

# **INTERVIEW: Philipp Rowe, CEO – The Secret of Great Teamwork**

**Philipp Rowe** is international economist, international business consultant and an expert for Russia. He founded Rufil Consulting 15 years ago and is successfully managing international team from different countries and locations. In an interview, Philipp is giving an overview of Rufil Consulting's management approach and sharing a secret of the great teamwork.

**Q: Philipp, you have been successfully managing Rufil Consulting for 15 years now. What do you think was the most important management skill that kept company's constant growth and development?**

**A:** Every company must grow and develop – if not, then it would die. Growth must be sustainable and depends on different processes but as well leadership skills and management. However, I think that management is not a skill. It is an art. It is a complex of a lot of different skills and elements. It is not that easy to highlight one skill. But I can say how management must be to bring the company forward.

Every management works the same way – you plan; you define what to achieve and then you look how to achieve it. Then you gather people together to work together toward achieving that goal. There is one great quote about management ‘‘In order to build a ship it's not enough just to bring people, material, and tools together, but you must put a dream into the team. Dream about the sea.’’ The same is with management and the same is with Rufil Consulting. Our mutual dream, constant development and improvement keeps us growing and responding to all challenges ahead.



**Q: What is vision of Rufil Consulting?**

A: The vision is *to support international customers in Russia*. This was my aim at the beginning when I started the business, and even before. And this is until today our mission. We communicate this. To communicate this is very important – to give the company and the whole team direction. And the question is always: How to communicate this in the company? It's not enough to say it once a year or once a month, week. You have to say it and to see it every day. So, we put this mission all around us: on all our materials, brochures, business cards etc. Giving a common vision and having a common goal, communicating this and putting it in the hearts and minds of the team – that is the way we achieve to follow our vision for 15+ years.

**Q: Last 2 years brought many challenges, and Rufil, among many companies over the world, shifted to combination of office – remote work. What is your opinion on this model of work?**

A: Rufil Consulting had remote office system and tools already installed long before the pandemic crisis and lockdown. We did not need a lockdown or governmental measures to implement such modern system of home/office combination. The fact is that we are since a long time not living in a time where every office worker must sit on a desk and I like the boss must come and see are the fingers moving, are the screens switched on? No! This is not the way to manage tasks and measure results. Some people can sit for an hour at the desk and make a lot of work, and other sit ten hours at the desk and get no result. To manage daily tasks and measure the results there are other ways. And the results we aim to see are customer satisfaction and revenues for the company. This is the management tool to track these results and because of that, our home/office model already worked before and works well. The people must be kept motivated on their job, no matter if they work from home or office. The most important is to install the right motivation methods. That is what can distinguish modern organization and less modern organization, just by the questions: is there bonus or incentive model working based on results – and not only based on the fact if the person is in the office or not.



**Q: How hard it is to manage intercultural team from all over the world?**

A: This depends on what kind of team it is. But, maybe even more difficult than to manage intercultural team, is to choose the right persons, the right people, the right team members. And when you choose the right team members – that's the way to go. Anyways, it is hard. But the question is not is it hard – but do you they like it? And if they like something which is sometimes hard – than they keep doing it. And when we work in the team, we are doing hard work. But when the members of the team like, respect and can work together in a good way – than it is not a problem to meet all the challenges. We have a lot of employees who are working with us for long period of time, some of them 10+ years and I think this is the result of good HR culture, good teamwork, and good management. I would say to manage – when you have the right structure, it makes today no difference is the team working at one place in one office or is the team working in different countries, continents and so on, as long as it is managed and motivated properly, and

follows the same goals and vision.

**Q: What is your success formula of leadership?**

A: What does leadership mean? It means that the people follow the leader. We are living in the free society. Leaders are competing among others. Employers compete about getting the best employees and when we see this as a model of leadership – then the success formula is to see for example what are the employees, their strengths and weaknesses and how to put them in the team that concentrates on opportunities. When people are deciding to follow somebody or not, they think about: What does that mean for me? What is the value I get from this? And this is not only about their salary. This is something more. It is also how they feel in the team, how good results are rewarded, how interesting is it to communicate and collaborate with other people of the team. So, these are things which the management and the leader must design, must install, and manage.

**Q: How important is constant education and improvement of processes and knowledge for the overall success of the company? What is Ruffil praxis?**

A: We are in the consulting business. We are in the modern world and working internationally. So, education in all terms is always key. And education and learning are something which must go forward. Because if it does not go forward, it can't stand still. *The company must offer to their employees' education.* Education on the job – this is kind of the team leading, how the teamwork is designed, mentorship program etc. Is there a kind of the system that everyone who wants to learn more, can apply for? Is there a budget for education? This is just one part that must be defined. The other part depends on employee: the person, *the employee must by himself give the power and show that he wants education*, that he needs education and that he is worth to get the education program. And one point which is connected here is – leadership by

example. The people follow to somebody who gives the example. Because you can't tell something and then not do it. You must serve as an example. And...you must be authentic, you must be honest when you are leader and then the people will follow you.

**Q: What is your development vision for Rufil team and company for the upcoming years?**

A: Vision of the company stays the same: To support international companies and customers in Russia.

In terms of development for the next years, our aim is to enlarge and launch companies in Montenegro and other countries where our customers come from such as: Germany, Austria and Switzerland, US and China.

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**Rufil Russia Consulting is** an international business consultancy and one-stop-service agency based in Moscow! We are specialized in company registration, legal services, tax consulting and business consulting. **Our mission:** "We support international business in Russia and create a better quality of life for our customers, employees and investors.

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