is proving much more efficient.

15 times more people are saying that working from home is more efficient than working in the office.

IA: this talks to the earlier point of people not wanting to go back to the office, but also of the need for employers to offer the best employee experience to retain and attract talent.

BR: It depends on job type. Low starting role tend to be local, but more experienced don't need to be local. Also that young folks may prefer living in a city than country living.

Back to IT... **IT has been beating itself up for years. Now it is good?**

SK: That is right for service, but for applications there is still a problem with enterprise applications feeling dated and old fashioned. We get some negative scores on applications, and as a CIO you should be looking at more than just the service provided. If you force people to use software that they hate for 8 hours a day you will lose them. Employment choices are affected by tool decisions.

IA: So… riddle me this… **If there is an HR system used by employees, and they hate using it, is that an IT experience issue or an HR experience issue?**

SK: It doesn't matter. They have to work together. Focus on the more important roles and the tools they use first. Role focus.

IA: So it is a shared responsibility.

BR: **Where does this all go from here?**

SK: Orgs need to start to measure happiness to baseline where they are now, then they can make changes and assess the impact of those changes. Then compare within your country or culture,

BR: **Do we need to be looking at both subjective experience data and also actual operational data?**

SK: Yes, in the future people need to include operational state and also flow of work in ITSM tickets along with employee sentiment feedback.

IA: Perception is very important. Even if you are receiving a really good service, but you don't think it is good then you really have a problem there.

Virtual Podcast Bar Recommended Drink

Sami recommends:-

The best Gin comes from Finland. Gin and Tonic made with Napue gin with cranberries, rosemary.

Or Happy Signals own "Happiness beer"

Napue Gin:

https://www.straitstimes.com/lifestyle/food/story-of-finlands-napue-gin-began-with-five-guys-in-a-sauna

Key Lessons from Sami Kallio

1 - IT is doing good service

2 - HR and Finance are improving, although finance has it tough

3 - Country/Culture will affect your employee happiness feedback

4 - It's all about "the ability to DO"

4 - Working from Home is popular and perceived 5* more efficient than in-office by employees

5 - If you force people to use software that they hate for 8 hours a day you will lose them

6 - Finland make a gin!

Useful Links

Sami on Twitter : https://twitter.com/SamiKallioHki

Sami on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/samikallio/?originalSubdomain=fi

Happysignals:: https://happysignals.com