A Springboard to Success

His participation in the Manager Training Programme was a career boost for Fizuli Yolchiyev from Azerbaijan. After six years as Purchasing Manager at Facet LLC, a wholesale firm for medical technology, he was promoted to the position of Head of Purchasing. Since then, he has particularly intensified the cooperation with German firms.

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2020 was not an easy year for Azerbaijan. Not only the Corona crisis, but also the political situation and the dramatic drop in oil prices hit the country badly. However, Fizul Yolchiyev remained confident in the midst of these adverse circumstances.

His positive attitude has helped him to develop the business further even during the pandemic. The cooperation with an enterprise in Southern Germany contributed considerably to this success. He had got to know this specialist for minimally invasive medical devices during his stay in Germany. On a visit to the firm's headquarters, he agreed on a trial delivery for doctors and clinics in the fields of cardiac and vascular surgery, and the Azerbaijani surgeons were impressed by the quality of the cardiac catheters and stents from Germany. Following a detailed market analysis, Yolchiyev drew up a business plan for sales and distribution and took on the registration process for the approval of the products. He organised training for doctors and hospital personnel – most recently, online. He is planning seminars and congresses for the time after Corona.Win-win-Situation

A win-win situation
Facet's customers include roughly 500 hospitals and clinics throughout Azerbaijan. Few of them have their own cardiology department. Thanks to Yolchiyev, they are now familiar with the German manufacturer's brand. Through the partnership, the proportion of Facet's turnover attributed to German products has increased by 15 per cent in the past two years, reaching one quarter. The business from Baku was able to strengthen its reputation as a supplier of high-quality products; at the same time, the partnership is important for the German partner as the

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firm had previously not been active in Azerbaijan.

Fizuli Yolchiyev with representatives of Eucatech during an on-site visit to the company in Weil am Rhein

An increase in turnover through Corona products

Turnover increased in the crisis year thanks to “Corona products”, as Yolchiyev and his colleagues call them, namely disinfectants, masks, protective clothing and tests. “Turnover for the other product groups has decreased”, says Yolchiyev. “As a result of the pandemic, products are more expensive, there are fewer flight connections and prices for transport and logistics have increased.” This is particularly noticeable as Facet only sells the goods of foreign firms. “Moreover, as in other countries too, operations are being postponed in order to secure bed capacity. A further cooperation agreement with a German firm, which was ready for conclusion, has been put on hold for the time being. “We can all hardly wait for Corona to be over”, Yolchiyev says.

Career kick-start

“When I returned from Germany, the firm’s management called me in”, Yolchiyev remembers. The then 29-year-old was promoted to Head of Purchasing. “That came as a surprise to me”, says Yolchieyev in his typically modest way, adding that the training had helped him in his further development. He learned how to do business with German enterprises and became generally more accomplished and self-confident in his contact with other foreign companies. The mathematician, who is now 31 years old, is not only good with numbers, but also has a talent for languages. Besides his mother tongue Azerbaijani, he speaks Turkish, Russian and English. In his leisure time, the former maths teacher and father of two enjoys watching documentaries on astronomy and distant galaxies and reading articles on these topics. And he also finds it exciting to look beyond his horizon in his job. He wants to expand Facet into a production company in the future; research in this respect is already ongoing. Facet would then be the first company in Azerbaijan to produce medical devices.

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