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Let's talk:

Natsir Akib, General Maintenance

Manager: „For me service is the

key factor to have good

business!”

Our #TheServiceTeam special continues with Natsir Akib, General Maintenance Manager in Indonesia. He is one of the most experienced

team members, having worked in service for over 44 years – not only in the cement business, but also in other industries. He is happiest when working in the field, helping our customers keep downtime to a minimum. For our INSIGHTS magazine, we talked to him about his day-to-day experiences in the service field.

How do you support your customers?

Natsir Akib: “I always try to help my customers by asking the right questions. This helps me find the root cause of the problem. Then I compile the answer, analyze the possible cause and advise them on solutions with several options based on priorities.

I have been working in service for almost 44 years in various industries, such as cement, mining, fertilizer, and infrastructure. I have started my career in a cement plant in Indonesia as low hands-on level and I am currently working as General Manager of Maintenance. After working in different companies in different fields such as engineering, fabrication, mechanical and civil construction, I joined thyssenkrupp four years ago as a service manager. Together with the thyssenkrupp regional team, I do my best to improve our local service capability in the cement, mining, and fertilizer business.

“It’s my top priority to make customers happy and solve their problems.”

Natsir Akib, General Maintenance Manager

One of the biggest challenges for me is when the customer is not open and transparent about the information I need. It’s my top priority to make customers happy and solve their problems. On the customer’s side, it is especially important to respond quickly to issues that can lead to plant shutdown. When this happens, #TheServiceTeam does its best to be as fast as possible.”

What is advice can you give customers to avoid problems?

Natsir Akib: “Sometimes customers forget to check the specifications of certain parts used in the operation of a plant. However, it is important to know these supplier specifications, otherwise problems may occur during operation. In terms of maintenance, it is essential that customers follow the operating instructions in the original manufacturer’s manual.

This is also a key aspect in reducing wear: Raw material specifications, part specifications, process optimization, consumable specifications, such as grease or lubrication, must be followed according to the manuals.

I remember one of the most challenging projects – the replacement of an outlet mill head on a ball mill. At that time, the outlet mill head was worn out and the customer needed spare parts. The problem, however, was that no spare parts were available on the market. We had to wait almost a year for new parts. To help the customer get a faster solution, here's what I did: I used old spare parts for the inlet ball mill heads. This involved reworking the inlet mill head, the machine trunnion and the bearing shoe, and installing everything to replace the old mill head outlet. The rebuild took me three months and I had to use local companies exclusively.

I am very proud that I was able to solve the customer's problem, speed up production, and use a local source for the rework. In general, however, one piece of advice I would give is to order spare parts on a long-term basis to avoid this type of problem. Especially in this time-critical industry, the sooner the problems are detected, the sooner we can intervene and assist in ordering spare parts.”

What makes work on site so special for you?

Natsir Akib: “I remember one experience I had when we were servicing a plant that needed to have the kiln pressure roller repaired and replaced. The thrust roller bearing was broken and caused the kiln tyre to move slightly downward. The peculiar experience I had when I put the rectified roller back in place was that I had to lift the kiln and push it up a few millimeters. The problem at that time was that the customers hadn't yet removed the material and refractory inside. It was a very heavy thing, about 10,000 tons. Lifting it and moving it up a few millimeters was almost impossible, and I did not expect it to happen. But in the end, it worked, and I am happy that my plan of action was successful.

To me, service is the key to doing good business. When customers experience excellent service from us, they are more likely to continue with your business and encourage others to try it.

I love working in teams and achieving a common goal together. Service is not only about technical knowledge, but also about being passionate, responsive, credible, and reliable. When the customer is happy, I am happy. I am very passionate about my job and I value being on site the most. A desk job has never been an option for me. Working in the field has given me a wealth of knowledge and experience. If I could give one piece of advice to the next generation of #TheServiceTeam, it would be this: Be passionate, be willing to take risks to add value, always be curious and lean to drive innovation and focus on customers. “



The bottom line: As part of #TheServiceTeam Natsir Akib does whatever it takes to keep his customers happy. He finds solutions to avoid unplanned downtime, but also recommends regular preventive maintenance.
