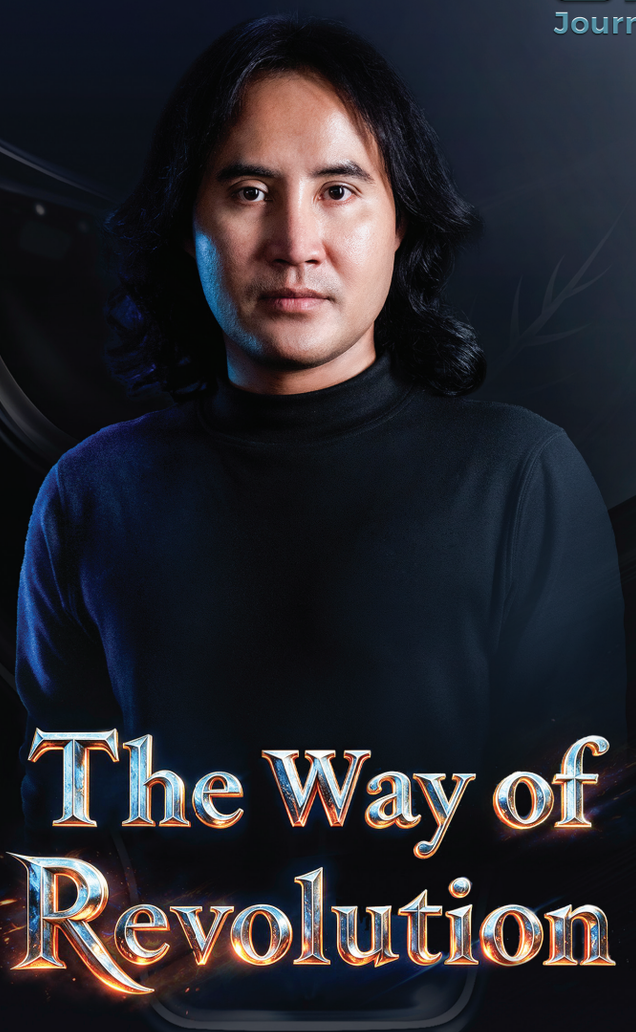
The SIMA Journey



The Way of Revolution

The way of **REVOLUTION**
is to make the world
SUSTAINABLE.

The Way of Revolution

The SIMA Journey

The Way of Revolution



Geoff Dean

Copyright © 2026
Geoff Dean
All rights reserved.

Dedication:

This book is dedicated to people everywhere,
in every country and every circumstance,
who are striving
to accept their own Story,
to trust in their own Ideology,
to follow their own Methodology and
to become the Amazing Innovators
that they were born to be.

Simply put,
this book is dedicated to those rare and special people who dare to be themselves.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The 12 Year Cycle of VP.Start

Section 1:

The 12 Stages of the SIMA Story

Section 2:

The 12 Steps of the SIMA Ideology

Section 3:

The 12 Strategies of the SIMA Methodology

Section 4:

The 12 Solutions of SIMA Amazing Innovations

Introduction

The 12 Year Cycle of VP.Start

This book is **NOT** the story of a visionary CEO, Phally Phoeurn,
or of the company he founded, VP.Start.
Needless to say, these two stories play a big role in the book of course,
but that is **not the point of this book**, not really.

This book is about the only person that really matters to you: You.
You have a SIMA Journey.
Story, **I**deology, **M**ethodology, **A**mazing Innovations.
You have your own distinctive STORY,
you have developed your own IDEOLOGY,
you plan and navigate with your own METHODOLOGY and,
therefore, you too will undoubtedly create your own AMAZING INNOVATIONS.
Innovations that belong to you,
come from you and
that could only be innovated by you.

This book will introduce the SIMA Journey of VP.Start and of CEO Phally,
but only as a way to help you unlock the amazing innovator that you were born to be.
Nothing more and nothing less.

Let's start with the conclusion…

In Cambodian (and indeed, Asian) culture,
the 12 year cycle is a very important concept.
Going through 12 years indicates going through a variety of ups and downs,
surviving challenges,
embracing successes,
pursuing opportunities and
demonstrating resilience when faced with obstacles.

Completing one cycle.
Returning to the starting point.

A time to look at where we have been and
to strategize about where we want to go.



2014 (Year of the Horse)

VP.Start rushes onto the scene with a team of 3 family members,
no branding, **no** customers,
no equipment, **no** production line,
no products or prototypes, **no** powerful connections,
no name recognition, **no** funding,
no materials or tools and **no** supporters.
Crammed into a tiny rented space.

It doesn't sound like an auspicious starting point, does it?

In fact, to be brutally honest,
the nascent VP.Start team had **almost nothing.**
But as Phally likes to say,
"Having almost nothing means having something."

They had nothing EXCEPT big dreams,
bold, arrogant, *impossible dreams*.
Dreams of transforming the entire electric grid of Cambodia,
making it more reliable, dependable and data-driven,
and like a rushing horse,
they were **ready for action** and **ready to take risks**
to make their dreams comes true.
Success seemed impossible at this point
but to quote Phally once again,
"No transformation ever happens UNTIL we try to accomplish the impossible."

2015 (Year of the Goat)

The year of the goat is usually considered a gentle, peaceful and harmonious year.
VP.Start began its first year as a registered company.
They were now an official start-up company and
ready to push forward with a very powerful start.
They began testing their flagship product for grid modernization,
the DRC 001.
Lack of space,
lack of tools and
lack of customers could not slow down or dampen their enthusiasm.
Long nights,
working weekends,
low pay and an uncertain future did not deter them, either.
Like a gentle and harmonious goat,
they protected **each other**,
encouraged **each other** and
gave **each other** emotional support.

In this year, VP.Start began its relationship with their first customers, the Cambodian utilities, namely the EDC (Electricite Du Cambodge), selling their first prototypes and getting their first serious income.

Amazingly, the EDC took on the products of VP.Start *before they were even developed*.
They could see **the passion** and intensity and dedication of the team and
the creativity and innovation of the ideas
so they decided to become customers and active supporters.
This is the power of innovation.
It brings to life what was only a dream.

It gives people enough confidence in what is to come that they can support it along the way.

Through VP.Start, the EDC saw the future of innovation.
Through the EDC, VP.Start took its first baby steps towards viability as a company.

Even from this earliest stage,
VP.Start was already **an idea-driven rather than a product-driven** company.
Long before they had achieved fully developed products,
their ideas and voice were persuasive.
The EDC and other customers bought into these ideas.
They saw the power of data-driven technology and jumped on the bandwagon.

2016 (Year of the Monkey)

The year of the monkey is traditionally associated
with bold action and clever maneuvering
but it can also become chaotic year if we are not careful.
With some revenue in hand for the first time and
with some business success in the previous year,
VP.Start was now ready to begin seeking opportunities,
learning fast, failing fast, moving quickly and with agility,
much like the monkey that represents this year.
The DRC series was expanded to make the plug and play solutions work
with other parts of the electric grid infrastructure and
with the products of other infrastructure providers.
The idea was to create a method of grid modernization that was
easy to install,

simple to manage and
quite inexpensive for a developing country with a limited budget like Cambodia.

Instead of rebuilding the existing infrastructure from scratch,
VP.Start was proposing **a radical new approach**
that would take advantage of the existing infrastructure
while upgrading it into a data-driven smart grid.
The DRC ecosolutions would be connected to the RPM Grid
which would allow for *monitoring* and
real-time management of the electric grid,
acquisition of grid data for continually upgrading the processes,
clear and easy to understand *visualization* of grid data and
the ability to find and **handle anomalies and power outages remotely**.

Not bad for the third year of existence!

Simultaneously,
it was becoming clear that VP.Start was going to need
more team members,
more sophisticated tools,
a **more** developed production line with increased testing and quality control.
MORE!
In other words,
VP.Start was *growing exponentially* and
its workspace needed to grow as well.
The various constraints of space, personnel and revenue threatened
to become a bottleneck that would slow growth and limit success.
VP.Start was not about to let that happen!

2017 (Year of the Rooster)

VP.Start entered their fourth year ready to raise their voice and shout to the heavens,
like a rooster in the early morning, a scene so familiar in Cambodia.
The time to hold back was past.
VP.Start began *hiring more team members*,
buying new equipment,
expanding research and development, production, testing and quality control,
all at the same time.
This was no easy task organizationally and at times,
there were problems, disagreements and confusion.
It was a time for straight-talking and honest, constructive criticism.
Most importantly,
it was a time of self-criticism and introspection and growth.

The DRC line of ecosolutions was expanded to 7 models,
each designed to work with the heterogeneous products
imported from various public companies
that were already in use in the infrastructure of the Cambodian electric grid.
The grid was becoming **smarter,**
more affordable for consumers,
less wasteful for utilities and power outages,
which had long been a bane of the Cambodian economy and a drag on investment.
Power outages and blackouts were being reduced **BOTH in frequency and duration.**

At this time, a more robust grid allowed the VP.Start management team to begin to consider new ways to take full advantage of the strengthened grid.
One concept that came out in this year was the UCN (Universal Connectivity Network), called AlienCheck, which was an overarching connectivity app that would also allow for remote monitoring and management of home automation and IoT devices as well as the overall power management system.

To many outside observers, this may have seemed like a crazy idea.
Why consider creating the UCN in the middle
of the monumental task of modernizing the grid?

However,
the VP.Start philosophy is quite direct and simple on this point.
If it is a good idea that meets the needs of people, start working on it.
Don't wait. **Don't** delay. **Don't** hesitate. **Don't** overthink.
Try fast, fail faster so you can succeed fastest of all.

2018 (Year of the Dog)

The dog is considered a loyal, obedient and honest animal.
In this year, VP.Start continued to expand its business missions and extend its vision into new areas with honesty and integrity.
The idea of smart grid modernization, energy transition and the UCN came together
in **one overarching framework** in this year, **the SIMA Journey**.
The SIMA (Story, Ideology, Methodology and Amazing Innovation) Journey meant that
all of VP.Start's plans, projects and products were just different aspects of one big picture journey, **the journey to a more sustainable world**.
This SIMA Journey framework helped clarify the vision of VP.Start and

ensure that all team members were on the same page.

In this year, sadly, loyalty and faithfulness became problems.
As a dog is faithful to his master,
most of the team started to move in fidelity with the VP.Start vision
and the SIMA Journey, but to be frank and candid,
when *a company begins transformation and growth*,
there are always **those who don't want to grow** and transform themselves.
This is true in every company experiencing powerful transformation and
VP.Start was no different.
Some team members started to leave VP.Start and then
to speak ill of and slander the team.
Some even tried to start their own business,
using code and proprietary information that they stole from VP.Start.
It could have been *a death blow* to a young, upstart company
but it had the opposite effect.
It **brought the team together** and
helped to further clarify the importance of their mission.

As Phally put it,
"In times of transformation,
negative people must leave to make space for people who want to grow."
He also stated,
"Negative people don't leave because we are on the wrong track.
They leave because we are moving powerfully on the right track."
In a year that some team members left,
the SIMA Journey did not stop.
In fact, it picked up momentum.

2019 (Year of the Pig)

The year of the pig is considered a lucky year and a year of success.
In like fashion,
VP.Start continued to make exponential growth in ideas and plans.
The DRC series of products had reached over 10 models and
its adoption by the EDC and various electric licensees continued apace.
But this year was about more than just developing products,
expanding market access and reaching new customers.
Just as importantly, this was a year of charitable activities.

VP.Start was founded with **a mindset of generosity and compassion**.
Innovation through technology was implemented *to make life better for people*,
much more than for the purpose of gaining revenue and
garnering massive profits.
Profits were **the side benefit** of creating a more sustainable
Cambodia.

First and foremost,
grid modernization is about making a Cambodia
where **factories and companies** can reach deadlines without electricity
interruptions,
students can use computers and WiFi for research without difficulties
and **home life** can be comfortable because of dependable electricity.

Innovation is a mindset and the core of the mindset is charity and concern
for others.
From this mindset,
it was only natural for VP.Start to **invest** part of its profits in projects
to **help** underprivileged students and underserved schools.
This was not about building a brand or gaining a reputation

as an ethical and responsible company.
This was about being true to their mindset
by **expressing their care** and concern for their fellow Cambodians.
As the profit margin of VP.Start continued to improve,
the management team saw this as a perfect opportunity
to use some of this profit to **help** others.
After all,
what could be more appropriate in VP.Start's year of success
than an attitude of generosity and sharing the wealth with the less fortunate?

2020 (Year of the Rat)

In traditional thought, the year of the rat is a year of survival and adaptability.
This was, of course, the year that ***Covid-19***
took center stage and dominated economic development.
This was a major challenge for VP.Start as indeed it was for all businesses.
On the other hand, for VP.Start,
this was also an opportunity to develop **remote working,**
online connectivity and to reduce direct physical contact.

Furthermore, it was also a time to solidify the teamwork that
made VP.Start strong and to crystalize the gains that had been made.
The management team came to recognize the value of **decentralized management** as Covid made highly centralized management almost impossible.

While this was a year of challenges, it was also a year of **significant milestones**.
Revenue for the year surpassed $1,000,000 US for the first time.

While VP.Start has never been a company to focus excessively on the financials, this was a further indication that they were headed in the right direction and that they needed to redouble their efforts by adding new team members with a variety of skills from *programming to marketing,*
research and development to human resources,
and for the first time,
international *liaison specialists*.
The growth of VP.Start and
the needs of developing countries in the ASEAN region was convincing the leadership that the time was approaching to start thinking seriously about expanding **to the global stage**.

2021 (Year of the Ox)

The ox is a hardworking animal, suited to harsh conditions,
intense labor and
slow, steady progress.
This year, VP.Start had to *overcome a number of serious challenges* and obstacles to achieving their ultimate goals.

First of all, despite seeking outside investment
from banking institutions and private investors,
no support was forthcoming.
VP.Start *revenue remained consistent* and
growth remained strong but
outside investment was required to get VP.Start to the next level and
potential investors were still uncertain about supporting the SIMA Journey vision.

Secondly, the Cambodian economy (and the world economy)

were still struggling to recover from the ongoing effects of the Covid crisis.

This might not seem like the best time, perhaps,

to start a new mission or

to move into a new campus or

to hire a number of new team members.

But as Phally likes to say,

"If not now, when? If not here, where? If not us, who?"

With this positive thinking powering VP.Start,
it was time to expand the SIMA Journey into IoT devices and home automation and then connect them to the UCN.
It was time to hire more qualified staff and increase salaries to retain quality workers.
It was time to move to a brand new campus, the Sen Sok Valley Campus, with greatly expanded space, equipment, infrastructure and meeting rooms.
It might not have been the best time to start all of these things
but as the Tale of Two Cities famously puts it,
"It was the best of times. It was the worst of times."
Or as Nikola Tesla put it, ***"There is no right time. There is only right now!"***

Phally would probably add that now is **the ONLY time**.
We don't know what tomorrow brings
so we had better do what we can today.

2022 (Year of the Tiger)

As you might expect, the year of the tiger is a time of power, energy and volatility.
For VP.Start, it was a time of successes and failures, victories and frustrations.

This year brought in another piece of the SIMA Journey puzzle,
the Smart City initiatives.
Urban life in Cambodia (and most of the developing world) carried many challenges
such as ineffective waste management,

poor traffic systems and frequent traffic jams,

inadequate parking,

inefficient street lighting and so on.

VP.Start decided to use data-driven technology to **face these problems head on**.

On the less positive side,
it became clear that VP.Start was *not reaching its productivity goals* and was in need of some **dramatic changes** to product development,
the production line,
testing,
quality control and
other aspects of business operations.

This would test the resilience of the VP.Start team and some members would depart. VP.Start entered a period of **revamping and restructuring**.
That said, product sales and profits continued to soar and
VP.Start reached a new level of success financially.
Also, for the first time,
VP.Start was starting to become **a known quantity** in growing circles in Cambodia.
No longer a start-up or even a small enterprise,
VP.Start was starting to develop its own distinctive branding and name recognition.

2023 (Year of the Rabbit)

Traditionally, the year of the rabbit is a year
for building peaceful relationships
and for VP.Start, this meant growing connections with **high schools and universities**
where Phally and the team held frequent workshops
to encourage young people to pursue their dreams and become innovators.

This also meant increasing connections with **government ministries**
which had become aware of VP.Start's groundbreaking work.

In addition, it meant more relationships with **various stakeholders and supporters**
who were excited about what VP.Start had already accomplished and
what VP.Start was looking to accomplish in the future.

There was even a burgeoning connectivity with other **players in the tech sector** and
in other sectors of the economy, such as law enforcement and agriculture,
for two examples.

For the first time, there were limited connections with **fellow ASEAN countries** and
interest in the possibilities of potential collaborative opportunities
for joint ventures and pilot projects.
It was still in the nascent stage at this point
but VP.Start was beginning to become ***more than just a local company***.

2024 (The Year of the Dragon)

This year, as you might expect from a dragon,
is high energy, *ambitious, full of big visions* and bold risks.

VP.Start followed this pattern quite closely.
By this point, VP.Start was rapidly approaching a team of 100 members,
divided into various departments in the company hierarchy
but still with **a high degree of decentralization.**
The number of DRC models had reached 20 and
were now installed in all the provinces of Cambodia,
delivering a much more reliable electric grid,
where power outages had become infrequent and
were handled rapidly and remotely.
The effects of grid modernization were even **starting to become clear** to consumers.

Furthermore, Cambodia had become more *attractive to direct foreign investment*.

While grid modernization was **scaling up**,
the smart city initiative was **ramping up** with a pilot project
In TaKhmau City,
a suburb of Phnom Penh, for data-driven street lighting
with IoT sensors and infrastructure.
As a result, for the first time, VP.Start was able to gain some financial stability.

This was also a year of increased global connections
with VP.Start participating in **ASEAN committee meetings** and
welcoming students from **the Philippines** and

tech professionals from **Myanmar** to the Sen Sok Campus
to give them a first hand view of what they were doing and planning.
This was also a year when there was a concerted effort
to raise the "voice" of VP.Start, especially that of the CEO,
to a new level in English and world-class communication.
There could be no global VP.Start without **a global voice**.
And as Einstein said, CEO Phally had long before determined to
"be a voice, not an echo."

Not an echo of others,
not even an echo of his own previous successes.
Every day was a new transformative day.

2025 (Year of the Snake)

The year of the snake is traditionally associated with wise, long-term planning.
This was the year that **the plan to access the global market** started to come together.
There were business trips to China, Indonesia, Singapore and
pilot projects established in Malaysia and southern India.
There were visits from tech executives and utility officials
from Japan, South Korea, various ASEAN countries and France.
Students from the University of Louisville in America visited the VP.Start campus to get caught up on the latest trends in technology.

VP.Start **participated** in pitching trips
for investment to Taiwan and Germany.
Potential connections and collaborations
with Bangladesh, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia

and Japan were **explored** as well.
Sen Sok Valley **changed** from being a backwater to being an emerging hub in the tech scene.

Plans were put in place to outsource the production line
as the goal was now to scale up to more than 1 million DRC devices.
VP.Start's big ask was now $100 million US in unsecured business loans
although as Phally pointed out,
"This amount is just to get the ball rolling. Soon we will need 10 times that amount."

There were rapid developments in the 4 key missions of VP.Start:
The SIMA Smart Grid,
The SIMA Smart City,
The SIMA Smart Home and
the UCN and
a new mission was added, **SIMA Big Data**, to tie all the missions together in one single journey.

There were still problems at times, of course.
One of the biggest issues for both international stakeholders and
even local Cambodian potential supporters and investors was a deeply rooted bias against Cambodia and Cambodian companies.
When Phally would make the case for innovation,
people would be greatly impressed but often say things like,
"Are you really Cambodian?
I have never met a Cambodian like you before.
You should have been born in Silicon Valley."

On the contrary, Phally would jokingly respond.
"Steve Jobs should have been born in Cambodia."

This year was the year to start raising up
what Phally called **"the new Angkorian generation."**

As any visitor to Angkor Wat can tell you,
ancient Khmer people were extremely innovative in *architecture,*
design,
sculpture,
landscaping,
irrigation and
urban planning.
The goal for VP.Start has never been to create an innovative culture from scratch but to revive the creative spirit that has always be **a key aspect of Khmer culture**.

2026 (Year of the Horse)

Having finished the first 12 year cycle of VP.Start,
the VP.Start team is faced with a serious question.
What comes in the next cycle?

It is still quite early but some trends are obvious already.
More rapid growth, especially with the imminent rollout of the UCN and rapidly increasing demand for pilot projects throughout ASEAN and South Asia in the smart grid, smart city and smart home initiatives.
More intense globalisation as VP.Start begins to spread outside of Cambodia.
More development of a true smart grid in Cambodia.
Currently some 80% of the grid in Cambodia remains conventional, but **more** than 1,000,000 DRC devices will dramatically change that.
More expansion in hiring team members and in enlarging the Sen Sok Campus.
More explosive, exponential growth and even greater ROI.
Revenue of $100 million or more in the next 5 to 6 years based on traction estimates.

And yes, there will be problems.
There always are.
But as Jensen Huang has put it wisely,
"Greatness comes from character.
And character isn't formed out of smart people.
It's formed out of people who have suffered."

What is the soul of the next 12 years for VP.Start?
Transformation. In a word, **transformation.**

VP.Start is poised to become a true unicorn,
a major player on the global stage,
a leader in innovation through technology,
while **never forgetting** its roots and heritage and
never stopping its generous, charitable activities.

VP.Start is out to change the world, make it more sustainable and build a brighter future.
Nothing less will do.
No stopping or slowing down until the goal is achieved!





“ENGINEERS CREATE EVERYTHING!”







The SIMA Story

Section 1

The SIMA Story
The 12 Stage Story of VP.Start

The VP.Start team believes that success comes from knowing your story.
Facing your story, successes and faults.
Admitting your story and owning your story.
Being proud of your story, even the flaws, because they also brought you to this point.

There are valuable lessons to be learned in your story and mine.
But we will never start to learn those lessons and
gain those valuable insights,
until we accept our story as it is.

Every story has a beginning.
Often the start of a story sets the trajectory for the whole story.
Where did your story start? What does that start teach you?
Did you make a Very Powerful (VP) Start?

The 12 Stage Story of VP.Start

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. The Journey of a 1000 Miles Begins 39
2. Learning to Learn in the SIMA Way 51
3. Engineering the SIMA Revolution 56
4. The Birth of a Company, the Rebirth of a CEO 65
5. The Reluctant CEO 72
6. The Growing Pains of VP.Start 85
7. VP. Start Begins to Raise Its Voice 94
8. VP.Start Begins to Spread Its Wings 101
9. An Ordinary Voice or a SIMA Voice? 117
10. Difficulties Along the SIMA Journey 127
11. The SIMA Journey to the Global Stage 133
12. The SIMA Journey: Past, Present and Future 144

Chapter 1

The SIMA Story
The Journey of a Thousand Miles Begins

"The only impossible journey is the one that you never begin." -Tony Robbins

How do you begin the journey of innovation?

The SIMA Journey of Innovation through Technology did not start out in a big city.
Not in a famous educational institution.
Not in an affluent suburb.
Not with a lot of excitement.
Not with expectation.

The road to VP.Start and innovation started, as journeys often do, with hardship.
But if ***"Necessity is the mother of invention"***,
then ***"Hardship is definitely the mother of innovation."***

Buddha himself, whom many Cambodians would consider the ultimate innovator, according to the traditional stories, was just an ordinary prince until he stepped outside the palace gates and saw the sufferings and hardship in the world.
Hardship made him an enlightened innovator.
This is the mindset that a young boy named Phally was raised in.

Or actually, he was not named Phally. He was not named at all.

What are the ingredients required to make a successful innovator?

The boy, growing up in a dirt poor village,
living in a simple handmade hut,
waking up and sleeping early in rhythm with the sunrise and sunset,
candles instead of electricity,
rainwater instead of running water,
living through the after effects of the disastrous Pol Pot era.
No medicine, no transportation, almost no education.
Not exactly the ideal conditions to raise up a future innovator.

But one thing had survived the cataclysm of the civil war,
the Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese invasion.
Family.
Family was the foundation that kept Cambodia from becoming another failed state.
As long as there was family, there was hope.

What is your name and how do you add value to that name?

The as yet unnamed boy was blessed with a loving, caring mother and a wise and somewhat unique father.
A father who decided not to give his son a name.

Education was very intermittent
but the father insisted on his boy going to school whenever possible.
On the first day of school, the teacher asked the boy his name.
"I don't know. I don't think I have one,"
was the boy's response.

The boy ran home and asked his father,
"What is my name?"
The father smiled wryly and said,

"That is for you to choose. In this world, **we must make our own name.**"
The boy thought for a second and said, "Phally."
"OK, Phally, it is, my son."

As Phally was still 3 years old and unable to write in Khmer,
he had his older sister write out his name for him.
Now it was official.

The father insisted that Phally was unique from that very young age.
He told Phally to **follow his dreams** and
never care what others thought of him.
Those lessons are still playing out today.

In other words,
Phally didn't become a *revolutionary innovator* and
a champion of *Big Data,*
grid modernization and
the power of creativity to overcome even the darkest situations
overnight.
Or maybe he did.

The story of Phally's childhood is not told
to say he was perfect by any means.
Phally is no saint and he can be notoriously **hard to deal with**.
As a small child and now as well.
Of course, true innovators often are **hard to deal with**.
But then again, not every person who is **hard to deal with**, is a true innovator,
of course.
I will allow the reader to pass their own judgment on such questions.
Why is it so hard for most of us to "be ourselves"?
How do we become the innovators that we should be

without becoming "hard to deal with"?

When Phally was a teenager,
it became clear that he was in many ways atypical.
He *followed his own pattern*,
marched to the beat of a drum that only he could hear and
didn't mind telling *classmates,*
older kids and
even teachers exactly what he thought…
and at times, why they were **wrong**!
In Cambodia, this **was NOT and is still NOT** done!
But Phally's father had told him that
he was not to care what others said of him or thought of him.
And he took it to heart with true intensity.

His classmates quickly gave him the nickname of ***"alien"***
because he didn't seem to be from the same planet as the rest of them.
But perhaps, it wasn't so much his unique philosophies that "alienated"
him, if you will,
as much as the matter of fact way in which he would tell his
perspectives.

Years later, when meeting with **much** older CEOs of companies
much larger, **more** famous and with **more** storied histories than VP.Start,
Phally never hesitated to tell his **much more** experienced and
wealthier counterparts
to **stop his wasting time,**
get to the point and
focus on the big picture.
He would tell them that
they might have *manufacturing skills,*

engineering prowess and
substantial revenue but
he had something that they did not possess and
that they desperately needed: **his creativity.**
Furthermore, he had **the compelling voice** that they lacked.

You might expect that these CEOs in their fancy suits with big offices and
matching titles and
first class airplane seats
would take offense at this upstart daring to call them out to their faces.
You would think that if you didn't know the unique charm of this "alien",
the charm that worked wonders on his classmates and teachers long before
it was deployed against state of the art, cutting edge, groundbreaking, jargon
spewing CEOs.

Phally was in middle school,
which for a lot of students of Phally's generation, was as far as they got in
education,
or indeed, farther than many of them got.
It was time for the math exam.
Students came into the sweaty classroom,
fans occasionally pushing the hot air around,
sweating from equal parts of the oppressive heat and the exam pressures.
The teacher was solemn and unsmiling.
The teacher was deeply concerned about this batch of students.
The time allotted was 90 minutes.
Just as the exam was about to begin,
Phally made his entrance.
After 15 minutes, Phally turned in his exam paper.

Some classmates might have wrongly guessed that
he had given up on the test,

but in fact, he had *completed the test without an error.*
To tell the truth,
Phally was **utterly unconcerned about his exam scores or**
about being the top student in the
class or any similar honors.
He was just happy to see his classmates succeed and
he worked hard to tutor them in his free time,
to help them all improve.
Students even came from other classes and classrooms,
climbing in the windows, to be tutored by Phally.
Either way, that was not the feat, that burned the "alien" image indelibly
into everyone's collective memory.

The teacher told Phally that he must sit down and wait until the end of the
exam period to turn in his exam.
Turning the exam in too early might make the other students uncomfortable
and give them some added pressure.
Phally wasn't buying it.

"Why should I be penalized to make other students feel more comfortable?"
Phally began his bold response to his teacher.
"Why do I need to sit and waste 75 minutes of my life to take the pressure
off others?
They need more pressure, not less."
Not surprisingly, teachers were not to be talked back to in this fashion.
And yet, somehow, as always, Phally managed to coax a grin out of his teacher.
Almost inexplicably, actions and behaviors that would get anyone else in
a world of trouble,
never seemed to put the "alien" in much of a bind at all.

Perhaps, it was the unabashed certainty of the words,
the pure and honest sincerity or

just an inability on the part of the teacher not to feel a little respect
for the chutzpah of this young student.
Teachers and classmates might not appreciate his attitude at times
but it was hard to look at young Phally and
not think that there was something different here,
that they were privy to witnessing the childhood of someone
who would become many things but never become boring.

Phally was not through speaking yet.
Not only, he insisted, was he not to be punished for finishing early.
As a matter of fact, quite the opposite, he should be rewarded.
If he could get a perfect score in 15 minutes,
how could that be the same score as someone who achieved the feat in
90 minutes?
He was calling for a deduction in the scores of students who could not keep
up with him.
He didn't want to share perfect marks with others
who took longer to achieve what he accomplished so quickly and effortlessly.

This is a core perspective of VP.Start.
It is insufficient and **inadequate to merely achieve great outcomes** and
great innovations.
VP.Start must achieve them more quickly than anyone else.
Speed is just as important as accuracy.
If you can achieve greater results faster than others without sacrificing
quality or accuracy,
you will be able to achieve amazing innovations.
**How about you? Are you dedicated to achieving your ideas in the least
possible time
but without sacrificing accuracy?**

Once again, in a normal world,

you would likely expect that students would not appreciate someone
trying
to reduce their scores to benefit his own,
just because they used the entire allotted time.
And yet, his classmates had come to know and love "the alien," just as his
teacher had and
just as future CEOs and government officials would come to.

This brings up a few of the key points of Phally's philosophy
that emerge from his story, his background.

**How can we accomplish our tasks more efficiently and substantiate this
efficiency?**

First, for Phally and VP.Start, it is not enough to do things right.
You must do them **as rapidly and efficiently as possible** as well.
A successful result achieved in half a year is more valuable
than a similar result achieved in two years.
Even before he knew the meaning of the term,
he was data-driven, constantly pushing to upgrade himself and others,
never willing to be satisfied.

**What makes you unique and how can you foster and cultivate that
uniqueness?**

Secondly, he had and still has the view of himself as someone distinctive,
someone special and unique.
This did not spring from his pride or overconfidence but from experience.
He could do things well, learn things quickly and make connections
that others did not see.

As one example of that, at one point,

Phally was, like so many of us, a struggling math student,
failing to see the point or the purpose behind the equations.
He had fallen considerably behind his classmates and
his math teacher had even begun to express concern to his parents.

Yet, it was *a motivational issue* rather than any inability to do the work.
He felt no need to do math and
couldn't seem to get why he had to waste his "valuable" time on such pursuits.
He would much rather feed the chickens and raise vegetables and
earn money in the local market to support his family.
He certainly wasn't concerned about grades or scores or his ranking relative to others.
But one day, at the age of 10, it suddenly dawned on him.
The philosophy underpinning math.
The way that math was a logic system.
The way that math attempted to bring the universe into focus.
It was as much as moment of **spiritual intuition**
as a moment of academic development.

Suddenly, he roared into action, mastering everything that the teacher could give him and
exploding into the top rank in his class,
working on university level math at age 11 and 12.

What is limiting and hindering your exponential growth?
How will you remove those obstacles?
Interestingly, and in keeping with his very nature,
he tells this story often but never to brag.
He often says that accomplishments are best forgotten
so that they don't hinder us from taking the next step.
He mentions this story because he believes that
this is ***exponential growth that WE ALL are capable of.***

Once we have that moment of inspiration, that moment of clarity,
we are all capable of almost superhuman feats of academic development overnight.
Any failure of growth is not a failure of ability or potential.
It is merely a *failure of insight*.
"If you know why you live, you will know how to live and what living is."

It goes without saying that this philosophy puts pressure on his team.
But to be fair, Phally puts more pressure on himself than on anyone else.
Always frustrated, but never discouraged.
Always unsatisfied, but never hopeless.

"The day that I don't want the impossible and stop feeling frustrated, find a new CEO!"

You might say that Phally was an innovator from birth.
And yet, while seeing himself as unique,
he was clear that **everyone was distinctive and amazing**;
the main difference was most people did not have the courage
to be the amazing innovators that they were by nature.
They were *afraid to unlock themselves*,
step outside the box and
they allowed school,
peer pressure,
family and societal expectations,
stirred up in some oppressive cocktail,
to compromise and customize them,
to keep them from reaching their ultimate goal.
To reach the unreachable star.
To be freely and completely yourself.

Phally might be many things at different times

but there was one thing that he always was without hesitation or exception.
Himself.

This didn't always make him **the easiest** to understand,
the easiest to deal with or
the easiest to get a handle on.
But it made him what he was and still is.
It is his occasionally irritating but always irresistible charm.
His charisma. His innovative nature.

How do we unlearn the toxic trait of caring too much about what others think?

One other characteristic that emerged from this period of Phally's life was his complete disregard for titles, positions, awards and all the trappings of modern success,
including financial gain.
If you don't care what others think of you,
what do their awards and certifications mean to you?

What good is a title like CEO or COO
if you can't hold down or live up to **the title of Innovator**,
the only title that really matters?
What does it really mean to have a high position and experience and accolades?

Just because you may have worked **more years** or
earned **more money** or
sold **more products**,
according to Phally,
that certainly does not indicate that

you have **accomplished more**.
More experience could merely mean **more experience of doing things the wrong way** or at least, in a less effective way.
The only award that matters to Phally is knowing that
he had served the cause of innovation without fear.

So, at this point, Phally wants to ask you a question…….

How about you?
Are you willing to take on the challenge of being the innovator that you were born to be?
Are you willing to push yourself to be better and to never be satisfied with who you are and what you have achieved?
Are you willing to defy authority in the pursuit of creativity and innovation?
Are you willing to maintain the focus required to keep pushing forward?

Are you willing to take the greatest risk to gain the greatest reward: the thrill of being yourself?

Chapter 2

The SIMA Story
Learning to Learn in the SIMA Way

"Self-education is, I firmly believe, the only kind of education there is."
-Isaac Asimov

If you have read this far,
you have already started to recognize some of the characteristics that make Phally who he is; complicated, disciplined, dedicated, at times infuriating, but certainly fascinating and endlessly innovative.

Why is advanced education a major stepping stone towards founding VP.Start?
University education was a the next key stage of the journey to VP.Start.
Phally considers the ITC (the Institute of Technology of Cambodia) as his second hometown,
his professors as his spiritual parents and
his classmates as family.
But like any family relationship, *the road to innovation was not without friction.*

Phally loves giving presentations at universities and meeting with students and professors.
He feels a special affinity that he doesn't feel speaking in a company boardroom or at a government ministry meeting room or even at a public utility office.
University is where he feels most at home because he loves to learn,
to research and to delve into the most arcane details of technology.
As a matter of fact, if he had not felt compelled by innovation to become a CEO,
I am convinced that he could have become a very popular professor of

electrical engineering, perhaps with a Richard Feynman vibe.
How do you learn? What is your learning style?
Do you agree that "traveling 1000s of miles is more valuable than reading 1000s of books",
as the Chinese proverb proclaims?

If you think that this means that Phally was a model student and that this phase of the journey to building VP.Start was easy,
you would be mistaken.
He was driven, possessed, quite literally *consumed with learning*
but found it nearly **impossible to focus on anything that didn't seem "mission critical."**
Each professor had to substantiate that their curriculum and textbooks were worthwhile.
The onus was on squarely on the professor.

Failure by the professor to do so,
would mean that Phally would quickly lose interest.
Phally meant no disrespect, although it was not always interpreted that way by his teachers.
Phally saw himself as **on a mission to change the world**.
He also realized *the impermanence of life and the shortness of time* to accomplish
what he was starting to dare to dream of.
There just wasn't enough time to waste on anything less than absolutely essential.

How do innovators approach education?
In fact, Phally would be more likely to study things outside of the curriculum altogether
than things in the textbook that he considered obsolete or inadequate.
Again and perhaps not so surprisingly, some professors *did not appreciate* this brash attitude.

But this is actually not so unusual among innovators.

For example, Steve Jobs, before dropping out of school completely,
would famously rush off to calligraphy classes
instead of attending the classes he was required to attend.
He later credited this calligraphy skill as critical in designing various Apple products.

Similarly, Phally didn't really care what others thought of him or how they chose to grade him.
The important exam was life and he was going to ace that test.
How he did on a test in a classroom designed by a professor didn't concern him in the least.
The real tests were designed by nature and the experiences of life.
The real grades, the only marks that mattered to Phally were simple:
Am I a true innovator or not? Do I have what it takes to achieve my goals?
The only ranking that mattered to him was this:
Am I a better creative thinker today than the Phally of yesterday?

How do innovators succeed in the innovative journey without compromising?
Just they did for like Steve Jobs, Einstein, and others,
and fortunately for Phally and for all of us,
there were some professors, mentors and supporters
who saw the method in the madness of Phally and accepted him as he was.
This is a lifelong, recurring pattern for Phally.
While some, perhaps many, were put off by Phally's idiosyncrasies and refusal to acquiesce to societal norms,
there were and still are always a chosen few who could see the potential andvisionary nature of Phally and accept him as he is.
Those supporters of Phally, I dare say,
see in him just a hint of themselves or, at least,

a hint of whom they would like to be if they dared to be true to themselves.

In the educational journey to a greater vision, where do you place your focus?
While many others found university life a great time to experiment and explore socially,
Phally always had his eyes on a loftier prize.
His passion was creativity and his addiction was improving himself.
He pursued his dreams of a brighter future for Cambodia
with a single-mindedness that bordered in obsession.
Later this passion would manifest itself with the creation of VP.Start.
He didn't create VP.Start because he had some entrepreneurial spirit
that he needed to express through business.
He was compelled to create VP.Start
because he felt it was the most efficient way to achieve his dreams.
More on that later….

Dating, entertainment, drinking, and other trivial pursuits were all relegated.
He took on the ways of a Buddhist monk, so to speak,
rejecting the pleasures of this world for a higher standard, a higher calling.
Indeed, for him, *the way of Innovation through Technology is a spiritual endeavour.*
Anything that might distract him was rejected.
He was on the road to electrical enlightenment.

By the way,
this is not to say that Phally was opposed to either alcohol or female companionship, per se.
He made a conscious, pragmatic and conscientious decision to avoid

all attachments.
In his view, life was short,
ephemeral,
impermanent.
He had revolutionary changes to make and
no time for a family to slow him down or for leisure to make him lazy.
Sleep seemed a waste of time as well
so he determined to get by on the minimum of sleep and exercise and to spend his energy for his one and only pursuit,
a sustainable future for his country and his world.

Phally wants to ask you a few more questions.
What is your journey and does it outweigh everything else?
What are the distractions that might **hinder and hamper your journey**?

And, most critically, **if you don't know what your journey is**,
how do you expect to reach the destination?



Chapter 3

The SIMA Story
Engineering the SIMA Revolution

"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken." -Oscar Wilde

How do we become innovators?
During a panel discussion at the Royal University of Phnom Penh,
a sincere student posed a question to Phally.
Phally had been the keynote speaker at a conference on the power of innovation and had talked about the differences between innovation and optimisation, creativity and engineering.
The student mustered up all her courage and asked Phally,
"How do we become innovators?"

Phally smiled. He smiles a lot.
This was the perfect question that would enable him
to state his philosophy succinctly and powerfully.
As the audience went silent with expectation,
Phally slowly replied. **"If you are asking this question, you are already an innovator."**

Phally looked at the student and then out to the hundreds of students gathered of their own free-will to hear a lecture about innovation.
Phally continued.

"To tell the truth, all of you are *innovators by nature.*
How does a banana become a banana?
How does a fish become a fish?
Everyone is born to be an innovator.
Innovation is the way of nature.

Evolution is just the scientific way of expressing the innovative
nature of our natural world and of the universe.
You don't need to worry about how to become an innovator any more than
you need to worry about how to become a person.
You are already an innovator and ***you were born for that very purpose.****"*

You were born to be an innovator.
Are you living up to your birthright?

Phally now posed a question back to the audience
as he had transformed from a keynote speaker
to more of an ascetic philosopher.
"So, let me ask you something.
If everyone was born to be an innovator,
why are there so few innovators?
Why are there **so few** innovative companies?
Why are there **so few** innovations?' The crowd went silent.

Phally smiled broadly. He was in his element.
"It is not because we were not born to be innovators.
It is because **most of us are afraid to be ourselves.**
Society tries to force us **into a box**.
Parents tell us to **behave.**
Teachers tell us to **follow the rules**.
Companies push us to **conform.**
They try to convince us **not to be ourselves** and all too
often they succeed."

"But look at the true innovators.
Oscar Wilde. Einstein.
Socrates. Alan Turing.

Buddha.
They **broke the rules**,
went outside the comfort zone,
refused to let the world harness them.
They were *disruptive, distinctive,*
unique and completely unafraid.
The true innovators are often criticized and even punished, some even killed
but they never stop being themselves."

"The real question that we need to ask is not,
'How do I become an innovator?' or
"How do I unlock my creativity?'
The only question is,
'How do I become myself?'

Phally insists on being himself.
He commands that of everyone who works for VP.Start.
There can be no innovative company
UNLESS
there is an absolute dedication *to their vision, to their goals, to their dreams.*
To being themselves!

Why is it hard yet essential for us to become ourselves?
And yet, to become yourself,
while it seems like the easiest thing in the world, is in fact, quite challenging.
As French philosopher, Albert Camus stated,
"Man is the only animal that refuses to be what it is."
You don't need to tell a turtle or a snake or a lion to be themselves.
They can never be anything else.
And yet people very often **choose to refuse** to be who they are.
And as Phally would insist in many speeches, it is a choice.
We don't refuse to become ourselves *by accident or chance or circumstances.*

We actively choose **to be or not to be** ourselves.
And we keep making that choice day after day after day.

Phally, as I mentioned before and will likely mention again,
was certainly no saint, no angel.
Indeed, there are many faults that you might accuse Phally of.
He can lose focus at times.
He can be frustrated with people who don't get him immediately.
He might demand too much of others and of himself at times,
pushing people beyond their limits.

But there is one accusation that you could never make about Phally.
You could never claim that Phally is not true to himself.
He is unapologetically and unabashedly himself.
*F*ew others could dare to claim the same.

Why do true innovators often need to found new companies?
Why do they often struggle in more conventional company hierarchies?
Because Phally was such a firm believer in the power of innovation and
in the power of being yourself,
it was almost inevitable that it was not going to be easy for Phally
in a traditional company.
And yet, fresh out of school,
Phally found himself working as an electrical engineer
for a small, traditional company.
He threw himself into the work and gained valuable experience.
More important, perhaps, than even his experience as an engineer,
he gained experience with the problems of the aging Cambodian electric grid and the negative impact it had on locals.
Phally was posted to Kampong Cham province,
a place he still considers his second home to this day.
He was tasked with keeping the electric grid up and

running and responding to outages.
Not surprisingly, outages often occurred **in remote areas in times of bad weather.**
Outages didn't usually occur at the most convenient times, either.
As a result, many a midnight would find Phally
on a dark, rugged road in a bad weather
travelling to a remote location to try to restore power.

Why do innovators often need to face problems directly before they can solve them?
It was a difficult job in less than ideal conditions
but Phally was excited about his work.
He knew firsthand **the importance of reliable electric power** and
the problems that developed when it was not dependable.
He saw himself as a kind of hero,
fighting the forces of nature and weather and time,
on behalf of the beleaguered electric grid.
As always,
Phally remained the optimist who believed
in *the power of one person to make a change for good.*

Yet all of the optimism and positivity that Phally could muster
was unable to mask some key issues that ate at Phally.
First of all, the grid and its aging infrastructure were *getting worse, not better,*
despite the best efforts of Phally and his equally dedicated colleagues.
The problems that plagued the grid, causing frequent outages,
problems like *flooding, intense rain,*
extreme heat and rapid growth of vegetation were beyond his ability
to combat.
Furthermore, these situations were unlikely to change.
As he and his team would restore power,

he couldn't help but be aware that **he had not really solved the problem**;
he had merely repaired the grid until the next outage came along.

He was constantly **putting bandages on broken legs**.
And outages were getting *more, not less frequent*.
And lasting *longer, not less time*.

Why do innovators often seem to feel frustrated?
Does their frustration with the current situation lead them to innovative solutions?
But what really frustrated Phally was that
he was often called back
to the **same locations**
to do the **same repairs**
in response to the **same problems**.
Two steps forward and three steps back.
He was working as hard as he could but seemingly without any progress.
For Phally, the one thing that he **cannot abide is feeling that he is making no progress**.
He is **willing to face challenges**, no matter how daunting,
because he believes deeply in his ability to make an improvement.
But he simply *cannot tolerate a lack of progress*.

At this point, Phally, still a neophyte in the electrical engineering sector,
began to make suggestions to his boss,
suggestions of Big Picture changes,
suggestions that were well beyond his experience or position or rank.
Not surprisingly, I suppose, his innovative ideas were viewed as the opinions

of a naive kid.

The questions came roaring back to Phally from the company management.
Do you really think that Cambodia can modernize and transform its grid?
Where is the funding coming from?
Who has the technology to achieve this transformation?
And, why do you think that you have all the answers
that much more experienced and respected engineers have never been able to achieve?

In one question, **Who do you think you are?**

Let me ask you, as well, dear readers: Who do you think you are?

That said, the management team of the company recognized
his passion, his intensity and his fervor for his ideas. No one ever doubted that.

Why do innovators choose revolutionary change over incremental improvements?
At this point,
the safe approach for Phally would be to *stay in his lane,*
stay inside the box,
follow the rules,
obey his superiors and
try to achieve some kind of ***gradual, incremental improvement*** of the electric grid.
For most people, that would be the road that they would choose.
But for Phally, that would break **the most fundamental rule of all**.
"To be yourself."
That was the one rule that was impossible for Phally to break.

Phally has stated many times that
he never wanted to become the CEO of a tech company.
He would have been far happier to be a teacher in a rural village school or
a "nameless" electrician plugging
away in a traditional company.
He could have had a normal life with a family and
a decent salary and reasonably secure future.
But he was "compelled by technology to become a CEO" as he puts it.
At the end of the day, he had no choice but to be himself.

Phally would like to challenge you with a question or two….

Do you know **yourself**?
Not the self you show to the world or even the self you show to yourself.
Do your know the real **yourself**?
Are you willing to become **yourself** in spite of all the risks?

Phally believes that no one ever becomes a successful innovator in tech
until after they *become themselves*.
And, although it is definitely not always easy to be **yourself**,
in the end it is a decision that you will never regret.

So, are you willing to stay true to *yourself*,
regardless of what praise or criticism may come your way?
Are you ready to become the innovator that you were born to be?



Chapter 4

The SIMA Story
The Birth of a Company, the Rebirth of a CEO

"Should I stay or should I go? If I stay, there will be trouble.
If I go, it will be double." -The Clash

The time had come for Phally to stand up and follow his dreams.
He saw the big picture, the bottlenecks facing Cambodian development.
He was unwilling to accept the current situation.
He was determined to transform the electric grid.
Not tweak it, not upgrade it, not optimise it, not even improve it.

Revolutionize the grid.
Disrupt it.
Transform it!
He was hellbent on transforming the grid,
the very nature of how electricity was distributed in Cambodia and ultimately in the world.

Why is it hard for most people to make big decisions?
Why do true innovators refuse to compromise or customize for others?
With some sadness, he had already left his conventional job,
convinced that he would never be able to achieve more than incremental upgrades of the electric grid in that position.
He was a little disappointed with this outcome but he was *not one to look back*.

He did not leave the engineering job acrimoniously.
He had always felt that life was a journey and

people and positions were destined to come and go.
When people aligned with his vision, he would go with them and
they would go with him, but, at the same time,
he and they were free to part ways at any time,
no hard feelings.

In later years, his hiring and staff retention practices at VP.Start were similarly flexible.
*The door is always **open***, he would say,
open for those who share our vision to join the journey.
But by the same token,
the door is also **open** for those who had lost the vision
and chosen to leave.
No criticism for those who go,
no excessive joy for those who come and those who stay.
Everyone was **free to follow THEIR dreams.**
Everyone needs to follow their own journey.
And the time had come for Phally to start his.

Another aspect of Phally's perspective is that
in his world there is **no time but now.**
Yesterday is gone and all that remains is an illusion of the memory.
Tomorrow has not yet arrived and is similarly little more than a figment of the imagination.
There is only now so everything must be done immediately.
After all, we don't know if we will even be alive tomorrow.
What will happen to our innovations if we start postponing them?

This "living in the perpetual present" mindset means that
Phally rushes in where "wise men" never go.
He was ready to change the world and

change it right now,
to make the electric grid of Cambodia *reliable, dependable,*
equitable, affordable and renewable.
NOW.
According to Phally, ***if you don't do something now, you will never do it.***
Not next year or sometime down the road.
RIGHT NOW! RIGHT AWAY!

Why do innovators boldly (and perhaps foolishly) take on "impossible" challenges?
Of course, there were a few rather serious obstacles in his way.
First off,
the electric grid was made up of *aging and*
in some cases seriously damaged infrastructure,
outages were getting *more instead of less frequent*,
technology was *far from cutting edge* indeed,
there was *little to no foreign investment* and
resources to devote to grid modernization were very minimal.
This would likely cause most people to give up before they started.
But, to state the obvious, **none of this deterred Phally in the least.**

Furthermore, in a society where patronage and connections were critical to business success,
Phally was *an outsider and an unknown*,
espousing ideas that seemed heretical to the electric grid orthodoxy of the day.

At this point, he had a team of himself plus two relatives,
working without salaries, in a tiny closet of a rented office space, working non-stop.
There were *no weekends, no holidays*,
work started before dawn and ended in the middle of the night.

At this time,
Phally started his practice of sleeping 3 to 4 hours per night.
In his view, as mentioned before, *sleeping was wasting time*,
time that could not be recovered.
And since he was trying to create a company
to upend the electric grid and change the world,
sleep was a luxury that he could not afford.

How do you refresh yourself and alleviate the stress of innovation?
The only break that Phally would allow himself were visits
to the nearby Buddhist pagoda.
When he was with the monks,
Phally was happy to *sit in silence* and listen and learn,
to absorb their wisdom and ideology,
to meditate on what the monks shared.
This is another aspect of Phally's practice that remains to this day.
No matter how busy he is or how many projects he is juggling or how many influential business or government leaders he is meeting, he always finds time to get to the pagoda.
He calls it ***"spending to communicate with himself."***
And he considers this time **essential** to him being an innovator.
For that brief period of time,
he *no longer needs to be the lead actor*,
the revolutionary, the groundbreaker,
the game changer, the rule breaker, the disrupter.

He can sit at the feet of the monks and, for a moment, just be Phally,
the simple boy from the rural village, studying by candlelight.
In those precious moments in the pagoda with the monks,
he is able to revert briefly to his childhood.
He is able to be Phally, the boy who named himself,
sitting, as it were, **with his father**,

who still advises him from the next world.

Recharged, he is able to leave the pagoda and
rush back into the fray of making our world a better place.

You and I might think that it is a bit too much
to imagine **a team of 3** with **no** experience, *no* name recognition,
no branding, *no* connections,
no resources, *no* revenue,
no prospects, *no* backers and
no realistic prospects of gaining any of these,
setting out to change the world.

Too naive.
Too innocent.
Too impossible.
Too ridiculous.

You and I, needless to say, are not Phally.

Despite all the limitations that
he faced while founding the company that would become VP.Start,
he did have one powerful possession.
His superpower.
He was possessed with **a spirit of absolute confidence** in his vision.
It wasn't overconfidence, hubris or pride, in his view.
Phally would argue that, on the contrary,
everyone should feel that way about their dreams.
It is not arrogance to believe in yourself and your journey 100%.
In fact, those who did not feel that kind of "arrogance" had the problem,
not those who did.
His absolutely unshakable belief in himself,

his team and his journey was matched by another equally powerful idea.
He believed and knew that Cambodia needed grid modernization desperately.
Someone would surely eventually achieve grid modernization and
bring Cambodia into the modern age of the global economy,
so, Phally thought,
why not let me be the one who achieves it?

Here.
Now.
Me.

How do innovators achieve the impossible?
What lessons can we take from their unshakable belief in themselves?
We often hear of the proverbial collision of the unstoppable force with
the unmovable object.
As they say, something has got to give.
The seemingly unmovable object was the dinosaur,
the aging, collapsing electric grid infrastructure of Cambodia.
The unstoppable force was Phally,
his team and his vision.
The collision of the two was the founding of VP.Start.

It is not by accident that Phally decided to name the company
that he created with his tiny team, VP (Very Powerful) Start.
Very Powerful Start.
Phally knew that to achieve dramatic change,
transformational, generational change,
it was going to take a very powerful force to move that immovable object.
And that company was going to have to be very powerful from the very start.
How do you make a Very Powerful Start against a seemingly intractable problem?

A conventional approach was certainly not going to provide
the very powerful start that was necessary.
Phally need creativity and innovation to solve the problem of
grid modernization,
solve it rapidly,
affordably and completely.
Results needed to be forthcoming quickly
because he would have to build his business on the back of these results.

Are you *ready to face* intractable problems, impossible obstacles and unbeatable dilemmas?
Are you ready to tackle the immovable object?
And *make it move*?
Are you crazy enough to try something that EVERYONE knows will fail and
resilient enough to gain success against all odds?
If you really believe in the power of innovation, what do you need to be afraid of?



Chapter 5
The Reluctant CEO

"The desire to be a politician should bar you for life from ever becoming one."
–Billy Connoly, comedian

If you applied this same principle to CEOs as to politicians,
Phally would certainly agree.
These is no greater threat to innovation than a CEO who loves his power,
his position,
his salary.
The moment a CEO falls in love with those material successes,
the CEO and the company stop growing.
The rule is absolute: *Grow or die*!
No exceptions, no excuses, nothing more and nothing less!

What is the key to becoming a successful CEO in tech?
According to Phally's view of management,
the key prerequisite for becoming a successful CEO is
never wanting to become one in the first place.
If you start enjoying the power,
the prestige,
the title,
the office,
the perks,
the salary or
any other trappings of being a CEO,
you are not only unsuited for the role, but you will surely cause your business *to fail*.
A good and effective CEO must be pulled into being one almost against their will,

drawn by the power of innovation and
by their unwavering, inescapable commitment to fulfilling their vision.
The CEO must have **a clear vision of the future** that she or he must create,
a goal so crystal clear and so powerful that nothing can stand in the way,
he way, not even **the inconvenience of having to become a CEO** in
order to achieve that goal.

What are your dreams leading you to do?
Are you following those dreams or trying to ignore them?
If Phally is to be believed and if his claims are true,
he was coerced by his dreams of a sustainable future for our world
into becoming a CEO when there was no other option.
Despite himself.
In spite of his desire to live a simple, quiet life.
He knew that the electric grid **must be modernized**.
It was the only way for Cambodia to recover from its dark and troubled
past and have a bright future.
He also knew that incremental change was never going to get the
job done.
As a matter of fact, it would probably allow the situation to
deteriorate further.
A revolution was required.
And revolutions require revolutionaries.

Phally further knew that as long as he was working in a conventional
company working for a traditional boss in a typical hierarchy,
he was not going to be able to effect the change that his ideas insisted on.

Let me reiterate at this point that Phally adamantly and repeatedly states
that he valued and *appreciated his time as an electrician*.
It helped him develop many of the skills that he still employs today.

It gave him a deep understanding of the challenges that electrical engineers
face and *an in-depth knowledge of the limitations of the conventional grid*.
Phally has nothing but respect and a spirit of camaraderie and admiration
for his boss and colleagues from those days,
many of who he still works with in his new role.
But he knew, as deeply as he knew anything,
that **the revolution was coming**,
that it had to be coming,
and **he had to be at the forefront** of that transformation.

When the time for transformation comes, are you ready to make the change?
Are you prepared to take the risk?
So, how does an unknown "CEO" of a barely functioning company with
no name recognition,
no track record and no connections
take his ideas and his prototype product to the EDC,
the electrical utility of Cambodia?
With a lot of bravery, courage and,
perhaps, a bit of blissful ignorance of
just how impossible and quixotic his quest was.
"Fortune favors the bold." *-Ancient Roman proverb*

How *do* you *do* what you know you MUST *do* even though it seems impossible to *do* it?
Better question still,
how does a CEO of an unregistered company persuade utilities and
other customers to buy the beta version of his product,
while he is still developing the final version
and while he is simultaneously implementing it and

gradually expanding it throughout the entire grid system of Cambodia.
We have already spoken of **authenticity**, being yourself.
We have spoken of **brash confidence** in the face of daunting challenges.
These are surely ***critical factors in the success of the SIMA Journey and your journey***, too.

But there is another factor that may even go further to explain the inexplicable.
The crazy success of VP.Start despite all the odds against it.

Absolute commitment, dedication, faithfulness.
Passion bordering on obsession or addiction.
Something you show rather than say.
Something that people see and cannot deny.
A person can be *authentic and still be authentically incompetent*.
A person can be *hyperconfident even though they have no logical right* to be so.
But to have **absolute, untouchable commitment**, that comes from a different place.

Of course, you can be dedicated to a mistaken idea or failed plan.
Cambodia has unfortunate experience with those
who were utterly dedicated to a deadly and failed ideology.
Commitment doesn't prove a vision correct.
But **a lack of commitment** and dedication shows clearly that this vision, right or wrong, **will never come to pass**.

Let's think of a young boy who wants to be a Picasso or a Rembrandt.
The young painter dreams of becoming an artist so one day he goes to his father with his dream.
"May I become an artist?"
His father booms adamantly, "No!"
The son persists, refusing to be discouraged.

The father relents, but just a little.
"Listen to me, Son. You will never become an artist unless you feel you can do nothing else.
If you have even an inkling of doing something else, do that, whatever it is.
If you want fame, fortune, success or reputation, don't even consider becoming an artist.
If you think you need your father's approval to become an artist, you have already failed to become one.

On the other hand,
if becoming an artist consumes your bones so much that
you can think of nothing else, become an artist.
If your every dream is filled with art and in your every waking moment, you think of becoming an artist, then chase your dream.
But if you decide to chase that dream, you must never, ever turn back.
You must make a lifetime commitment at that very moment.
Otherwise, you will have already failed before you have even started."

Let's think, for a moment, of another example,
of a Japanese sumo wrestler who dreams of being a grand champion.
In Japan, future sumo wrestlers enter the sumo world at the age of 15.
They do not attend high school which in Japan means that
they have given up all job prospects and employability outside of the sumo world.
They have chosen to risk everything on the infinitesimal chance of being a sumo wrestler.
On the exceedingly unlikely chance of making a name for themselves.
What are the odds that out of the thousands of wrestlers, each with the same dream,
they will be the one to wear the twisted rope of a grand champion, a yokozuna.
They are trying for the impossible and leaving behind the logical.

As a new sumo recruit, they are treated to endless hazing and indignation.
Forced to wake up at 4:00AM, clean the practice area,
cook breakfast for the higher ranked wrestlers and then
only be allowed to eat what little might remain after everyone else has finished eating.
They are never called by name, only summoned by grunts,
sent on endless errands, even forced to wipe the backsides
of higher ranked wrestlers in some extreme cases.
Everything in the sumo regimen is designed to break their spirits and make them give up.
Or to hone them into absolute single-minded addiction to and obsession with their dreams.
Many do the former.
They give up and retreat under the intense pressure.
But a few refuse to give up their dreams.
After all, *they didn't choose sumo.*
Sumo chose them.

All in, for **a one in a million chance** of becoming a superstar.

If they don't make a name for themselves,
they will spend their lives working in a sumo restaurant as a dishwasher or perhaps working as a janitor in a sumo stable or
a sumo barber or as cleaning staff at the sumo arena.
Demeaning, draining jobs with limited pay.

And yet, fully aware of this harsh reality,
they still give up everything for their dream.
The dream that so rarely comes true.
Why?
Because *the dream compels them* and they have no choice but to follow that dream.

How far are you willing to go for your dreams?
That mindset of the young artist or the sumo wrestler is
the same mindset of dedication that pushed Phally to start VP.Start.
To take the risk that only has a one in a million chance of success.
To jump off the cliff even though everyone says he would never survive the fall.

That is the power that helped him and his dedicated team create the first DRC prototypes,
the first humble attempt to create plug and play solutions
to revolutionize the electric grid while using its existing infrastructure.

Previously, there had always been a conundrum,
an unsolvable catch 22 to the grid modernization in Cambodia.
And across the developing world.
Grid modernization was imperative to gain international investment but without international investment, grid modernization was impossibly expensive.
A complete overhaul of the entire electric grid was needed but **no such funds existed**.

The only way to raise that kind of starting capital would be to get massive investment,
but without a viable electric grid, there was no way to garner investment more than a trickle.

How do you transform a bottleneck into an opportunity?
How do you change the way you view things with positive thinking?
The genius of the DRC technology was to ***see this impasse as an opportunity***.
If it were simply impossible to get the revenue required to revamp and rebuild the electric grid from scratch,

VP.Start decided that they must find a way to modernize the grid
by *leveraging the aging infrastructure* already available.
Furthermore, if they could succeed in this,
they would provide a blueprint for any of the many, many other developing countries
which **similarly** needed comprehensive grid modernization
but **similarly** lacked funds to achieve the transformation.

The DRC concept is deceptively simple.
The technology gathers data from the electric transmission lines regularly and uses that data to spot anomalies and potential outages before they happen.
The "R" of the DRC is "remote" meaning that this data is collected and visualized at a control room using the SCADA system, the RPM Grid.
In other words, the entire system is monitored **remotely**,
potential issues are noted **remotely** and then
solutions are applied, most of the time, **remotely** as well.

Recently in Phnom Penh, a new airport has just been opened in a still, as this is being written, undeveloped farming area.
As a results, the air traffic tower is visible at quite a distance and
has become something of a tourist attraction for locals.
The SCADA system of the power grid is similar in function to the air traffic tower,
overseeing and monitoring from on high,
making decisions,
changing routes and
avoiding problems **in real-time**.
If we stick with this metaphor,
the DRC might be like the radars that provide the data
to enable the air traffic controllers
to make decisions accurately, promptly and efficiently.

Change your thinking. Change your solutions.
Change the grid. Change the world.
The DRC brought state of the art, cutting edge technology
to a place where it was affordable and accessible.
A single DRC unit could be manufactured by VP.Start
for a very limited price and then sold to utilities and electric licensees for a handsome profit.
These DRC units would then provide significant reductions
in **energy waste, outages, and leakages**
while promoting energy efficiency and eliminating redundant work.
Soon, EDC was on board as were more than a 100 other customers.
VP.Start had only just been founded in 2014 and
yet the grid modernization revolution was well under way in 2015,
even before VP.Start had become an officially registered company.

In the very early days, the few members of the VP.Start all
wore several hats and headed several departments.
Everyone did research and development,
everyone did marketing,
everyone did testing and quality control,
everyone did customer service.
This experience would serve the company later as it started to diversify and grow.
The leadership knew the challenges and details of every aspect of the entire VP.Start project.
This is one reason that VP.Start has always insisted on agility and decentralized management.
The CEO and the management team are always available to anyone who
has a suggestion,
strategy,
improvement or
who simply wants to give some feedback.

Whatever your position.
Whatever your age or years of experience.
Whatever your idea.
It can be a little chaotic at times but that is the price of decentralized growth.

As we all know, success doesn't come easy.
So, how far are you willing to go?
Product testing in the early days usually meant loading assorted parts and components into *a small car late at night* and heading off to remote areas of the country to test out equipment. Late nights and rural areas were chosen to minimize the damage if testing turned out to be unsuccessful.
Often testing equipment in **extreme heat or torrential rain**.
Lots of sleepless nights and plenty of failures and flops.
And yet, Phally and his team recalls this time fondly.
The time when VP.Start demonstrated unflinchingly why they had given their company the moniker of **a "very powerful" start.**

It was at this time that the company slogan was created as well.
Innovation through Technology.
From the very beginning,
Phally wanted to make it clear that innovation and technology are **not the same thing**.
Both are mission critical and one, technology,
is **the result** of the other, innovation.
That's why it must be ***"innovation through technology"*** and
never "technology through innovation."
If innovation does not come first, it will never come at all.

In the VP.Start mindset,
technology is something that you can build and
upgrade and
customize and
optimize.
It is constantly changing.
A company can imitate the technology of others and other companies can copy yours as well.
Technology leads to competition.
It is the domain of engineers and technicians and skilled specialists.
VP.Start has no intention of knocking technology but **VP.Start was not founded to be a product-driven tech engineering or manufacturing company**.
Nothing wrong with those kinds of companies.
But they are not VP.Start!

Innovation is creative thinking, outside the box ideas.
It is a series of groundbreaking ideas that transform and revolutionize, that challenge the norms of conventional wisdom.
Building a product like the DRC is technology and manufacturing,
testing and quality control,
sales and marketing, engineering.
On the other hand,
seeing that the key to modernizing the electric grid is
harnessing and leveraging the existing, aging infrastructure,
recognizing that this crumbling infrastructure can be part of the solution
as much as it is part of the problem,
that is innovation.

Technology can come from researching other companies' products, following the latest news and keeping abreast of the most recent trends in the tech world.

It can also be as simple as updating or upgrading your own products.
It can come from any number of sources.
But *technology is, by definition, derivative*.
Again, to be clear, this is not to belittle technology or engineering.

But from the SIMA Journey perspective,
it is not the optimizers and customizers who change the world;
it is **the thinkers and dreamers and innovators**.

True innovation leads to new technologies.
New technologies comes from true innovation.
Always.
Technology is the realm of the followers
while innovation is the kingdom of the lead actors.
To restate the obvious,
I must emphasize again, there is nothing wrong with being a follower.
VP.Start appreciates deeply the skilled team of engineers
who bring their innovations to reality.
At the same time, while Phally may be many things,
he certainly is not a follower.
VP.Start has amazing technology, to be sure,
but it is all through and as a result of innovation.
Innovation through technology.

In his speeches, especially to high school and university students,
Phally focuses a lot of his attention on creative thinking and innovation.
He puts it this way.

"Technology without innovation is little more than toys on the playground.
By the same token, innovation without technology is mere daydreaming and science fiction.

But when innovation leads to technology,
a revolution is unleashed to transform the world.
That is the lofty objective that VP.Start aspires to.
Do you dare allow yourself to be a leader, an innovator, a creator, a thinker, a founder?"

Phally boldly poses the same question to you.
He **insists** that everyone is an innovator by nature.
Innovation is the lifeblood of the universe and
everyone is born into this world with the DNA of innovation.
"DNA" to Phally means "Dreaming New Advancements", by the way.

So, are you ready to take up your birthright and become the innovator that you are?
Are you ready to be radically authentic?
Are you prepared for the challenge of dedicating your life to your dreams without reservation?
Are you willing to have the confidence to believe in yourself, the way the universe believes in you?

Are you ready to start your journey of "innovation through technology"?





Chapter 6

The SIMA Story
The Growing Pains of VP.Start

"Unfortunately, resilience matters in success. I don't know how to teach it to you except for I hope suffering happens to you." -Jensen Huang, CEO of NVidia

Why are times of growth often more challenging than times of failure?
How do you overcome the bottleneck of your own success?
With the implementation of the DRC technologies into the electric grid,
with the providing of SCADA technology to the EDC utility branches throughout Cambodia and
with the increasing partnering with the EDC and other electric licensees,
for the first time in its brief existence,
VP.Start began to experience a degree of success.

Beyond mere survival.
VP.Start started to move from its very powerful start to **the next stage** of its growth.

VP.Start began hiring new employees,
establishing a more permanent headquarters, the Sen Sok Valley Campus,
and improving the DRC through various iterations.
Each of these steps were opportunities and potential pitfalls at the same time.
As with many companies in the early stages,
rapid growth did not always play out smoothly.

Why is it so hard to transition the corporate culture as your business grows?
One challenge that many startups face is the corporate culture transition from the small, close-knit group of friends and family members who started the business
to a burgeoning team of skilled and more specialized experts.
This problem was further exacerbated by Phally's insistence that staff were free to depart VP.Start whenever so inclined.
No coercion to stay.
No pressure to stay.
No encouragement to stay beyond the excitement of innovation itself.
If the thrill of being on the cutting edge of the sustainability revolution *was not enough* to hold your loyalty to VP.Start,
If the desire to make a massive difference in the future of Cambodia *was not enough* to keep your focus on the prize,
it was probably inevitable and even preferable that you leave anyway.
Leave and make room for others
who were more aligned with the vision.

To paraphrase the lyrics of Juice Newton,
"There'll be **no strings** to bind your hands,
Not if **love of innovation** can't bind your heart."

In such a freewheeling and open-minded atmosphere,
even small disputes and disagreements might be a cause
for a valuable team member with **a difficult to replace skill set** and level of
expertise to decide to up and leave.
And to take others along with him or her.
And to speak ill of the company once they had left.
And that is exactly what happened.
More than a few times.

How do you clean up the mess after key team members abruptly leave?
How do you make your workplace a place that employess want to stay at?
One lesson that Phally and the new management team of VP.Start had to
learn the hard way,
was the mission critical nature of **damage control**.

As a wide-eyed true believer in innovation and
the solutions that VP.Start were creating,
it was hard for Phally to imagine that
anyone would ever want to leave the company.
Especially, over such **minor issues**
as working conditions, schedules, promotions and salaries.
Of course, to many team members, these were hardly minor issues.

When you are "all in" as the management team definitely was,
you are tempted to think that everyone else is as all in as you are.
As long as *VP.Start was striving for a sustainable future*,
the management team seemed to think,
All other matters would pale in importance.
That, VP.Start learned, was a seriously erroneous perspective.
How do we avoid the fallacy that
since we care so much about our vision and dreams,
everyone else must feel the same as we do?

Word began to be spread that
Phally might be hard to work for,
salaries might be less than desired,
schedules might be harder than hoped for,
working conditions might be less than ideal and so on.
These innuendos may have been exaggerated and overblown
but it would be hard to deny that
there was some element of truth in the background.
For someone like CEO Phally, who cared nothing about money,
fame,
prestige,
awards or
positions,
the trappings of business success that most others sought after,
how could he be made to understand that others
did not always share his detachment from attachments?

What are some of the challenges of moving to a new location and upgrading your facilities?
The inauguration of the Sen Sok Valley Campus was another major step
forward for VP.Start.
But this undeniable milestone, too,
was not without **its own challenges**.
First of all, at this point in time,
the moniker, "campus", might have been **more aspirational than actual**.
Positive thinking, yes!
A bit of a stretch, yes to that, too!
The "campus" was a small area of warehouses and workshops
in the Sen Sok district of Phnom Penh,
a growing but still somewhat gritty suburb.
Just off of a main street but facing on to on a dirt road.

Surrounded by shops peddling snacks and meals for day laborers.

Sen Sok was a district slowly and noticeably on the rise but at this point,
still struggling to escape from its humble beginnings.

In its own way, it was *a very fitting place* for VP.Start to take its first stand in the business world.

Furthermore, there is no valley in Sen Sok to justify the
name Sen Sok Valley Campus.
The "valley" was added by VP.Start to compare itself to Silicon Valley.
Bold, audacious and visionary but also a little bit over the top!

As a matter of fact, there was no valley and truthfully, no campus,
at this point, either.
At least, not in the normal meaning of the word.
There were some rented spaces in a corrugated compound,
hints of potential growth but still ramshackle and unrefined……

Why is upgrading a product often more challenging
than inventing the product in the first place?

The development of the DRC through its various iterations,
unsurprisingly, was also not without its challenges and issues.
The original DRC concept was a remote control system
to monitor grid data,
to collect the data for grid function improvement and
to pinpoint anomalies and flaws,
to reduce outages or
to stop them before they happened.
Radically simple,
radically cost-effective,
radically groundbreaking.
Plug and play, easy to install,

intuitive to use and adaptable to the existing infrastructure.

However, this last point,
which was a key aspect of the affordability of the grid modernization
solutions of VP.Start,
was also the source of a major potential dilemma.
The electric grid in Cambodia was made up of infrastructure imported
from various providers from all over the world.
Complicated and somewhat haphazard.
Different protocols, different parameters, different specifications.
The original DRC solution would need to be modified
to meet the various needs of each piece of infrastructure,
depending on the company that provided this equipment.
In other words,
the DRC would **have to be modified over and over** again.

Furthermore, at this point,
these modifications would need to be carried out at the "campus",
a campus with limited testing facilities,
limited research and development,
limited quality control,
a limited production line
and a significantly limited, if growing, team of
technical experts.

The revenue required to upgrade these facilities needed to come from selling
the products.
But simultaneously, the products could not be developed without upgraded
facilities.
Outside investment was interested but not ready to commit.
A serious bottleneck was forming that threatened growth and success.

How do you create an innovative business in a conventional world? How do you break the traditional rules of business and take bold risks without being seen as "risky" and "out of control" by investors and stakeholders?

Additionally, while Phally and the VP.Start management team were determined
to upset the apple cart of traditional grid modernization,
they had to deal with the struggles and challenges of
stabilizing and expanding their business at the same time.

Let's be honest, dear readers.

Investors tend to prefer safe investments,
especially when investing in a developing country like Cambodia.

Banks tend to prefer companies
that follow the traditional business growth model.

Government ministries tend to select and support firms
that stay within established patterns and conventional frameworks.

VP.Start refused to play it safe.
And, at times, they paid the price.

Former US President Theodore Roosevelt once said,
"Believe you can and you're halfway there."
While these encouraging words may be true,
this certainly does not mean that each step will be easy or
that you may not feel like giving up at times.

But Phally refused to bend, to change, to give up his perspective.
"Yes, you will feel like giving up.
Sure, you will get discouraged.

Undoubtedly, you will want to quit.
Not might. Not could. You will.
After all, if you never feel like giving up,
it means that you are not accomplishing anything important.

The frustration, the doubt, the discouragement,
the feeling of accomplishing nothing, learning nothing, knowing nothing,
these feelings are natural for anyone that has a growth mindset.
They are universal.

Accept the frustration, welcome the disappointment,
embrace the failures, admit the feelings of despair and discouragement
*but **don't let them consume you**.*
Let these feelings be your fuel to achieve personal and professional exponential growth.
The moment you stop feeling these feelings, you have stopped growing.
Nature presents us with only two choices: grow or die."

"When you feel like you know nothing
and have accomplished nothing
and can do nothing,
you are in good company.
All of the great creative minds,
Socrates and Aristotle,
Confucius and Einstein,
Steve Jobs and Oscar Wilde,
Even Buddha himself,
*and, indeed, **all the great innovators and thinkers of our world felt the same way**.*
The path to enlightenment is the path of self-disillusionment.

If you believe in your ability and rest on your laurels, you will cease to grow.

If you look at the vastness of the universe and the power of nature
And if you dare to dream,
Nothing will be impossible for you."

Do you see your dilemmas and difficulties and predicaments as opportunities?

What are the challenges that you are FORTUNATE enough to face in your personal life?
In your career? In your company's development?

Are you accomplishing something so significant that
at times you feel doubt and discouragement?
Are you ready to turn that into the fuel that rockets you forward?



Chapter 7

The SIMA Story
VP.Start Begins to Raise its Voice

"The first principle is that you must not fool yourself and you are the easiest person to fool." -Richard Feynman, Professor and Nobel Laureate

Why do successful achievements often take us by surprise?
As grid modernization proceeded across Cambodia, a funny thing happened.
A *simultaneously both* unexpected and completely expected development.
The DRC technology in its ever improving and expanding iterations and the SCADA system, the network collecting and displaying the DRC data, started to *dramatically* improve electric grid reliability in Cambodia.

In a very short period of years,
outages had been reduced dramatically,
energy waste had been trimmed,
processes had been streamlined and,
most importantly and most noticeably to the utilities and electricity consumers of Cambodia,
the grid had become more dependable.
Coverage had been expanded and extended
to even more remote areas and,
so by the same token,
the quality of electric service became more equitable.
Businesses were increasingly able to plan and develop products at full capacity,
universities were able to accelerate research and establish connections with academic institutions in other countries,
families were able to live tangibly more comfortable lives,
healthcare became more effective and dependable, especially in remote regions,

construction work became smoother and quicker
and so on and so on.
In other words,
since the electric grid is at **the foundation of almost all aspects of modern life**,
modernizing the electric grid led to significant knock-on improvements
in virtually every facet of quality of life.

Why is grid modernization so mission critical and foundational to success?
What are the key developments that would be foundational to your success?
As the grid became *more energy efficient*,
it also became *more favorable* to the adoption and increase of renewable energy usage.
Furthermore, it became *more affordable* for customers.

For the first time, there was starting to be the stirring of interest in VP.Start's technologies **outside of Cambodia** as well.
Visitors began arriving from ASEAN member nations, as well as, India, Japan, China, Taiwan and even US universities, such as the University of Louisville.
This growth coincided with *a major expansion* of the Sen Sok Valley Campus.

What are the rewards and affirmations that you seek after?
VP.Start, at this time,
began to receive awards, international certifications,
increased government and utility contracts.
VP.Start began to forge connections with investors,
potential collaborative partners,
and leaders of academia and government ministries.
But as always,
Phally was **not very concerned** about the connections or
impressed with the awards garnered.
He was respectful and he appreciated the acclaim but

he was **not that excited** about the people he met or
the awards VP.Start got.
The only reward that mattered, in his view, was being yourself,
a better version of yourself.
He felt could learn as much from making a connection with a street vendor
or a tuk tuk driver
as from a government minister
or a famous professor.
As a matter of fact, he would say that he could probably learn more
from a street vendor or tuk tuk driver than the others
because they have never been *customised and compromised*
by society, academia, government or industry.
They are true to themselves.

Be that as it may, VP.Start was making a "very powerful" start,
moving forward aggressively,
developing new products,
meeting new customers and
chasing the dream of a reliable and affordable electric grid
for all Cambodians in all parts of the country.

It was an amazing turn of events,
a spectacular, nearly miraculous, transition from a company
without anything going for it except powerful ideas
to turn into a burgeoning success story,
a veritable "out of nowhere" success story,
a company growing from the ground up,
from scratch, rapid fire, exponentially.
This growth would have surely shocked and awed anyone else except Phally
but for him, the only question had never been whether VP.Start would
succeed or not,

but **why was success taking so long?**

He knew that VP.Start had the answers *in-house and in hand*,
to grid modernization
in a plug and play format with the DRC technology and the SCADA system,
a system that could often be installed *in fifteen minutes or less*
and that used *existing infrastructure* to keep costs
at less than **one-hundredth of traditional and conventional grid modernization** strategies.

With home grown innovations like these already being deployed,
Phally knew that it was just a matter of time
before these innovations would become mainstream and
VP.Start **would become a major player.**
Confidence has never been an issue for Phally.
His frustration was that success was not forthcoming **immediately**.
What was the bottleneck?
Branding?
Advertising?
Market research?
As important as all of these certainly are,
CEO Phally realised that the real problem
didn't lie in any of these areas.

VP.Start **needed a voice**,
a powerful voice to match their very powerful start.
A voice full of passion and energy,
a voice replete with wisdom and storytelling,
with philosophy and the power of persuasion.
VP.Start needed a mesmerizing, captivating, enthralling **voice.**
And Phally knew full well that **that voice** would have to come from Phally,

himself.
Technology could be developed and tested by *others*,
innovations could be implemented by *others*,
DRC and SCADA systems and RPM Grids could be optimized by *others*,
plans could be made by *others*,
projects could be inaugurated and organized by *others*,
but at the end of the day,
Phally was going to have **be the one**
to raise a powerful, articulate, positive **voice** on behalf of VP.Start.

What do you care enough to RAISE YOUR VOICE about?
A conventional voice would never do.
Never be sufficient.
Never be adequate.
How could VP.Start tell the world that it was an innovative firm,
prepared to break the rules,
embrace nonconformity,
take risks,
go completely outside the comfort zone and
challenge all traditional norms and conventional approaches,
indeed, how could VP.Start **dare to claim** that,
unless it had an **revolutionary and unconventional** voice?

If you believe in yourself, follow your dreams, refuse to concede and become yourself,
You will have amazing innovation and undeniable success.
Are you expecting success or will it take you by surprise?









Grid System
System
Automation
Check

Chapter 8

The SIMA Story
VP.Start Begins to Spread Its Wings

"Until you spread your wings, you'll have no idea how far you can fly!" -Napoleon

When it is time to take the plunge, are you prepared to jump?
Or will you be left behind?
As VP.Start started to grow and gain more success in business,
Phally started to face three new predicaments,
challenges that he had never had to navigate before,
obstacles that were actually **golden opportunities disguised as difficulties**.

First of all,
if the grid could be modernized and made data-driven **and**
that data could be harnessed for simulations and applications,
was that **the final destination?**
Or were there *more innovative solutions*
still to be built on the foundation of a reliable energy source?

Secondly,
since VP.Start had been able to deploy grid ecosolutions
that were already starting to work powerfully for Cambodia,
why wouldn't they ***work in other countries, as well,***
especially developing countries that were faced with similar grid issues?

Finally, and perhaps most critically,
how was VP.Start ever going to become the company that it must become
without Phally **developing a powerful, persuasive voice in English** that was,

as he likes to say, "beyond native speaker level"?
This was not a criticism of the Khmer language, per se, but a clear recognition
that on the global stage, *English was mission critical.*
Not just good and proper English, correct and fluent English,
not even native speaker English.
After all, there were already hundreds of millions of native speakers all over the world.
Merely matching their ability was ***never*** going to be good enough for Phally.

One the first question,
as it became increasingly clear to Phally and the VP.Start management team
that grid modernization based on the DRC technology was assured to be a success in Cambodia in conjunction with the Cambodian utility, EDC,
a new question arose in their minds.
Is that enough? *Have we already arrived at the end of the journey?*
Surely not.
So, what is the next step once the grid has become modernized, smart and intelligent?

Where do we go next?

The VP.Start team began to see that grid modernization was just getting the ball rolling, if you will.
Laying the foundation.
Taking the first step.

After all, until you have a reliable source of electricity,
how can you even **consider** attracting meaningful external investment?
How can you even **try** to incorporate more renewables into the power system?
How can you even **start** to move towards energy independence?
How can you even **imagine** the education sector beginning to leverage the power of WiFi and the internet,

machine learning and the advancements of AI,
if they can't depend on their source of electricity?
How can you even **hope** for industry to grow and expand
when deadlines are missed and product development is delayed,
testing is made unreliable and pilot projects fail
due to the lack of a dependable energy source?
How can you even **dream** of families living a comfortable and convenient life
when appliances are undependable,
air conditioning is exorbitantly unafforable
and electric lighting is unstable and unreliable?
Consider, try, start, imagine, hope, dream.
All of these verbs were waiting on reliable electricity to make them operable.

As the VP.Start team had come to see,
everything depended on electricity and a ample, reliable supply thereof.
But if a lack of reliable electricity hampers and hinders, damages and ruins everything,
then, what does having a dependable supply of energy bring to the table?
What benefits accrue from having the solid foundation of a sustainable grid?
Allow me to answer that:
Once you have successfully modernized and **smartened** the grid,
made it data-driven and dependable,
affordable and equitable across the spectrum,
and made power outages infrequent and
by harnessing the DRC technology,
easy to spot and solve remotely and instantly when they do happen,
Why do we need to stop there?
Now that you have a solid foundation to build on,
why not start building *skyscrapers of innovative ideas*?

What are the real-world problems that you face personally?
What do your ideas and innovation do to alleviate these issues?
As we know but occasionally seem to forget,
it is pretty *nearly impossible* to solve a problem
until you know clearly and exactly what the problem is.
Fortunately, Phally and the VP.Start team were not just innovators and researchers.
They didn't live in a fictional world of affluence and comfort.
They were also ordinary electricity consumers just like everyone else.
They similarly experienced the same hardships and inconveniences
when power was down as everyone else did.
They faced the same challenges in garnering investment and
meeting deadlines and
testing products.
They also faced the same inconveniences in their personal home lives
that came from dealing with unreliable energy sources.
This *deep familiarity with the real-world problems*
of a third world country like Cambodia
is what especially empowered them to get off the fence and
make an assault on these problems proactively and relentlessly.
In other words, they pushed grid modernization as if their lives depended on it, because, in a sense, their lives did.

What are the benefits and drawbacks of urban life in your city?
How can we augment the benefits while mitigating the drawbacks?
In the same way,
Phally and his team were urban dwellers,
living in the **beautiful, challenging, glorious and frustrating city of Phnom Penh**,
a city with its own unique set of colonial charm, riverfront beauty and suburban sprawl.

Phnom Penh is a rapidly growing capital city, *a beacon for radical urbanization*,
in a country that is still largely rural and agricultural for the most part.
Phnom Penh is increasingly a city of skyscrapers and towering apartment buildings,
of old alleys and lanes juxtaposed with modern highways and major roads,
a city with a modern core area around the royal palace along the Tonle Sap riverfront
that is full of trendy bars and
international restaurants and
high end hotels as well as
backpacker establishments.

A second layer of Phnom Penh spreads out from the riverfront area
with some exclusive neighborhoods and
gated communities and
boutique shops spreading out in a semi-circle from the central area.
As you get further away from the royal palace-oriented center, however,
you soon start to get into working class neighborhoods,
pothole covered roads, and
less than well-maintained infrastructure.
In some areas, to be brutally honest,
Phnom Penh is little more than shanty towns with open sewers and
dwellings cobbled together from reused materials on the edges of polluted canals .

How do we handle the mixed blessing that is urbanization?
Phnom Penh, not surprisingly,
has the best education and job opportunities in Cambodia by far.
Salaries are higher and workplaces are better, cleaner and safer.
But it is certainly not always a completely rosy picture,
not for the majority of city dwellers.

Traffic for instance can be horrific in the suburbs.
Morning rush hour and especially evening rush hour traffic can easily turn a 15 minute ride
into 90 minutes or 2 hours of torture and wasted time.
Public transportation, to the extent that it exists at all, is a fleet of imported city buses
which if anything, add to the extreme traffic congestion.
How much productivity is lost due to time wasted in commuting?

Waste services are also rudimentary in many areas,
schedules are undependable and the quality is unreliable.
This is said, not to show disrespect to the valiant workers who take on this thankless task.
We have the utmost respect for the work that they do
but the reality is that it is insufficient.
This often leads to unsanitary conditions,
health issues,
safety concerns and
unpleasant odors and
uncomfortable urban living,
especially in the outlying areas.
Not surprisingly, this also takes a toll on valuable tourism income.
Littering is also a serious problem that is,
to some extent, a side effect of unreliable waste management.
How can health and safety be maintained in such sub-optimal conditions?
As is the case in a lot of rapidly growing cities,
car parking is yet another major problem, especially in the city center.
Due to lack of legitimate, authorized parking spaces in Phnom Penh,
motorists often choose to park on the sidewalk, at the roadside
or in illegal spots like in front of bus stops or hospitals.
Needless to say,
this makes the already unpleasant traffic situation

even more congested and inefficient.

Building management in apartment complexes is another critical urban life comfort issue.
We want to live in buildings that have *reliable elevators*,
dependable security systems,
effective water and electric power delivery,
reliable smoke alarm systems and
convenient parking.
Each one of these is a challenge in a developing country like ours that lacks infrastructure and cutting edge architectural know how.
Phally and his VP.Start team members have had the unpleasant experience of water running out mid-shower,
of elevators breaking down in tall buildings and
of parking issues that simply won't go away.
As urban dwellers and lovers of Phnom Penh,
Phally and the VP.Start team seek boldly innovative solutions
to some of these pitfalls
that they themselves also face.

The challenges of urban life in a developing country are huge and growing.
But…

"But" seems to be the most commonly used word in Phally's vocabulary.
"There is this intractable problem **but…**"
"This seems like an impossible challenge **but…**"
"We don't have the resources to accomplish this plan **but…**"
"But" is a word that indicates refusal to accept defeat.
"But" is a word that says that despite all the evidence to the contrary, there must be a way to make this work.
And **VP.Start will find that way!**
As VP.Start was achieving the early stages of a more reliable, sustainable,

affordable and equitable smart grid as a foundation,
it was time for another **"but".**
A big "but"!

Urban life is not always convenient, comfortable, safe, healthy or affordable.
I might add, this is hardly a situation unique to Cambodian cities like Phnom Penh.
It is rare indeed to find a city that does not suffer from at least some of these challenges.
To CEO Phally, these daunting challenges of the urban experience looked like opportunities.
Golden opportunities.

After all, *the bigger the problem,*
the larger the solution that needs to be created.
Phally looked directly at these daunting urban problems
and decided that VP.Start would **take those problems head on**.
VP.Start would make solutions,
big solutions,
transformative solutions,
global solutions.
Nothing more and nothing less!
VP.Start was going to have to **create solutions for Smart cities**.
After all, the ultimate goal of VP.Start had never been just grid modernization.
They were moving towards an overarching sustainability system.
There could be no true sustainability unless there were sustainable, liveable cities.

Think about it like this:
What good is a reliable electric grid if it doesn't improve the lives of users?
What good are smart cities without smart citizens?
What good are smart homes without smart homeowners?

Another challenge that Phally and the VP.Start team faced personally on a regular basis
was trying to live a comfortable, cost-effective and safe home life.
There was a definite need for home automation.
Greater efficiency in home electric usage.
Greater cost savings and less waste.
Greater dependability and safety.
A sustainability revolution.

Specifically, electricity in Cambodia,
while getting more affordable, was still far from cheap.
Inthis situation, the last thing that Phally and his associates could afford to do
was waste money and waste electricity with inefficient devices.
There was **a world to change and**
so little time to change it.
Inefficient,
wasteful,
unsafe,
unhealthy,
uncomfortable homes
were simply unacceptable.
This challenge, the challenge of smart homes,
led the SIMA Journey of VP.Start in yet a new direction,
The direction of the Internet of Things and IoT devices.

Phally knew that he, like most hardworking people,
didn't have enough time to sit around and monitor his devices on a constant basis just to make sure that he wasn't wasting electricity.
A commodity, electricity, that Cambodia could ill-afford to waste.
He didn't have the time or the inclination to constantly check his appliances to ascertain and verify that cost-savings were being maximized.

Phally needed **devices that managed and monitored themselves**
and only subsequently reported to him, as necessary
.
IoT devices that could make adjustments independently
based on *data-driven insights that were self-collected* and acted on.
Phally needed **devices and appliances that worked for him**,
not the other way around.
This was the seed that sprouted the SIMA Home Initiatives concept.
And once again, as Phally tended to think,
if it could be **done right**, why couldn't it be **done big**?

The "CEO Phally strategy":
Find a successful and *affordable* approach to home automation,
office automation,
business automation,
hospital automation,
every kind of automation,
and keep expanding the plan,
increasing the savings,
improving energy independence.
"If at first you don't succeed, it was probably because the plan was not big enough."

So you have the wisdom to solve a million problems,
But do you have the wisdom to solve them all with only ONE solution?
This, logically, led to the yet another stage of the SIMA Journey.
So, yes, we are developing an intelligent grid with plug and play technology and using existing infrastructure for cost-savings.
So, yes, we are building a reliable urban framework on the foundation of that now reliable electric grid.
So, yes, we are expanding the power of data-driven technology that

has become possible thanks to a more dependable and equitable grid.
So, yes, we are pushing that power out into home automation
by means of IoT devices and data acquisition.
But, in spite of all these new "missions" of VP.Start,
Phally and his "clan" couldn't help but feel that **something was still missing**.

He needed something to bring it all together into one framework.
One integrated system, one network.
A Universal Connectivity Network.
One app to bring grid modernization, intelligent cities,
home automation and AI capabilities under one giant umbrella.

Just as Phally had been nicknamed the "alien" by his classmates,
this universal app would be called **AlienCheck.**

Just for a moment,
Stop and think about the courage,
the chutzpah,
the boldness bordering on madness,
required for a young, growing company like VP.Start
to even consider attempting to create a universal app.

Simply creating any app,
let alone an app with chat features,
an IoT device connectivity app,
an AI chatbot app,
an app to monitor the electric grid,
an e-commerce app,
an internet banking app,
an app to monitor and improve urban life,
an app to facilitate home automation
And then combining all these features into one UNIVERSAL app,

was such an epic task that **even some team members thought it was crazy.**
To create even one of these apps was a very daunting challenge.
To try to create them all, simultaneously,
under one UCN (Universal Connectivity Network)
was such a herculean task that it almost required a suspension of reality
to even consider it.
And yet, Phally and his team **not only considered it,**
they insisted on it.
Without an overarching framework to tie everything together,
It couldn't really be called a sustainability **system**!
Are you willing to be "crazy" for your dreams?
Fortunately, Phally was and is, more that willing to suspend reality for a while
if reality threatens to get in the ways of his plans and dreams.
He has *never minded being called "crazy"* or considered foolish.
If Phally ever worried about such things,
VP.Start would have never started at all, let alone, very powerfully.

Others could say why this is impossible or that is unachievable,
talk about the improbability of even accomplishing a sliver of what
Phally was setting out to do.
Phally would *hear out* all the naysayers and doubters,
with all their logical and reasonable doubts,
and then he would just accomplish,
just achieve,
just succeed,
just perform.
This has always been the crazy miracle of VP.Start.
Somewhere beyond the world of logic and reason,
Phally would determine that something needed to be done
and then he and his team would be **arrogant and foolish** enough to do it.
When you innovatively solve the problems that trouble you personally,

Why not share these solutions with the world?
Do you dare to try to make the world a better place?
Another core aspect of the VP.Start perspective and the "missions"
of VP.Start is how the solutions start at the very **personal level**,
spread to the **local level,**
rapidly become **national and regional solutions**
and then eventually move on to **the global stage**.

As mentioned before, grid modernization,
intelligent cities,
data-driven IoT devices and
creating a universal connectivity app,
were at their core, solutions to daily life problems of ordinary Cambodians.

Ordinary Cambodians… like Phally and his management team.
The entire team.

The grind of traffic jams,
the frustration of undependable electricity,
the discomfort and health issues of poor waste management,
the lost money from their pockets due to inefficient appliances and electric use,
these were not "academic" research topics divorced from daily reality.
These were **real world problems** for which VP.Start began to craft **real world solutions**.

When your business ideas begin to grow, is it time to consolidate your successes?
To rest on your laurels?
To count your money when you're sitting at the table?
Or is it time to press your advantage and go for broke?

As the solutions began to take shape, to take hold and succeed,
they started to become adopted as *local solutions*,
at first in a piecemeal fashion,
by *local* business and *local* communities and *local* branches of the EDC.
With each new pilot project like the SIMA City Initiatives in TaKhmao town,
a suburb of Phnom Penh in neighboring Kandal Province,
with each new company that started adopting VP.Start automation solutions and
with each new successful integration of DRC technology into existing EDC infrastructure,
word was starting to spread
and continuing to spread.
VP.Start was starting to make a difference *at the local level*.
True national recognition was not far behind.

Especially, thanks to the well-established and still growing
working relationship with the EDC and its branches all over Cambodia,
VP.Start was starting to become a flagship company in grid modernization for Cambodia.
The deeper point was not missed or lost on VP.Start.

If you succeed locally, why not go national?
If you succeed nationally, why not go international?

What if the best way to follow up success is more and more success,
more accelerated,
more escalated,
more exponential success?
After all, if local solutions could be scaled up nationally,
and if people in other countries were facing similar difficulties as those

of Cambodia, countries across ASEAN,
South Asia and indeed throughout the developing world,
why wouldn't it make sense to scale up what VP.Start was doing internationally?

Which, of course, is exactly what started happening,
be it through pilot projects in India and Malaysia,
visiting students from the US and the Philippines,
pitching conferences in Taiwan and Germany,
collaborative meetings in China,
and with Japanese, Singaporean and Korean investors.

Phally was quickly becoming a regular fixture at Phnom Penh international airport.
For the first time,
VP.Start was beginning to have a nascent international reputation, presence and branding.

Two of the three big challenges were already being met head on.

The first challenge had been,
what to do with the reliable power that accrued from a grid
that had become more dependable,
more affordable,
more equitable and
more efficient,
not to mention, more data-driven,.

What kind of architecture was VP.Start going to build on that foundation?
As we have already seen in detail above,

a variety of missions and initiatives were inaugurated.

The second challenge had been,
as these initiatives became more established, substantiated and verified through successful implementation and deployment experiences,
which aspects of the overarching SIMA Journey were primed
to be expanded and **scaled up to the global level**?
As we have just seen,
VP.Start dealt with the question aggressively and proactively.

But **a third challenge still remained**, perhaps the most daunting challenge of the three.
For VP.Start to succeed in the long term,
it would *not be enough* to have amazing ecosolutions and missions,
or even *not be enough* to spread them out on the global stage.
VP.Start's success or failure to gain permanent success, would come down to a critical factor,
a core issue that *could not be ignored* or overlooked.

VP.Start need to have a powerful, persuasive, positive and particular voice!

You have amazing ideas, groundbreaking solutions, innovative plans. There is no doubt about that. It is your birthright as a human, the gift of nature.
And furthermore, your ideas belong on the global stage, transforming the world.

BUT, do you have the voice,
The Powerful,
Persuasive,

Positive and
Particular Voice
To bring your dreams to fruition?



Chapter 9

The SIMA Story
An Ordinary Voice or a SIMA Voice?

"I like hearing myself talk.
I often have long conversations by myself,
and I am so clever that sometimes I don't understand a word of what I am saying."
-Oscar Wilde, author and humorist

How often do you talk to yourself? When you do talk to yourself, do you listen?

The time had come for VP.Start to raise a SIMA voice.
There really was no choice.
VP.Start had the innovative solutions.
They were developing a local branding and name recognition.
They had solutions that needed to **go global**.
That were suited to **go global**.
They were starting to have supporters, stakeholders and to get positive word of mouth.

But this word of mouth was in Khmer.
No disrespect intended to a beautiful language with an ancient pedigree.
An ancient language,
a historically significant language,
but hardly a global business language.

VP.Start was going to need to raise its SIMA voice,
and raise it loudly and proudly in English.
How do you plan to learn how to raise your voice? In English?
One solution to this situation might be to bring in
English-speaking outsourced consultants.
International spokespeople.
Public speakers or speaking coaches from abroad.

There was a key, inescapable problem with this approach.
Outsiders cannot bring the powerful **inside story** of VP.Start to life.
VP.Start was and is a proudly Cambodian company.
This is not about racism or discrimination on the part of VP.Start;
it is about giving talented young Khmer students and graduates greater opportunities.

Think about this:
If the voice of the company was not Cambodian,
If the voice came from some overseas speakers,
How could VP.Start focus attention on its **home-grown solutions**,
created **in-house** by Cambodian engineers and tech professionals
who graduated from the Cambodian education system?
Before you raise your voice, do you know what you want to say?
If you don't know what you want to say,

How can you avoid having **an ORDINARY voice**?
How could VP.Start successfully make the case
for its "MADE IN CAMBODIA, MADE FOR THE WORLD" solutions?
How could VP.Start **reinforce** its position that its solutions and innovations
Are NOT imported from abroad or copied from other companies?

How do you raise your voice with originality and authenticity?
Getting quality English speakers was not the biggest issue, by any means.
VP.Start's amazing innovations came from the CEO and Founder Phally.
Other team members could talk
about specifications and testing regimens,
About compliance and technical parameters,
About all the critical details that made up the ecosolutions of VP.Start,
But they could not give **the big picture sustainability system view**.
They could not give the overarching data-driven AI-infused digitized view,
The philosophical underpinnings that brought everything together.

And if the team that knew VP.Start so well could hardly do that,
how could outside consultants do that?

If you don't raise your voice, who will?
If you don't raise it now, when?
The team could sell products and promote services
but VP.Start had never been focused on that.
They might be able to help customers to start to understand VP.Start's products,
but the goal was never that
but always,
To let customers **feel, believe in and remember** VP.Start.
Deep technical understanding by customers was neither required nor encouraged.

My wife informed me recently that she wants an Apple iPhone.
I asked her why she preferred this phone to other options.
She didn't give me specifications or
functions or
technical information.
She said, "I **believe in** Apple products. I **feel** like they are high quality."
That is the vibe that VP.Start is seeking as well.
But that could only come from a powerful and persuasive big picture voice
And that voice has to come from the Founder.
Phally was going to have to improve his English ability.

Why do we need to improve our communication skills to the true world-class level?
We are talking about Phally so
Let's be clear.
For this task,
Fluent speaker,
second language speaker,
nearly native speaker,
functionally native speaker:
these were not going to be sufficient.
The goal was simple and simply difficult: **world-class communicator.**
The SIMA Voice.

At this time, VP.Start made its first steps towards having an online presence, as well.
Building a website from scratch.
Developing a Facebook following.
Sometimes in Khmer, sometimes in English, sometimes both.
In these early stages,
everything was pretty rudimentary.
It was definitely a case of on the job training.

But, if you have the VP.Start mindset of creativity and positivity,
And are naive enough or
arrogant enough to believe in yourself,
the impossible might just be a little less impossible than you think.

What is your online footprint and why is it distinctive?
If you cannot show your innovative nature in your online presence,
who will believe it offline?
Especially on Facebook, this was a time to document every meeting,
every visit to utility offices in the provinces,
every visitor to the campus, both domestic and international.
Not for branding,
not for promotion,
just for practicing raising the SIMA Voice.

A strange and new phenomenon had begun;
gradually the number of Facebook post viewers was increasing
and these viewers were increasingly *industry leaders,*
regional tech players,
government ministers and
university professors.
Not that Phally particularly cared about the number or positions of his viewership.

Remember this:
For a powerful SIMA Voice,
Sometimes what you choose NOT to say
is just as important as
what you choose to say.
VP.Start **decided NOT** to use Facebook posts to focus on products and services.
After all, who wants to read advertising and sales pitches masquerading

as legitimate posts?
Furthermore, VP.Start **determined NOT** to use Facebook posts for self-promotion.
Awards gained,
sales targets reached,
profits accrued,
customers acquired,
these were **not** topic for Facebook posts.

When you have your chance to speak to the world,
your 15 minutes of fame,
what do you feel compelled to say?
Facebook was the place to tell the SIMA Journey.
The **Story** of VP.Start,
The **Ideology** of VP.Start,
The **Methodology** of VP.Start and
The **Amazing Innovations** of VP.Start.
To raise up the **SIMA Voice**.

From the earliest days, the focus was largely and intentionally on Ideology.
What were the guiding principles of VP.Start?
Why did Phally decide to found the company in the first place?
What was the difference between innovation and technology?
Between being yourself and being a follower, a copy, an echo?
What does true sustainability mean?
The theory was simple.
Some people may want to know about the latest products.
A few people may even want to know about the specifications and technical details.
On the other hand,
everyone wants to know **how to live** more sustainably,
how to work more creatively,

how to manage their lives more effectively,
how to become the best possible version
of themselves.

In other words,
The SIMA Voice must take the principles of grid modernization
and data-driven technology,
of digital twins and AI-infusion,
of data acquisition and digitization,
and use philosophy and common sense and powerful quotes
to *make these concepts meaningful to lay people*.

The culmination of this strategy was a recurring Facebook post article that Phally created:
"From Cambodia With Love"
A couple of examples will suffice to give you the concept:

From Cambodia With Love (Part 13)
Thoughts on a Business Trip in Vietnam

"We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust our sails." -Dolly Parton

The wind blows. And then it stops. It changes directions.
The "tech warrior" knows that wind is energy, energy that can push you forward or slow you down.
The wise man doesn't try to fight against the wind.
The wiser man lets the wind lead him forward.
The wisest man of all tries to harness the wind and use Big Data to predict what direction and what time it will blow.
The old song says that "the answer is blowing in the wind."

Are you ready to catch the next big wind?

And, one more…..
From Cambodia With Love
Part 20

How do you feel when you think about the future? Are you excited or afraid?

Some people feel afraid when they think about the future.
They think that technology will leave them behind.
They believe that innovation can be dangerous.

Often, they are especially afraid of AI.
They hear stories that AI will take over the world, taking away human freedom and authority.

However, the "tech warrior" is not afraid of the future.
He understands these feelings, of course.
Technology must be handled wisely and harnessed to benefit everyone equally.

VP.Start promises not just to bring "innovation through technology "
but to implement it carefully, safely and sustainably.
The future is coming, whether we are ready or not.
VP.Start wants to help us be ready to greet a future without fear.
Each entry start with either a quote or a thought-provoking question.
We are then faced with a challenge and we are informed what
1) the ordinary person and
2) the tech warrior
would do to handle that situation.
This is never meant as a put down of the "ordinary" response
or arrogant praise of "the tech warrior".
It is simply a unique way for CEO Phally
to show **the uniqueness of the SIMA philosophy**.

At the end, there is a question or statement to push the reader into action.

These post ultimately reached 100 editions and became quite popular.
There were internal calls at VP.Start at times
to make these posts **less philosophical** and
more commercial and product-oriented,
but **Phally refused** to do so.

The goal was **never** product promotion,
advertising,
sales and marketing
or even company branding and name recognition.
The **sole goal was to express VP.Start's unique ideology**
to Cambodia and the wider world.
This inclusiveness and lack of sales pressure made the series unique and ubiquitous,
soon being passed around in ever widening circles.

Just the kind of counter-intuitive approach that VP.Start always embraces.

If you could meet anyone,
pitch your idea to anyone,
chat with anyone,
Who would you choose to meet?

VP.Start also started raising their voice by ramping up conference and meetings.
Meetings with utilities.
Meetings with customers.
Meetings with stakeholders and supporters.
Meetings with potential investors.

Meetings with educators and school administrators.
Meetings with government ministers.
Meetings with international organizations.
Meetings with students.

Why so many meetings?

Not to promote a product, **nor to** secure brand loyalty.
Not to publicize a service, **neither to** build up a customer base.
Not to garner investment **or to** build ROI or attract support or earn a profit.
Not to leverage that powerful SIMA voice for
any of aspirations that companies normally leverage
a powerful voice for.

The purpose was **much simpler and much more complex**.
Much more conventional and yet simultaneously innovative and unique.
VP.Start had something to say, and had to say it.
A message of sustainability to change the world.
A message of the hope of innovation through technology.
A message of the SIMA Journey.
Silence was not an option.

Chapter 10

The SIMA Story
Difficulties Along the SIMA Journey

"I took the (road) less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."
-Robert Frost, poet

When you make the decision to be yourself in all your uniqueness,
Are you prepared to deal with those who may not approve?
By this point, VP.Start has been experiencing continuous,
if somewhat haphazard, off and on growth.
By embracing the strategy of not being strategic,
by choosing to be idea-driven rather than product-driven,
by opting to adopt an innovation-driven rather than profit-driven business model and
by insisting on a corporate culture of radical decentralization,
VP.Start had certainly selected "the road less traveled."

While this approach impressed outsiders greatly and stoked interest in VP.Start,
Some insiders were less enthused.

While CEOPhally ignored awards and eschewed honors,
keeping his focus squarely on the Big Picture solutions of the sustainability system,
There were some team members who didn't appreciate
his *responsibility-over-profits* approach.
There were those who felt that a company should be focused on
promoting products,
selling services,
cornering markets,

making government connections and above all,
garnering massive profits.

In the normal business world, these were hardly radical ideas.
But CEO Phally adamantly and steadfastly refused to allow VP.Start to be a mere normal business.

Do you choose or refuse to do business as normal?
Why do you choose the road that you choose?

Normal businesses sell products, but *innovative businesses tell* stories.
Normal businesses garner ROI, but *innovative businesses make* a difference.
Normal businesses work for traction,
market share,
increased profitability.
VP.Start was working to change the world and make it more sustainable.
Not surprisingly, not all team members were not on board with this attitude.

A group of VP.Start employees, referred to by CEO Phally,
as "invaders, slanderers, toxic, ungrateful people",
decided to see if they could start their own company, have success and make profits on their own.
Unfortunately, they decided to take code,
product details,
specifications and
Some of the VP.Start technical staff with them.
They thought that they could copy the success and imitate the products of VP.Start
without the burden of an innovative spirit or sense of responsibility.

Why do we often learn more from failures and problems than from successes?

CEO Phally learned 3 valuable if painful lessons from this setback.

First, innovation **cannot be stolen**.
Products *can be copied,*
services *can be imitated*,
business plans *can be mimicked.*
But innovative ideas and creativity are **impossible to echo or steal.**
How can the non-innovative person expand the innovative ideas of another?

Who do you trust and how much do you trust them?
Second, VP.Start learned a vital lesson about trust.
"Trust but verify."
CEO Phally loved each team member,
including those that chose to betray his trust,
but he also learned that unlimited trust and
unfettered access leads to problems.
Cybersecurity is not just designed to **protect us from outside malicious and nefarious actors**;
a similar scrutiny, sadly, must be applied to **the internal team**.
People tend to do what they think is in their personal best interest
rather than what is in the best interest of the team.
If we assume by default that people will always behave properly,
we are certain to be disappointed.
But finding **the right balance of "trust" and "verify"** is never easy.

Perhaps, the VP.Start management was so convinced,
of the power of their ideas,
the persuasive power of innovation through technology,
that they forgot that
some people operate profit-driven rather than idea-driven lives.
While everyone has the opportunity to be an innovator,

some choose the less challenging, materialism-driven life of the follower, not the lead actor.

Third, CEO Phally discovered the truth of the famous quote,
"Whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger."
While the loss of valuable staff, some with difficult to replace skills and experience, the loss of intellectual property, which would take time to recover from, and the loss of trust, perhaps **the hardest blow of all for a "family"** like VP.Start,
While all of these setbacks slowed down VP.Start for a while, these dilemmas were **unable to seriously damage the growth trajectory** of VP.Start.

What problems and failures have made you stronger?
As a matter of fact, the departure of those team members
who didn't share the unique VP.Start perspective,
meant that **those who remained had actively chosen to align themselves** with this radical way of doing business,
for a brighter future for our country and our world.
As a result, the familial atmosphere of the team became stronger than ever.
In that way, while the setbacks caused frustration and difficulties,
in the long run, they were beneficial and made VP.Start stronger.

Or maybe, to put in a more CEO Phally ideological framework,
We cannot always control what happens to us,
BUT
We can control how we respond to less than favorable outcomes.

How do you react to those who disappoint, harm or betray you?
What does your reaction tell you about yourself?

The "slanderers" left VP.Start and tried to start their own business,
make their own products,
accumulate their own customers and
garner their own profits.
At times, they spoke ill of VP.Start and tried unsuccessfuly to cast doubts on the effectiveness of very products that
they had helped to develop and market.

Under the circumstances,
you might expect that the VP.Start team would hold a grudge or even take legal action.
And since they are humans, not angels,
they did hold a grudge at times.
They did consider legal action, as well.
CEO Phally, himself, was not above having moments of anger
with those who had shown themselves to be ungrateful and dishonest.

And yet, those moments never last very long.
VP.Start's core vision is to make a brighter, better future for Cambodia
with a **more reliable** grid and
a **more sustainable, greener** and
more energy independent power system.
No time to dwell on bitter feelings and bad memories.

One further aspect of this sustainability system encompasses creating better paying, higher quality job opportunities for Khmer young people.
The VP.Start team is clear and united that
if the ungrateful "rivals" and "rebels" are able to create new jobs
for qualified students and recent graduates,
we would be happy and unhesitating to wish them success.
The good of the country comes first.
In fact, at the end of the day,

Phally **hopes that they achieve their dreams** and find what they seek.
Still, and without bitterness or malice,
Phally has determined unflinchingly
that they will **never be allowed to return** to the fold of VP.Start.

This is not based on anger or
pettiness or
jealousy.
The former team members made a conscious, intentional decision to reject the VP.Start ideology and methodology in pursuit of greater financial rewards.
They are not to be criticized for this,
but their decision must be respected and bear consequences.
They made a choice and in CEO Phally's view that is **the one choice that cannot be undone**.
Mistakes can be forgiven, of course,
errors can be handled, to be sure, and
failures can be learned from, without a doubt
but **the decision to reject innovation** and leave
the SIMA Journey is final and irreversible.

Have you ever felt betrayed in a business or other context?
How did you handle the feelings?
Are you so dedicated to your goals that these setbacks cannot derail your journey?
Are there lines that cannot be crossed and decisions that are irreversible for you?

Hard times will come, Challenges will appear. You may feel discouraged or disparaged or dismayed.
HOW WILL YOU RESPOND?

Chapter 11

The SIMA Story
The SIMA Journey to the Global Stage

"To understand the actual world as it is, not as we should wish it to be, is the beginning of wisdom."
-Bertrand Russell, philosopher and professor at the University of Cambridge

The artist, Picasso, once drew a portrait of a customer in less than a minute.
He asked the customer to pay him $10M for the picture.
The customer refused saying that it only took him 30 seconds to draw that picture.
Picasso responded that in fact, it took him 40 years to draw that picture.

In the same way, you could say that VP.Start decision to go to the global stage started
when Phally was 5 years old,
dreaming about Cambodia becoming another Singapore,
a place that he could barely imagine.
In other words, ***the seed of going to the global stage was there from the very beginning***.

What dream is guiding you? What are you aiming for?
What is your ultimate destination?
How sure are you of that objective? How long has that goal been your aim?
The dream for VP.Start was, and always has been, and will always be, one and the same.

Yes, grid modernization.
But that stepping stone is just in order to create a more reliable source of energy.
A stronger economy, a more vibrant education, a more comfortable life.

Yes, the SIMA Smart Grid. The data-driven dynamic digital AI-infused Smart Grid.
But that is not the goal, either. That is one step further on the path.

Yes, SIMA Smart cities are essential.
Smart cities for smart citizens.
Data-driven green waste management.
IoT device-based traffic management and smart street lighting.
Smart building management and parking management connected online.
Weather forecasting.
EV charging station expansion.
DER seamless integration.
Safe and secure water management.
Augmented Disaster preparation infrastructure.
Each component is a valuable part of improving outcomes for city dwellers.
And yet this, too, is not the destination.

Yes, Smart Home automation is mission critical.
More efficient appliances.
More cost-saving gadgets.
Safer devices that can be monitored remotely.
More peace of mind, less waste, more energy efficiency.
Each IoT-infused home appliance and each automated piece of office equipment is a positive step in the right direction.
A step forward but this, too, is not the ultimate objective.

Yes, the Universal Connectivity app,
bringing all of these aspect of the VP.Start vision,
all these parts of the SIMA Journey,
together in one platform.
Connecting AI to IoT device management,
connecting chat features to the energy management system,
connecting e-commerce to internet banking to smart cities and homes,
connecting seamlessly, powerfully, efficiently, universally.

How far are you prepared to go to bring your dreams to fruition?
We are finally getting close to the SIMA destination but we have still not yet arrived.
Moving past Big Data and cloud computing and AI capabilities and digitization,
We are able to arrive at the objective that has motivated VP.Start before it even existed.

Sustainability.
Overarching sustainability.
A comprehensive sustainability system.
A sustainable future.

A sustainable WORLD.
This is the crazy, impossible, extreme, revolutionary destination of the SIMA Journey.
And the VP.Start team is crazy enough and arrogant enough to believe that simple people with big ideas and unbridled ambition can change the world.
"A small campus but big ideas.
A small team but big dreams.

A small country but a big heart."

Or a John Lennon put it in the song, "Imagine":
"You may say that I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one.
I hope some day you will join us and the world will live as one."

A sustainable future necessitates a sustainable world.
And If VP.Start is serious in its pursuit of a sustainable world,
by definition, they must "go to the global stage."
Nothing more and nothing less!

Do you believe that your ideas can change the world?
Your ideas may or may not change the world,
but I can guarantee without hesitation that
your unexpressed ideas will never change anything.

VP.Start had been cultivating connections to the world, as mentioned before, but the time had come to move from cultivation to harvesting.

5 initial locations to *extend and expand the SIMA Journey* **outward** came into focus.
India, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Lao PDR.
Each potential market presented challenges and obstacles
But as we know, VP.Start "translates" obstacles into opportunities, challenges into chances.

How do you turn extreme challenges into amazing opportunities?
How do you view the challenges that inevitably come?

The *Philippine market* is particularly challenging for market access in the energy sector.
For starters, the Philippines features **three mostly interconnected but**

distinct grids,
which in and of itself is a major logistics challenge.
Furthermore, the Philippines is an archipelago ranging from
densely populated and fairly large islands to small, isolated and sparsely
inhabited ones,
which leads to **a wide spectrum of electric coverage** and service
depending on the location,
from extensive to minimal to completely non-existent.
Add to that, the Philippines regularly faces **extreme weather events**
at a level and frequency
that few other countries in the world experience:
tsunamis, extreme heat waves, torrential rains and flooding with
related landslides.
Beyond all of these challenges, there are **active volcanoes and
frequent earthquakes**.
The cherry on top is rampant and **runaway urbanization**
which puts a severe strain on the functioning urban grid
capacity.

Haha, did I mention that the Philippines is a challenging energy sector?

VP.Start is able to say that their ecosolutions are a perfect fit for the
Philippine market
because they are:
easy to install,
easy to use,
easy to afford,
easy to adapt and if necessary,
easy to replace.

Installing expensive grid infrastructure that a tsunami or volcano
may suddenly take out is neither wise nor cost-effective.

On the other hand, data-driven solutions that are predictive
can minimize the negative effects of extreme weather events.

Installing expensive grid infrastructure to support islands of minimal
population is impractical.
On the other hand, taking advantage of existing infrastructure and
building a grid architecture with AI-capabilities to seamlessly
integrate DERs into the power system is proactive and sensible.

Installing expensive grid equipment to try to keep up with explosive
urbanization and exponential growth in demand is fiscally unfeasible.
On the other hand, leveraging the power of digitization and data
simulation to reduce bottlenecks,
and doing it at cost, is reasonable and doable.

You might say that VP.Start's grid modernization solutions and strategies
were created just for a place like the Philippines, a developing country
with a myriad of challenges.
You might say that and if you say that, you would be right!

Indonesia and its market are in some ways similar to that of the Philippines
but with these problems exacerbated to the extreme degree.

The Philippines struggles with rapid urbanization.
Indonesia faces the same challenge with **one of the largest populations**
in the world.
The Philippines is a widespread archipelago of islands.
Indonesia is **the largest grouping of islands** in the world.
Covering the greatest distance.
more or less, stretching from the vicinity of India to that of Australia.
composed of **islands with different cultures,**
religions, languages,

histories, customs and
very different levels of economic development
from affluent Java and tourist powered Bali
to undeveloped and primitive islands like West Jaya and North Maluku.

Great distances geographically,
culturally and economically.
Once again, this variation among the islands means that
grid modernization **must be very adaptable**.
Fortunately, one of the strengths of the DRC series,
the flagship modernization products of VP.Start, is their adaptability.
Cambodia itself is a hodgepodge of infrastructures made by different companies,
put together in an inconsistent fashion,
due to the challenges of recovering
from near total economic collapse during the war period.
Hence, the DRC has more than 20 iterations and the number is constantly rising, each iteration dedicated to a distinct infrastructural architecture, maintaining the core grid modernization concepts but **adapting to to the varied circumstances,** bringing the disparate parts into one unified whole.

In other words, exactly what Indonesia needs.

If money were no object,
do you think it would be wise to spend money as if it were no object?
The Malaysian market is in many ways an outlier among the VP.Start global push.
Malaysia is a stable, economically vibrant,
rapidly developing and harmonious country.
They have considerable resources to expend for grid modernization.

Why would they want to consider the modernization solutions of VP.Start?

Let me suggest a pragmatic reason.
To state the obvious,
rich people and rich countries tend to get that way and stay that way
by allocating their resources wisely.
Just because you are able to afford a more expensive, luxury car,
does NOT necessarily mean that a luxury car is the wisest option.

As we all sadly know,
we live in **a world of geopolitical instability** and sudden conflict.
We also live in **a world of unprecedented economic shocks**.
A wise country chooses the solutions that meet their needs at the lowest cost.
A wise country prepares for the unpredictable future carefully.
VP.Start ultimately intends its solutions to *serve developed and "rich" countries* in addition to those that are *developing, "poor" and struggling*.
This initiative to access the Malaysian market is the first step in that direction.

The Indian market is a special case indeed.
It is often said that
"India is not a country, India is a world".
Each region and often each village has its own culture,
religious traditions and language.
More than 20% of the world's population live in India,
so needless to point out, it is one of the world's largest markets.
One of the world's most complicated energy sectors, as well.
There is **one national level dispatch center** that manages the
5 regional level grids which in turn break up into more than **30 state level grid authorities**.
Each state level grid has its own compliance standards,
its own unique regulatory framework and

its own distinct governing bodies.
Success in one state does not guarantee access to others.
Entering the market must be done on the state and local level and built up piece by piece,
constantly adapting to the varied and heterogeneous geographical, legal and economic situations of each Indian state.

How can a relatively small company like VP.Start dare to even envision entering such a massive market?

As we have seen before, the VP.Start philosophy is simple:
You cannot change the world by being quiet and shy and modest.
You need **aggressiveness and boldness and at times, arrogance.**
You need to be so convinced of the power of your ideas that **the ridiculously impossible suddenly sounds easy.**
CEO Phally and the team are convinced of exactly that.

It is not that the Indian market is **so big and so complex and so unfathomable;** it is that *the SIMA Journey is* ***so powerful and so essential and so undeniable.***

India is BIG.
The SIMA Journey is BIGGER!

In some ways, the market dearest to the heart of VP.Start is the nearest one, that of the Lao PDR (Laos).

First of all, *Laos is a neighbor of Cambodia.*
Culturally **similar**,
religiously **similar**,
historically **similar**.
Similar food,
similar wedding practices,
similar thinking,
similar backgrounds.

Both Cambodia and Laos experienced French colonization together.
Both countries experienced the Cold War, the Vietnam War and the communist takeovers.
Both experienced nearly crushing war experiences leaving both countries largely destroyed.
Both countries suffered and still suffer frequent conflicts with bigger neighboring countries.
Both are rebuilding their economies and electric grids.

The EDL, the main utility of Laos, faces a major challenge, as well.
Very limited population,
spread out in remote and often mountainous villages,
very limited urbanization and
still a largely rural and underindustrialized economy
and a much larger geographic area for the electric grid to cover than Cambodia.

But Laos does have its advantages as well,
namely **great hydroelectric power resources**.
The Laotian energy grid is a very green one, in that sense.

The ecosolutions of VP.Start can help connect those resources to the grid.
Efficiently.

Without waste.
Without losses.
Using *the power of data-driven technology.*
The power of AI.
The power of digitization.
The power of IoT-based monitoring systems.
The power of innovation through technology that VP.Start brings to the table.

VP.Start is already working on pilot projects in Laos with the EDL.
The first steps.
Small steps.
Small steps that will soon turn into strides.
Onto the global stage.

At the end of the day, "going to the the global stage" is not about garnering more profits,
although considerable **profits and ROI will undoubtedly accrue**.
Neither is it about building up the reputation and name recognition, the branding, of VP.Start,
even though this too will certainly be a result.
The motivation is about *building a better, brighter,*
healthier, safer,
more equitable and more peaceful world.

A more sustainable world. Is there really any other goal worth pursuing?
Beyond turning a profit and building a brand and promoting your products,
What are your motivations? Why do you work so hard to do what you do?
As Phally likes to put it: ***"When you know why you live, you will know how to live and what living is!"***

Chapter 12
The SIMA Story
The SIMA Journey Past, Present and Future

"The best way to predict the future is to create it."
-Peter Drucker, management consultant

For obvious reasons, the Story section of our book has focused mostly on the past, the development, the challenges,
the victories, the failures.
The resilience of VP.Start
and its dedication to the SIMA Journey.
Similarly, when you think about your "story",
you probably think of your past,
your experiences, and
your memories,
both positive and negative.

That is legitimate, but…
Your story is more than just history.
VP.Start's story is more than just retelling the past.
The past is just the guide to the present and the future.
As some have put it,
the past is made up of memories,
not always accurate,
and the future is made up of predictions,
not always correct.
All we have is now!

How much time do we spend
regretting things that have never happened or
worrying about things that never will happen?
Focus on now and so much stress drifts away!

VP.Start is now a company of more than 100 team members.
More than 10,000 DRC solutions have been installed across Cambodia.
VP.Start is **working** in tandem with universities across Cambodia and around the world.
VP.Start is **liaising** with government ministries and officials while keeping independence.
VP.Start is **cooperating** with various industrial leaders,
attending and leading out various forums,
participating in ASEAN and international conferences,
submitting proposals for grants,
cultivating partners and supporters and investors,
forging a very loyal customer base,
ramping up production with OEM collaboration,
developing new products,
expanding new missions,
publicizing their UCN app, and
entering global markets.
That is a lot of action!
VP.Start is a highly profitable company
changing the face and image of Cambodia.

Outstanding results, **yes!**
Amazing advancements, **yes!**
Wonderful successes, **yes!**
Does this guarantee a bright future? ***NO!***

VP.Start values its past but it does not believe in dwelling on the past.
Resting on your laurels is not a recipe for success, but for disaster.

VP.Start is looking to the future with the newly built SIMA Journey Hub,
a conference center addition to the Sen Sok Valley Campus.
In addition to hosting meetings with *government dignitaries,*
investment bankers,
utility officials, resident ambassadors,
university administrators and industry leaders,
this is also the home of **the SIMA Journey Workshop**,
a weekly meeting open to the public to spread
the good news about the latest trends in innovation through technology.
Raising their voices and letting the world know!

The goal is to turn Cambodia and VP.Start, specifically,
into a hub of innovation.
Other countries may have taken the lead in
manufacturing and engineering and technological skill
but Cambodia is primed to **take the lead in innovative and creative ideas.**
Again, you may find this far-fetched.
But the VP.Start team is completely dedicated to bring this idea to fruition.

The VP.Start "Story" has reached a transformational inflection point.
VP.Start is **moving from** a local company **to** a regional one,
with eyes on the prize of becoming an international one.
VP.Start is **moving from** a small, unknown company **to** a well-known local player with an increasing degree of name recognition at the regional level.
VP.Start has, in a short time, increased its yearly revenue from nearly nothing to considerable resources with a view towards further exponential growth.

Above all else, VP.Start is committed to its journey and to building a sustainable world,
or at the very least, setting the wheels in motion for others to follow up on.

You, too, have a story to bring to the world. Everyone does.
This story informs how you view the world,
how you view your life,
how you envision the future,
how you understand what it means to become yourself.

Your story when internalized, leads you to your ideology, which is the next step in the SIMA Journey.




“Nothing Will Start
Until We Start”

The SIMA Ideology



Section 2

The 12 Stage of The SIMA Ideology

"A sign of wisdom is believing that you are limitless, because you are."
-Maxine Lagace, philosopher

What do you believe about yourself?
What limits have you chosen to put on yourself?
What do you believe that you cannot achieve,
can never accomplish?

Most people are convinced that there are many things that can not do.
Most companies feel this way, as well.
They pull up short of their dreams, believing that their story shows their limitations.
But ***a big part of every story is how you interpret that story***.

Do your failures mean that you are a failure?
Do your mistakes mean that you are a mistake?
Or do they show you the way forward?

If you look at your story and you have a negative ideology, let me be so bold as to tell you that **you are interpreting your story incorrectly**.

CEO Phally's story is not without hardships and troubles, as we have seen.
The SIMA Journey of VP.Start similarly faced many obstacles, errors and disheartening moments.

Days of darkness, of difficulties, of disappointments, of disasters, of defeats.

However, VP.Start chose to see that as a call to action.
After all, *you never fail if you do nothing*.
But when you try to accomplish something, **failures and defeats are inevitable**.
In fact, the higher the goal that you seek to reach, the greater those failures will seem to be.
In other words, troubles, frustrations and out and out failures mean that we are on the right track.

How are you interpreting your story?
What ideology are you forging out of your life experiences?
What outcomes are accruing from the ideology that you have adopted?
Let's look at the data and let it drive us.
Let's look at the results and see if any changes need to be made.

Sadly, some people and some companies have amazing stories,
incredible stories
but they allow a negative mindset and
a pessimistic ideology diminish their power.
VP.Start adamantly refuses to allow
that negative mindset and defeatist ideology to take hold.
Believe in your dreams, **believe in** your story,
believe in yourself, **believe in** your belief.
How about you?
Are you ready to look at your ideology with open eyes?

The 12 Steps of the SIMA Ideology

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Innovation Through Technology 157
2. Remember the Big Picture 163
3. Idea-driven, not Product-driven 170
4. Data-driven, not Feelings-driven 178
5. Break the Rules 190
6. The Three Aspects of Powerful Thinking 198
7. Radical Decentralization 207
8. Love Everyone But Don't Care About Anyone 224
9. People Come and People Go 231
10. Celebrate Your Milestones….Briefly 240
11. Public Speakers HAVE a Voice, World-class Communicators ARE a Voice 247
12. Innovators Become Themselves 266

Chapter 1

The SIMA Ideology
Innovation through Technology

"Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity, not a threat."
-Steve Jobs

Change will come. There is no way to avoid change.
No way to escape transformation.
However, will we be on the innovative, cutting edge of change?
Or will we be left behind?
As someone said,
if you are not driving the car of change, that car is running you over.

How do you feel about change?
How do we come to see change as an opportunity?

The most basic ideological framework of VP.Start is a simple but powerful one:
Innovation through Technology.
This is the slogan and motto of the company but more importantly,
this is **the mindset that drives VP.Start** forward.
And yet, it is a deceptive simple idea that few people really understand.

First off, **technology and innovation are not the same thing.**
Let me say that again, technology and innovation are not the same thing,
any more than an artist and a house painter are the same thing.
Any more than a classical composer and a high school drummer are the same thing.

A classical composer hears the melody in his imagination and creates music out of silence.
A drummer is high school band has one task: follow the musical score.
No creativity, no imagination.
Just follow the notes written on the page.
Success or failure is determined by **how well you follow** what has been written for you.
The composers success or failure comes from **how well he or she creates** something out of nothing.

Similarly, a house painter's job is to paint the house
according to the exact specifications of the home owner.
The home owner determines the colors for each wall and
ceiling and the house painter follows that design.
A great house painter is **a great follower**,
not to criticize house painters in the least.
But creativity is not only unnecessary, it is forbidden.
On the other hand, altogether,
an artist faces a blank paper and
lets his imagination guide her or him.
The artist "sees" what is not there and brings it into existence.
Creation.

A house painter, a drummer and an engineer are all similarly
on the technology side of the ledger.
Again, we are not speaking ill of their skills.
The ability to follow instruction precisely is not easy
and is worthy of respect.

Yet, on the contrary, the classical composer and the world-class artist
come from the innovation side of things.

They bring into existence new things that did not exist before,
except in their minds.
Innovators turn imaginative dreams into tangible reality.

That is why ***Innovation must always come before Technology.***
That is also why success requires both of them in tandem.

What are your innovative ideas?
Are you putting them first? Are you using your skills to bring your dreams into reality?
Are you contented to be a follower? (No shame in that) Or, do you insist on being a lead actor?

There are several groups.
In **the first group**, some people and some companies try to achieve success with **technology, but without innovation**.
Perhaps they believe that with enough technical skills and experience and expertise, innovation will come automatically. **It will NOT.**
They build products that *people don't really need*,
set up marketing campaigns to convince people that they need what *they don't really need*,
and they battle competitors who also produce very similar products that *no one really needs*.

They make profits, but *incrementally*,
They grow their business, but *very slowly*,
They change the world, *not even a little*.
They do not achieve sustainability.
After all, that was never the goal in the first place.
On the flip side, there is also **a second group**,
those companies and people,

fewer in number than the first group,
who have **innovative ideas but no skills** or inclination to bring them to reality.
The dreamers of dreams,
the thinkers of thoughts,
the imaginers of imagination.
But **NEVER** the accomplishers,
the achievers, the doers.
If you have innovation but you don't pair it with technological skills and abilities,
You might as well go back to sleep and continue your dreaming.

Are you a thinker? Or a doer? Or both? Or neither?
There is **a third group**, rarer still, but existing nonetheless,
those corporations and individuals who have **both innovation and technology**,
but try to put technology first.
They try to create prototypes and products,
services and subscriptions,
and THEN, make them innovative.
This is an impossible task.
After you crack the egg, can you put it back together?

Innovation is the idea that drives technology, the action.
If you act first and think later, what usually happens?
Have you ever said something and then stopped and thought,
why did I say that?
I know I have many times.
After saying it,
you realized that those words would make the other person, the listener, unhappy and should not have been said.

I am pretty sure we have all had that experience.
But can you take back what has already been said or already been done?
The act of saying (or doing) is like technology.
When we put words or action before thinking,
will we have a positive outcome?

Let me give an example.
Some entrepreneur decides to start an AI service provider.
After all, she has heard that now is the time to get into the AI business.
So thinks the entrepreneur.
So she comes up with a company name,
hires a great and highly qualified AI team,
gains international investment,
builds an impressive headquarters
and launches a successful IPO.
Sounds good, doesn't it?
Now if she could only think of what to do,
what goal to pursue,
what innovation to bring to the table.
She has all the technology that she needs but she put it before innovation.
She leaped before she looked.

Do you usually think before you act? Or do you act before you think?
There is **a fourth group**, a very small group, indeed.
This is the group that has both innovation and technology and puts technology first.
They are **innovation-driven**, idea-driven, creative thinking-driven companies and people.
They practice Innovation through Technology.
VP.Start is a proud member of this last group.
At the core of VP.Start's ideology are ideas.

Amazing ideas.
Ridiculous ideas.
Outstanding ideas.
Impossible ideas.
Powerful ideas.
Incredible ideas.
Crazy, crazy ideas!
Our ideas are a natural outcome of our story.
In VP.Start's case, **the idea of ideas is sustainability.**
A sustainable future. A sustainable world.
Coming from an unstable and unsustainable past in Cambodia.
and creating a stable, peaceful, successful and sustainable Cambodia and the larger world.

That is the dream, the vision, the goal, the innovation.
Next Phally set about hiring a team
and gathering skill sets and human resources
and establishing a hub to flesh out these ideas,
to **hone them into specific missions** with tangible deadlines and measurable results.

Not Innovation and Technology,
Not Innovation or Technology,
Not Innovation without Technology,
Not Technology through Innovation,
But….
Innovation through Technology

Chapter 2

The SIMA Ideology
Remember the Big Picture

"If you want to make the world a better place, take a look at yourself and make a change." -Michael Jackson from "Man in the Mirror"

The ideology of VP.Start includes **caring about others**.
What point is creating a sustainable world,
SIMA Smart cities, homes and offices
And a reliable, affordable and energy independent power system,
If you don't care about the people who will use those solutions?

Once again, **compassionate corporate culture** comes from the VP.Start Story.
CEO Phally remembers family and friends
who supported him from his very birth,
even going so far as to take him to various other mothers in the village
for breastfeeding when his own mother was ill.
People who have experienced suffering themselves tend to be **unwilling to let others suffer**.
They see the big picture.
They see *beyond profit statements and*
market research and
balance sheets and contracts.
They see what really matters.
They see compassion.
Compassion is the soul of VP.Start, the cornerstone of all its ideology and vision.
Without compassion, there can be no SIMA Journey.

How do you respond when others are in trouble?

Is a spirit of helping others a core part of your corporate culture or just a sideshow?

It is impossible to consider the VP.Start philosophy without talking about charitable work.
During the border conflict with Thailand that occurred in 2025,
many hundreds of thousands of Cambodians were displaced
(many Thais were displaced, also).
The evacuees were forced to live in ramshackle tent cities or
on the grounds of Buddhist pagodas.
The elderly and the infirm struggled, at times,
to get the healthcare and medications that they needed.
Tragically, young children were unable to attend schools.
Pregnant women and women with small babies were hard pressed to make sure that they were able to get adequate nutrition for their newest members.
The refugees in general were suffering from overcrowded and
sometimes unsanitary conditions
with insufficient food and water and
a critical lack of medical and educational resources.
Of course, the government was doing its best to help
the victims.
And yet, some in the camps also were affected by depression and extreme loneliness.

Despite the fact that in Phnom Penh conditions were safe and
the war seemed very far away,
the VP.Start team and CEO Phally saw this situation and
felt that this was a challenge
that the SIMA Journey needed to take up.
What good, after all, is a sustainable future that leaves some people out?
Furthermore, merely giving donations to a charity

and letting them handle the logistics would not be sufficient.
VP.Start needed to go into action,
visit the refugee camps,
meet the displaced people,
serve their needs and
take action to help them **directly**.

CEO Phally believed that just as important as meeting their material needs,
VP.Start needed to show the evacuees that **they had not been forgotten**,
that people all over the country were concerned for their welfare and that
Cambodians everywhere were all "one country, one family."

Of equal importance,
the VP.Start team didn't see this as "taking a break" from the SIMA Journey,
or "putting the journey on hold" for a while,
while they pursued a valiant but unrelated charitable goal.

Caring for others, compassion and charity are actually at the very heart of what VP.Start does.
There is no SIMA Journey without concern for the welfare of others.

To put in a more tech business context,
VP.Start has various core missions that form the backbone of its business plan:
SIMA Smart Grid Modernization,
SIMA Smart City Initiatives,
SIMA Smart Home Initiatives and
the UCN (Universal Connectivity Network), the app known as AlienCheck.
Each one of these missions serves as an innovative solution to a challenging set of problems
but they are much more than just solutions,

more than mere products for profits.
They are acts of compassion, above all else.

What, after all,
is the purpose of modernizing the electric grid of Cambodia
and then of other nations, especially developing ones?
Is it to gain investment,
to turn a nice profit,
to burnish the brand reputation of VP.Start,
to earn credentials and honors and awards?
These are all fine accomplishments, in their own right,
but from the SIMA Journey perspective,
none of these could be the motivation for true innovation.

As the VP.Start team saw the frustration of students
unable to do research on the Internet due to an unreliable electric supply,
they felt frustrated.

As they saw factories unable to meet their quotas due to frequent outages,
they felt disappointed.
As they saw clever industrial leaders unable to finish projects on time or meet deadlines or release new products in a timely fashion,
they felt deeply moved and saddened.

As they saw families unable to live comfortably
because the cost of electricity was too high for them
to run an air conditioner or heat water or use lights,
they felt compassion.

"Compassion", "caring" and "concern" may not be words that we usually associate with the tech industry and cutting edge innovation
but for the SIMA Journey to a sustainable world

it is a massive mistake to leave compassion out of the equation.
VP.Start is not in the business of selling products or promoting services; it is in the business of creating solutions for people in need.
Why?
Because they genuinely care about their neighbors and their neighbors' problems.

Similarly, the **smart city initiatives** are innovative solutions to improve
street lighting, traffic management,
parking and building management,
waste collection and other aspects of the urban experience.
While grounded in data acquisition and application
and implementation of sophisticated systems of sensors
and digital monitoring systems with continuous upgrading based on the data,
they are **so much more than the latest in IoT technological prowess**.
They are answers to actual human needs,
the problems and sufferings of urban citizens,
answers that stem from the compassion that VP.Start's
team of engineers feels for their fellow citizens.

In much the same way, the **smart home automation** approaches of VP.Start, are not merely technological strategies to improve appliance usage for greater cost efficiency and less energy waste,
although they certainly achieve these goals, as well.

These home and office automation and IoT initiatives are based on the fact
that families **are struggling** to pay their electric bills,
that, at times, the EDC **is struggling** to meet their energy needs
without relying on excessive energy imports and
that nature and the environment **are struggling** to put up
with the wasted energy that makes our world less green and sustainable.

VP.Start sees the family trying to make ends meet despite high electricity bills and their hearts go out to them.
The team sees the utilities working their hardest to meet energy demand and wants to help in any way they can.
CEO Phally and his clan feel the vital importance of connecting with and protecting nature,
not because it is good business or
good marketing or
good branding.
Simply because it is good.
How often do you do things "simply" because they are the right things to do?

The UCN is a profoundly game changing app that combines:
Chat and conversation features,
AI capabilities,
IoT device management and
Smart city updates in one convenient app location.
It is a groundbreaking, outside the box technological transformation that opens up new possibilities in sustainable connectivity.
But in addition to all of that,
AlienCheck is a much needed answer to a problem.
We have and we need to have too many apps currently.
We need separate social media apps, AI apps, IoT device apps and so on.
This makes managing and monitoring all these different apps,
both challenging and inconvenient.
It leads some people to abandon the process in frustration and others feeling stressed out trying to stay on top of a myriad of varied apps.
CEO Phally and the VP.Start family saw this situation and
felt **compassion** on people overwhelmed

by too many overlapping apps and the confusion that it bred.
But compassion that doesn't lead to a solution is just romantic, dramatic feelings that don't really accomplish anything.

Think of it like this:
Innovation is the engine of progress but
compassion is the key that starts the engine running.
Or perhaps, as Phally likes to say,
"**compassion is the key that unlocks us.**"
Once unlocked, we can dare to be ourselves,
the best version of ourselves,
and become the innovators that nature always intended us to be,
Innovators that care about others because they know that in reality,
we are all part of the same bigger picture,
whether we are wealthy tech moguls or refugees languishing in uncomfortable camps.

Please remember that in the SIMA philosophy,
innovation is the default situation.
Innovation is not surprising or unexpected.
Lack of innovation is.
Innovation is the natural state of man,
since man is a part of nature and nature is innovative.
Compassion is the natural attitude of people who realize
that we are all part of something *bigger than* ourselves,
bigger than our families, *bigger than* our countries and ethnicities,
bigger than our languages and religions and cultural biases.
Compassion is the de facto state of a world citizen.
It is the only prerequisite to innovation.
Everything else can be learned later.

Compassion and kindness are the big picture. VP.Start is laser-focused on them.
Why do we need to remember that we are a part of the bigger picture, the universe?
Why do we need to make compassionate corporate culture central to everything we do?
Are you ready to put aside profits and self-promotion and make helping other your goal?
If you do so, get ready for the world to change!



Chapter 3
The SIMA Ideology
Idea Driven, not Product-Driven

"The two greatest days of your life are the day you were born and they day you find out what your purpose is."
-Shannon Kaiser, author and self-love teacher

If this is true for people, it is equally true for companies.
The two most important days for every company are the day that the company was founded and
the day that the company discovered why it was founded.
Hopefully, both happy events come on the same day,
but all to often, there is a big gap in time between these two days.

Have you discovered your purpose yet?
Are you living according to that purpose?

VP.Start knew its purpose on its first day.
On its founding day.
As a matter of fact,
CEO Phally knew the purpose of VP.Start long, long before there was any company.
Make the grid reliable,
make the future sustainable,
spread it to the world.
Simple.
In other words, from the very beginning,
VP.Start was driven by ideas.
That is the reason that they were able to make a Very Powerful Start.
Dreams,
ideas and
goals came first.
Products and
solutions and
services came later.

So, why does it matter which comes first?

Every company requires some customization.
It is simply inevitable.
Either you customize your products to meet your ideas
or you customize your ideas to meet your products.

If you do the former,
you will keep modifying your product in line with your goals until those goals are achieved.
In that case,
you will have a crystal clear vision and your entire team will know

that vision and buy into it.
If you do the latter,
you will keep changing your ideas and goals to keep up with your products.
In that case,
you will have confusion and uncertainty.
Your team will not know which road to take.

But, let's be completely frank.
Acquiring the "idea-driven" mindset is not always an easy task.
Conventional companies focus on products and profits,
services and subscriptions,
customers and competitors.
You cannot break that mindset and replace it with the "idea-driven" mindset overnight.

For instance,
As mentioned before, VP.Start, like most companies, put effort into establishing a website.
Like most corporate websites, it listed products and their features,
services and their benefits,
successful case studies and satisfied customers.
Pretty typical corporate website.
But that is the problem.
How can an atypical company have a typical website?
How can a revolutionary company have a conventional, traditional website?
How can an "idea-driven" company have a "product-driven" website?

Don't get the wrong idea.
This is not to attack the website designers.
They did an outstanding job of creating a conventional, professional website.

Unfortunately, VP.Start needs an innovative, "idea-driven" website.
Dramatic changes had to be made.

People come to website to see if they can trust a company.
How does the company make them **feel**?
What does the company make them **believe**?
After visiting the website, what do they **remember** about the company?
Feel. Believe. Remember. The FBR principle.
A good website never tries to make you understand.
A good website makes you FBR.

"What are the products that we sell? At VP.Start, our ideas are the products."

Again, don't get the wrong idea.
VP.Start has amazing products and creative services.
They are proud of their home-grown solutions and their "Made For the World" innovations.
And yes, of course,
VP.Start *sells* these products,
promotes these services,
markets their solutions and
strives to garner profits.
So, is an "idea-driven" company like VP.Start really any different from a traditional company?
YES!
The mindset maters.
The mindset changes everything.

Companies that are product-driven are made up of
salespeople, marketers,
advertisers and promoters.
They try to convince you to buy a product whether you really need it or not.

They are strategic thinkers,
seeking to leverage customers for their company's financial gain.

Let's be honest.
If you are like me at all,
you are not a big fan of salespeople.
You avoid advertisements and ignore commercials.
You despise the manipulation.
You especially dislike paid promoters
like singers and sports figures and social media influencers
who promote and champion a product that
they have never used and have scarcely ever heard of.
Some companies are worse and some are better,
but most are variations on this situation.

The "idea-driven" company is totally different.
They present a problem to be solved and suggest their innovative solution.
VP.Start does **not tell** you to buy their DRC products
but asks if you want a more reliable grid.
VP.Start **never pressures you** to buy home automation IoT gadgets.
They explain why they created them,
how they can be beneficial
And then they *leave the decision up to the individual consumer*.
VP.Start, for example, expresses the philosophy, problem solving and ideology that gave birth to AlienCheck and encourage those who share their views to download.
If so inclined.

"VP.Start sells its ideas. VP.Start's ideas sell its products."
Let's look at another example.
We have already talked about the weekly SIMA Journey Hub Conferences held at VP.Start.

Each week a new topic,
a new audience,
a new opportunity.
Early on, topics were suggested
such as *"The DRC: The Power of Innovation"* and *"VP.Start's Grid Solutions."*
If such topics were adopted,
the weekly forum would be little more than advertising and marketing.
And the audience would recognize that and dwindle away.

What are people interested in?
The products and services of VP.Start? **NO!**
People are interested in themselves.
They want to know what technology and innovation means to them personally.
They want to see if VP.Start cares about them.
They don't want to understand technology.
They want to FBR (feel-believe-remember).

Subsequently, the topics were changed to *"The Impact of AI Data Centers"*, *"Tech Jobs of the Future"*, *"Renewable Energy for a Renewable Future"* and so on.
Not product promotion.
Not services promotion.
Idea promotion!

Let's be clear on one more point.
You cannot be "idea-driven" unless you have positive thinking.
Founding, maintaining and even **working for an "idea-driven" company like VP.Start is *risky*.**
Undeniably,
inescapably,
irrefutably risky.

Think about this:

Even if your product is no good, even worthless garbage,
with effective marketing and strategic advertising,
you still may be able to make a profit.
Even if your services are useless and pointless,
if you promote and publicize them cleverly,
you may still be able to keep your company in the black.
But if you are an "idea-driven" company and
your ideas are inadequate and subpar,
no amount of ingenious marketing or fantastic promotion is going to save you.

Your company will live or die on the power of its ideas, and nothing else.
If you have less than absolute confidence in your ideas,
your company will be "idea-driven" into the ground.
VP.Start has that **confidence in their ideas, bordering on arrogance.**
They are ready to put all their eggs in one basket, the basket of ideas.

How about you?
Do you **believe in what you believe** enough to risk everything to make those ideas succeed?
If you have less than absolute assurance of the power of your ideas,
You are probably better off making and selling a product.
Being a follower.
Being an echo.
Being a marketer.

But only those who dare to take the risk,
get the chance to experience the reward.
The choice is yours.

Are you ready to stop selling your products and start selling your ideas?
Are you ready to be "idea-driven"?



Chapter 4

The SIMA Ideology
Data-Driven, not Feelings-Driven

"Without data, you are just another person with an opinion."
-W. Edwards Deming, Data Theorist

How do you make a decision?
What do you base that decision on?

VP.Start like any other organization,
has to make decisions. Lots of decisions every day.
Some decisions are minor like when to schedule a meeting or
where to have a dinner with customers.
Other decisions are critical and potential deal breakers,
such as which foreign markets to enter first or
whether or not to collaborate with a certain OEM.
But at its core, *all decisions have to be based on something.*
They must either be based on data,
or they must be based on something other than data.

Needless to say,
it is not always easy to get the data that is necessary to make wise decisions.
Sometimes we must act with insufficient data,
based on feelings, emotions or even guesses.
Even in the 4th Industrial Revolution as AI chatbots become ubiquitous,
there is still no one who lives a completely data-driven lifestyle and
there is no company that is perfectly data-driven, either.

While this is true,

VP.Start has made the decision to **adopt the data-driven mindset.**
Yes, let's be clear.
Data-driven is a powerful technology but long before data-driven technology,
there was the data-driven mindset.
In fact, there can be no data-driven technology
without a data-driven ideology.

What does it mean to have **a data-driven mindset and ideology?**

First, it means that we make ***decisions based on facts.***
Second, it means that we are always ***looking to upgrade.***
Finally, it means that every result, good or bad,
is checked to ***see if it could be better.***
These are core beliefs, key pillars,
the very soul of VP.Start.

Are you ready to make decisions based on the facts and the data?
Are you ready to constantly, ruthlessly, relentlessly upgrade those decisions?
Are you willing to accept the frustration of always wanting to be better?

How can VP.Start achieve grid modernization, smart cities, smart homes?
First and foremost,
they have to know the details,
the facts,
the data of the current situation.
You cannot solve a problem that you do not really understand.

How can VP.Start carry out extensive grid modernization with the DRC and other products
unless they know **clearly and accurately** the faults of the current situation?

Common sense, isn't it?
At each step of grid modernization,
with each installation of new DRC solutions,
with each new SCADA system,
with each new RPM grid,
there is a new chance to judge those problems even more clearly and accurately.

You might be surprised, as VP.Start was on many occasions,
that problems that were considered and
solutions that were implemented did NOT hold up in the data.

How do you respond to data that does not match your assumptions and suppositions?
Do you throw away your assumptions or do you throw away the data?

For one example, you might be forgiven for thinking that
the main or even only purpose for the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) is
to store solar energy from daylight hours and shift them to nighttime use.
Most energy and technology companies view the BESS in this way.
Fortunately, VP.Start is not like other companies.
They follow the data.
Yes, renewables integration and solar energy storage and shifting are roles for theBESS to be sure and *one of the ways* that **the BESS plays a crucial role in the overall sustainability system that VP.Start promotes**.
But not the only way.
Not even the main way.
In fact, the data gathered on the BESS shows a quite different picture
than conventional wisdom might suggest.
In fact, in terms of data results,

solar energy integration is just a small part of the function of the BESS.
Much more critical functions according to data analysis include
backing up the grid to prevent blackouts and outages
when there is a major grid disruption.
Furthermore, balancing second-by-second grid
fluctuations are another essential function of the BESS.
In other words, the main function and importance of the BESS lies
NOT in energy shifting and renewables integration, BUT in
ameliorating grid stability.
If a company created renewable integration solutions
without this data-based understanding of the BESS,
there is a very good chance these solutions will not produce
the desired outcomes.

This is an example where the **data points to a deeper purpose**
that might be lost if we merely focused on our opinions,
hunches and estimations.

Another common trope in grid modernization is that the only way to solve grid congestion,
is to build more transmission wires and infrastructure.
Most companies in the energy sector follow this logic.
Not surprisingly,
building more infrastructure and new transmission lines is expensive,
time consuming,
environmentally-unfriendly and
difficult to achieve within budget constraints.
Once again, **VP.Start adamantly refuses to follow accepted wisdom.**
What does the data say?
Data-driven technology points to new technologies, **Grid Enhancing Technologies**,

that allow more efficient and effective use of existing wires and infrastructure,
to **maximize capacity WITHOUT building new infrastructure**.
For example, instead of basing load capacity of worst-case scenario weather conditions, data-driven dynamic digital solutions can base load capacity on real-time, constantly updated weather conditions.
Similarly, data-driven solutions can **reroute power flows instantly and automatically** to avoid congested bottlenecks in the power system.

These are exactly the kinds of approaches that VP.Start implements.
Because VP.Start refuses to follow assumptions and feelings;
VP.Start unflinchingly follows the data.

Another widespread assumption is that Smart meters
lead to significant energy savings and electricity bill reductions.
Most companies market their Smart meters and home automation products in this fashion, often leaving customers disappointed with the results.
How about VP.Start?

The data shows that *merely installing IoT devices*
has only a minimal, negligible effect on energy saving and cost reduction.
In many cases, the data shows that there is not benefit to the customer at all.
Why?
The customers don't know how to use the devices properly or pay no attention to them at all.
Data shows that fewer Than 10% of IoT device customers actually understand their purpose.
VP.Start provides regular training,
customer service, workshops and tutorials
on effective IoT device usage.
As a result, there is massive growth in effectiveness of use and customer satisfaction.

If you didn't follow the data,
this trend might escape your view.
But, have no fear, **VP.Start follows the data.**

On a similar note,
one of the flagship solutions of VP.Start is the Universal Connectivity Network app, AlienCheck,
as has been mentioned before.
VP.Start encourages people to download AlienCheck and
use it to monitor their IoT devices,
connect with conversational features and AI capabilities
and much, much more.
But **data paints a much bigger and clearer picture**.

The number of people who actually download AlienCheck is certainly valuable data,
but it is merely the beginning.
How frequently,
how effectively and
how wisely people are using AlienCheck,
these are some key pieces of data that can help VP.Start
make sure that
AlienCheck is serving its purpose.

Does VP.Start need more online videos to show people how to make effective use of the app?
Does the app itself need to be transformed to be more intuitive?
Does something as basic as the color scheme or font need to be changed to make it more user-friendly?
Are customers finding the AlienCheck experience satisfactory?
If not, why not?

These questions can only be answered with data.

And this accumulation of data leads us naturally to the second point of contention.
Constant, continuous, relentless, endless upgrading.

The data-driven ideology is never satisfied,
always seeking better,
more effective, more efficient.
Good enough is never good enough.
Sufficient and adequate are always insufficient and inadequate.
If handled unwisely,
the data-driven mindset adopted by VP.Start can be unsettling and frustrating.

Let me share a personal example to illustrate my point.
Once I attended a camp in Japan as a counselor.
At the end of the week-long camp,
all of the counselors were called together for a meeting.
I thought that overall, while not perfect, of course,
the camp had been a success.
The campers had enjoyed themselves, the experience had been a good one.
But the meeting started without congratulations on a job well done or appreciation for successes.

Would you rather be satisfied or would you rather be better?
I would learn later that this kind of meeting in Japan
was called "Hansei-kai" (reflection or self-criticism meeting) and
that it was common practice in Japan.
Every possible way to make improvements was discussed and

every problem and foible was dissected in extreme detail.
As a non-Japanese person new to the experience,
I found it very frustrating and irritating.
We had just finished what I considered to be a great camp and
we now nitpicking every minor flaw and fault endlessly.

In a sense, the data-driven philosophy is similar to this.
We are never satisfied with our results because the data always tells us that things could be better. CEO Phally himself often speaks of his frustration,
frequently after an experience that most people would consider
a resounding success.

Good return on investment? **Not good enough.**
Improved energy efficiency? **Not improved enough.**
Better English speech making? **Not nearly enough.**
The Grid is still *not smart enough,*
Not digital enough,
Not dynamic enough,
Not extended enough,
Not renewable enough,
Not affordable enough,
Not reliable enough.

Each success and each milestone reminds VP.Start that:
the sustainable world *has not yet been obtained*,
the final destination *has not yet been reached*,
the SIMA Journey **has not yet been completed**.
If VP.Start allowed emotions to overrule their judgment,
this could lead to depression and despondence and ultimately to giving
up in despair.
But VP.Start refuses to give up because they are **led not by feelings and**

emotions, but by data.

The third stage of the data-driven mindset and the data-driven lifestyle is the hardest of all.
Data shows simultaneously the impossibility of the task AND the way to achieve that task.

Without this crazy mindset,
there is no point in following the data-driven ideology at all.
After each result,
we must compare it with the data to see the ways in which that result
was sub-optimal.

As mentioned with the camp example above,
this is especially uncomfortable when we feel we have had a signature success.
At those special moments,
the last thing that most people want to think about what went wrong and
how to make things better.
It is much easier to seek better results
when we feel our early results were clearly unacceptable.
It is not at all easy to seek better results
when our results were undeniably good,
but could still be even better.

As an example,
I have had a chance to attend several events where CEO Phally was the keynote speaker.
For instance, there was a major conference in downtown Phnom Penh where Phally delivered a major address on the topic of the power of innovative technology.
The audience featured university students,

government officials,
visiting international dignitaries and
tech industry leaders.
It was a big opportunity to promote and bring forward
the SIMA Journey.

Unfortunately, the slides used in the speech were too complicated and
contained too much information.
Also, it was one of the first times for Phally to give a major speech in English
before such a distinguished crowd and by his own account,
he got flustered and lost his place in the speech a few times.
Furthermore, he didn't make as much of a connection with the audience
as he had hoped and in the end, he was disappointed with the results.

The data-driven mindset was perfect for this occasion as there was much
to upgrade.
Simpler and fewer slides.
More audience participation.
Better voice control at the speech opening and a more compelling conclusion.
Less dependence on prepared notes and slides and more spontaneity.
More frequent speech making in English in less consequential and high-pressure forums.

A few months later,
Phally gave a speech at a European Chamber of Commerce, Cambodia
(EuroCham) function
on the topic of EV adoption,
a topic which is not exactly a specialty of VP.Start.
And yet, this time,
the speech was smoother,
the conclusion was stronger,

the connection with the audience was deeper,
the slides were fewer, simpler and there was no confusion,
the EV adoption topic was seamlessly weaved into
the larger sustainability system framework and the SIMA Journey,
and the speech was, while not perfect, a resounding success.

It is at this point that the data-driven ideology becomes crystal clear.
Far from resting on his laurels over a clearly much better speech,
he was **still unsatisfied**.
Always unsatisfied.
CEO Phally felt that
The introduction could have been more gripping.
A wider variety of English vocabulary could have been employed.
He could have moved more on the stage instead of standing rather immobile.

The data-driven ideology states that success is only temporary.
The only permanent thing is upgrading.

This is how the **Big Data revolution** as envisioned and implemented by
VP.Start works.
Using solutions like the DRC,
VP.Start accumulates data from the grid, IoT devices,
AlienCheck and Smart City and home automation sensors.
This data is cleansed,
stored in a retrievable form and the acquisition continues.
Next off, this data is put into a myriad of simulation scenarios including
digital twins,
to find the best possible usage of the data
to improve grid, smart city, smart home and AlienCheck functions
and operations.
When the best solution is discovered from the data,

these data-based solutions are applied to the sustainability system
of VP.Start
to maximize efficiency,
reduce waste and
increase savings.

Is this the end of the process? **NO!**
This is just the beginning.
These outcomes of data application become new data
to be collected, analyzed, simulated and applied.
Improved. Upgraded. Endlessly.

Let's be honest.
The data-driven ideology is not always comfortable and satisfying.
In fact, it can be quite frustrating and
irritating and
off-putting.
But the best answers can only be found and achieved in this way.

So my question to use is a simple one:
Is good enough good enough for you?
Or do you insist on following the data-driven ideology for endless improvement?
The SIMA Journey belongs to those who choose the pain and joy of continuous growth.

Chapter 5
The SIMA Ideology
Break the Rules

"Know the rules well, so you can break them effectively."
-Dalai Lama, Tibetan Buddhist leader

Do you know the rules? Are you ready to break them for your ideas?
VP.Start is a leading company in the 4th Industrial Revolution,
sometimes called the Revolution of Data.
A revolution is more than just novelty or unusual ideas or even innovation.
A true revolution MUST break the rules of the past.
There is no such thing as a traditional, conventional revolution.

When you meet CEO Phally for the first time,
you will probably notice something about him before he says anything or does anything.
Take a moment to look at his photo.
You will most likely notice, as so many visitors to VP.Start have,
his long, full, somewhat curly hair.
In Cambodia, it is very rare, indeed,
to see anyone with a hairstyle like this,
especially a CEO.
If Phally worked for a "regular" company,
he would almost surely have to cut his hair in a more conventional style.
Fortunately, when you are the CEO, you get some special permissions.

So let me ask you:
Is a hairstyle really important?
Yes and No.

Of course, a hairstyle says nothing about a company's plans or footprint or ideas or projects.

You can't learn much at all from a haircut. And yet, this is not completely true, either.
Why does Phally wear his hair in an unconventional way?
To make a statement? **No.**
To confound expectations? **No, nothing complicated like that.**
He wears his hair that way because he likes it that way.
Simple.
Yet, this encapsulates the "break the rules" ideology.
Some people might not approve.
Some people might criticize.
Some people might laugh.
Some people might approve.
An innovator with a "break the rules" mindset doesn't really care what others think.
"If I like it, I do it.
If I don't, I don't.
If I break the rules, written or unwritten,
I don't really care one way or the other."

Are you prepped to "change the game"?
Do you even know what the "game" is?

For a very long time, rugby had been a popular sport.
Running with a ball, passing it backwards or sideways and moving up and down the field to score points.
Football (soccer) was also popular and many rugby teams chose to move the ball without using their hands, relying merely on kicking the ball.
However in one rugby football game, in 1880,

the coach of Yale University encouraged his players to pick up the ball with their hands and
pass the ball forward, which was directly against the rules of the sport.
Nevertheless, the idea became popular quickly and
soon "forward passing" became a key element of a new sport,
American football.
This was literally a *"game changing" innovation*.

VP.Start has a similar spirit of **experimentation and revolutionary change**.

Are you ready to break the rules if you think that it benefits your customers? Even if these changes make your personal success and your companies profits harder to achieve?

Case in point, in the 3rd Industrial Revolution, the so-called *Digital Revolution*,
social media was a key player in the sweeping changes.
When VP.Start invented AlienCheck,
many observers, even in the internal team,
foresaw another social media app to go alongside
Telegram and Messenger and Whatsapp and others.
If that were true,
if AlienCheck were just another social media app,
that would not be revolutionary at all.
No rules would be broken.
AlienCheck would be a follower, not a leader.
But that is not the case.
Not at all.

VP.Start designed AlienCheck to break all the rules of social media.
After all, *AlienCheck is NOT a 3rd Industrial Revolution* social media app.

***AlienCheck is a 4th Industrial Revolution* data-driven sustainability app.**

Social media makes a profit by gathering *as many users as possible*,
persuading these users to frequent the app *as often as possible*,
convincing users to stay on the app *as long as possible*, and
ultimately encouraging them to buy products recommended by the app
tailored to the users' algorithmic preferences.
As many have put it,
social media users and their data are the products.
Social media companies leverage the data of users to make massive profits.
Hence, social media moguls are always among the richest people in
the world even though ostensibly they give away their products for free.

VP.Start took a good look at this rule of the social media business and determined to break it.
After all, these **social media rules were not designed to benefit the customers** in the first place.

The AlienCheck developers thought:
What if *instead of gathering the maximum number of users,*
we only tried to add users who would benefit from the app?
What if*, instead of leveraging the users and their data,*
we created an app designed to allow users to leverage their own data?
What if*, instead of trying to maximize the frequency of user access to our app,*
whether they were really gaining something from the access or not,
we tried to keep access to the bare minimum of usefulness?
What if*, instead of trying to keep users on the app as long as possible*
with recommendations and addictive algorithms,
we attempted to make the app as efficient as possible to keep "on app" time minimal?

What if*, we created an app that was not social media at all,*
and furthermore, was not designed to promote advertising and sales and marketing,
but took user productivity and sustainability as its goal?
What if*, in one app,*
we created a universal connectivity network?

The AlienCheck programmers and developers were imbued with the VP.Start ideology,
the "know the rules, so you can break the rules" mentality.
They decided that in order to benefit the users,
they were willing to break every rule of traditional social media apps.

What rules need to be broken in order for you to become who you were meant to be?
What rules need to be broken to make your innovations succeed and your dreams come true?

Another "break the rules" approach of VP.Start was
in the interface of AlienCheck with home automation IoT devices.
A common problem across IoT apps and platforms was that
they tended to only allow access to IoT gadgets aligned with
that company.
After all, why would you create an IoT framework app
that would help customers use your competitors products?
It seems like bad business practice.
It seems like bad business practice ***UNLESS*** *you are a revolutionary company that breaks the rules.*

From the beginning,
VP.Start was determined to make the AlienCheck app platform
interoperable

with **all IoT devices** and home automations solutions
whether they were produced by VP.Start or not.
Interoperability makes AlienCheck more intuitive to use
and more fruitful and advantageous for users.

Would this mean that AlienCheck users might be more inclined
to use home automation gadgets and appliances produced by competitors?

Yes.

But remember, according to the SIMA Ideology,
true innovators have no real competitors.
Instead of competitors weakening the market share of VP.Start's home automation smart meters, these **competitors would actually be strengthening the value of AlienCheck**, intentionally or otherwise.

How could AlienCheck call itself a Universal Connectivity Network if it limited itself to VP.Start products and services?
How could such a limited app be part of the overarching sustainability system?

Are you prepared to accept the ridicule that sometimes accompanies breaking the rules?

When you start breaking the rules, as VP.Start consistently does,
the **feedback will not always be positive**.
When the pioneers of aviation started making the first attempt at manned flight and airplanes,
they were mocked,
ridiculed and
criticized as fools.
According to a famous critique of the day,
"*If God had wanted man to fly, he would have given man wings.*"
Those pioneers and innovators ignored the ridicule and broke the rules.

Every time you get on an airplane,
you are recognizing the value of breaking the rules.
You are honoring the revolutionaries
who were not stopped by the "impossibility" of human flight.
When the first astronauts stepped on the moon,
they were walking in the footsteps of these "crazy" dreamers.

Are you willing to speak "truth to power" in order to break the rules?

When VP.Start went to the banking system
with their radical approaches and rule breaking disposition,
not so surprisingly, they were not always welcomed with open arms.
Even though, many financiers and bankers respected the ideas and innovations,
these ideas seemed a bit too risky,
too radical, too revolutionary.
Bank after bank would ultimately refuse to finance VP.Start projects
because VP.Start didn't follow the established, conventional procedures.
Where was the starting capital? The collateral? The assets?

Phally responded that **their assets were their ideas,**
their collateral was their innovation.
Sadly, banks fell back on regulatory frameworks and
traditional practices and
time-tested approaches.
The banks were not ready to break their rules for the company that broke the rules.

At the same time,
VP.Start was completely unwilling to customize itself
to make its plans and projects more appetizing to the banks.
Once you make a commitment to breaking the rules,
"unbreaking" those rules will destroy your entire business plan and

corporate culture.
According to Phally,
one exchange went something like this:
Banker: We love your ideas and we would be interested to invest in VP.Start if you made some changes to fit our banking regulations.
Phally: We cannot change our culture to fit your rules.
We would become just another engineering services company.
Please bend or break your rules to fit our unique situation if you truly believe in what we are doing.
Banker: We can't do that. You need to make changes.
After all, wouldn't you be excited to get funds from us?
Wouldn't you be happy to get our loans?
Phally: Actually, not really.
We will use the loans to make profitable ROI for your bank.
You should be happy to have the chance to give the loan to us.
Banker: In that case,
it seems like we have to wait until you are more solidly profitable and stable to give VP.Start a loan.
Phally: By the time VP.Start is stable and consistently profitable, we won't need your money.
If you don't believe in our ideas now, no disrespect, but we will have no use for you later.
Banker: No one has ever talked to us like this before!
Phally: That's because you have never met an innovator before!

CEO Phally and VP.Start have made a radical commitment to breaking the rules.
VP.Start demands a revolution, *nothing more and nothing less!*

Are you willing and able to be a revolutionary for your dreams?
Are you prepared to break any and every rule that is an obstacle to your dreams?
Are you ready to absorb the criticism and ignore the ridicule and keep to your journey?
Are you ready to live your ideology and your story?

Chapter 6
The SIMA Ideology
The Three Aspects of Powerful Thinking

"Failure is not the end, it's an opportunity to learn and grow."
-Jensen Huang, CEO of NVidia

Who are your role models in thinking?
Do you learn more from your failures or from your successes?

CEO Phally, as a young student, as we mentioned in the Story Section, had no desire to be the top student in the class or to get the best grade on the test.
He was never drawn to the top students,
the studious and the clever.
He was naturally attracted to the least successful students,
the laziest, weakest, least motivated students.

Not with a condescending attitude or
even with a desire to change them.
He just wanted to figure out,

to diagnose their reason for lack of interest,
lack of energy,
lack of academic growth.

For the young Phally, while academic success meant nothing and
academic awards meant even less,
there was no greater joy than thinking.
It struck Phally as peculiar, an almost unfathomable mystery,
that some students, in fact, many students,
found thinking and learning distasteful and unpleasant.
Phally was not so much an evangelist trying
to convince these students of the value of thinking.
He was examining and evaluating these students, largely unconsciously,
to try to figure out why thinking and learning were so valuable and
enjoyable to himself.

Not surprisingly, coming from this background,
VP.Start values thinking.
In this regard, there is nothing so out of the ordinary from other companies.
But from the perspective of the SIMA Ideology,
there is a big difference between the way most people and companies
think and powerful thinking.
Truly powerful thinking.

Powerful thinking requires three aspect working together, according to
the SIMA perspective.
Logical thinking,
creative thinking *AND*
positive thinking.
If you are lacking in any of these areas,
you can never really be called a "thinker" and

you definitely cannot become a world-class innovator.
The stereotypical "engineer" or "tech guy" is *strong on logic,*
moderately creative and
almost completely lacking positive thinking skills.
This is an oversimplification and overgeneralization, of course,
but perhaps, it is not without some basis in reality.
After all, engineering relies on the logical skills of mathematics and physics,
solving complex equations and
explaining operations down to the minutest details.
Coding and programming are also logic-based by definition.
Similarly, one potential problem of artificial intelligence is that
it is by its very nature highly logical
but lacking in creativity and, of course,
completely bereft of true positive thinking.
In that sense, according to the SIMA Ideology,
AI is unable to "truly" think.

When someone is *strong on logic and weak in the other two areas of intelligence*,
they tend to act as "teachers" or "professors",
sages on the stage,
talking down to customers and potential investors
from a position of superior knowledge.
They can easily become condescending.
From a personal example,
I recall one math teacher that I knew in my school days
who would frequently berate students
who didn't learn and understand complex math concepts after
the first explanation.
He would say to the class, he had understood it easily,
so they should be able to understand it easily as well.
He was a highly logical teacher with almost no creative or positive thinking.

As you might well imagine,
he was not very popular with his students.
On the other hand,
there is the legendary physics professor from California, Richard Feynman,
who could explain the most complicated and arcane physics concepts in simple layman's terms, due to amazingly creative storytelling skills.
Professor Feynman was a very logical man, as well, undeniably,
but he allowed creativity and positivity to guide his teaching.
He was, from the SIMA point of view,
a true thinker and a world-class innovator and communicator.

Some people *have creative thinking but lack logic and positivity.*
These people are the proverbial "starving artists".
They have creative ideas but lack the logic to explain their ideas or
the empathy to make people care about their ideas.
These kind of "innovators" **tend to irritate people** with their "odd behavior".
People quite often don't think of them as creative but as simply strange.

Then there are those that *have positive thinking but lack logic and creativity*.
They are the eternal optimists who always believe that tomorrow will be a better day.
Unfortunately, **they don't do anything to make tomorrow better**.
They probably have a lot of friends
because they are positive and fun to be around but in the end,
they accomplish very little because they have no creative strategies
or logical plans to help them go forward.

In business,
the "logical thinking only" people are irritating and overbearing and tend to drive customers, potential investors and collaborators away.
The "creative thinking only" crowd are considered strange and peculiar

and they are unable to explain why their often great ideas are great.
The "positive thinking only" folks make customers and supporters feel good and happy but in the end, they cannot lead these stakeholders to make a decision to support their company.

VP.Start insists that all employees must be powerful thinkers, deploying all three of the thinking skills.

You can think about it this way.
If you lack logical thinking,
how can you give a clear presentation of your business plans and goals?
If you lack creative thinking,
how can you create a business plan
that is not just a sad imitation of the business plan of other companies?
If you lack positive thinking,
how can you get stakeholders excited about your ideas and plans,
ideas that you yourself don't seem to be very excited about?

On the other hand, when you are a powerful thinker,
you are a game changer,
a world beater and a lead actor.
Your creative thinking gives you amazing innovations and solutions that have never been thought of before.
This means that you have no competitors, a completely blue sea situation.
Your logical thinking means that you can explain your ideas
clearly, concisely and effectively and
persuade people of the value of your vision.
Your positive thinking means that you are enthusiastic about your ideas and
you share that enthusiasm with everyone you meet.
It doesn't matter if the other person is a high government official
with policy proposals,

the CEO of a unicorn suggesting a merger or
a new customer with a "stupid" question.
(Of course, there are no stupid questions but I think you know what I mean.)
All of them get the same infectious enthusiasm
because positive thinkers don't know how to give out negativity.

Think about nature for a moment.
Animals need to be **logical.**
If I, as an animal, see a bigger predator,
and I know that that predator is stronger than me and likely to eat me,
I will run away as fast as I can,
because logic tells me that this is the wise approach.
Otherwise I might be eaten.

If I, as an animal, need to cross a river to access a food source
but I cannot swim or if the river current is too strong,
I must find a **creative** way to get to the other side.
Otherwise I might starve to death.

And, if I, as an animal, head out into the natural world,
I must do it without fear or hesitation,
convinced that I will succeed in getting food and raising my young.
Without **positivity**, why would I take the risk of having offspring?
I must have positivity and believe in myself.
Otherwise I might never find a mate.
Powerful thinking is key part of nature and
nature informs all the practices of every wise tech company, including VP.Start.

Finally, powerful thinking is not always easy.
Not at all.

As CEO Phally would say, "*Thinking is a choice.*"

Are there times when it seems easier to abandon logical, creative and positive thinking?
How do we maintain our commitment to powerful thinking?

There are days when there may be team problems, power outages,
cyber attacks, weather disruptions,
lower profits than expected, contract cancellations and
other discouraging developments.
It would be easy to become negative and pessimistic.
Do you allow negative thinking to creep in and do you CHOOSE to be a positive thinker?

There are times when it seems easier
to just follow the ideas of other companies or
rehash your own ideas from the past,
rather than taking the time and effort to create new solutions.
Do you allow yourself to copy others and imitate the past or do you CHOOSE to prioritize creative thinking?

There are moment when following logical procedures is a lot of trouble and hassle.
It would be much easier to cut corners and not follow all the proper processes.
We might even think that probably no one would ever notice.
We might even be right.
So, **do we accept the easy and lazy way or do we CHOOSE to emphasize logical thinking?**

The choice belongs to everyone and at times, we all make the wrong choices.
Needless to say, the VP.Start team is not immune to these mistake

and errors.
But at its core, when VP.Start is true to its beliefs and ideology,
the clan *succeeds or fails*
because the team *chooses to be powerful thinkers or they don't.*
The success of the past suggests
that VP.Start has learned well the value of the **triple helix of powerful thinking**.
But *yesterday's success does not guarantee success tomorrow.*
The team must rededicate itself to **choosing powerful thinking every day**.

Having powerful thinking does not ensure that you will be a world-class communicator
BUT *you will **not** be a world-class communicator without positive thinking, creative thinking and logical thinking.*

CEO Phally would like to pose a question to all of you, dear readers.
Have you made your choice?
And, have you made your choice again TODAY?



Chapter 7

The SIMA Ideology
Radical Decentralization

"Many people think that decentralization means loss of control. That's simply not true.
You can improve the control of events instead of the control of people. The more people you have proactively working to create favorable events - the more control you have, by definition."
-Wilbur Creech, US Military Thinker and General

As we stated in the last chapter, VP.Start values powerful thinking.
The SIMA Journey necessitates powerful thinking combining creativity, logic and positivity.
Decentralization takes powerful thinking to the next logical step.

For example, if you work for VP.Start,
you almost certainly have a solid skill set, expertise, experience and areas of technical prowess.
Yet, to state the quite obvious, *you also have deficiencies and limitations* in some areas.
You may be an incredible coder or software developer
but know little about marketing strategies.
Or, you may be a world-class engineer
but have very limited public speaking abilities.

In terms of creativity,
You may be an outside of the box thinker with revolutionary ideas in your domain,
Be it sales or business development or communication.

But it is highly unlikely that you will be breathtakingly innovative *across ALL domains*.

Even a highly positive team member can face *moments of discouragement and doubt*.

Do you value your team and their ideas over your own?
Do you believe that they can bring things to the table that you cannot?

Decentralization comes from the philosophical perspective that
our *logic is better than* ***my*** *logic,*
our *creativity exceeds* ***my*** *creativity and*
our *positivity outweighs and surpasses* ***my*** *creativity.*

If you want truly powerful thinking at the corporate level,
you need to give everyone a voice and a seat at the table.
Corporate powerful thinking is a powerhouse that
individual powerful thinking can never match.
*However, c*orporate powerful thinking requires decentralization to exist and thrive.

You might think that decentralization would belong in the Methodology Section of this book,
rather than the Ideology Section.
CEO Phally would not agree.
As he likes to put it, "**Decentralization is a mindset** before it is corporate governance architecture."

Think about it in this way, if you would:
A company can build a decentralized management model,
forge agile teams, remove corporate titles and

flatten the entire company hierarchy.
But *decentralized management will never succeed in a company that does not have a decentralized mindset*.

Are you willing to take the risk of having a decentralized mindset?

There are some core beliefs that inform the SIMA decentralized mindset:
1) Creativity can never be taught or managed; it can only be nurtured and fostered.
2) Centralized corporate governance can maintain a company or optimize a product but it can never be transformative.
3) CEOs and management teams are optional but understanding of and commitment to a shared vision are not.
4) A decentralized company does not seek qualified, highly skilled employees. It seeks staff members that are creative, positive and above all else, passionate.
5) If you have a limited, closed mindset, how can you expect unlimited, universal outcomes?
6) The best CEO is not the one who leads from the front but the one who gradually disappears.

There are some contentious and controversial claims here, so let's look at them one by one.

1) Creativity can never be taught or managed; it can only be nurtured and fostered.
This is the basis on which SIMA decentralized management is built.
A successful company does not provide lectures and lessons and workshops on creativity as if it is a subject to be mastered like a programming language.
If creativity and innovative thinking could be taught, centralized management might be a wise idea.
The most creative person would be the leader and

she or he would impart their creativity to the team members, correcting their errors and enhancing their innovative skills.
But creativity is not like that at all.
Creativity comes from inside of each one of us.
From becoming ourselves.
From ceasing to be a follower.
Any attempt to manage or manipulate this process will instantly destroy all creativity.

That would be like a company demanding creative solutions and then laying out the detailed parameters of what those solutions must look like.
If we follow those parameters to the letter without exception, we are trying to **create outside the box solutions inside the box**.

A decentralized company allows team members *to experiment, to learn and grow, to try outlandish ideas and even, to fail spectacularly.*
Failures are noted as learning experiences on the road to innovation.
Only in a company with this kind of decentralized, nurturing atmosphere, can creativity dare to grow.
If you ask me to be creative, but punish me when I fail, *I will avoid failure and ignore my creativity.*

Are you ready to allow to yourself to try new things and to fail spectacularly?
As mentioned before,
VP.Start has inaugurated a weekly Friday conference, open to all, called the SIMA Journey Conference.
This conference is a chance to discuss and examine

some of the latest trends in cutting edge technology
but it is also an opportunity for a wide variety of team members to speak publicly.

They create their own presentations, design their own slides and do their own research.

Some speeches are excellent.
Some are less so.
All of them are valuable.
Team members get a chance to raise their voices,
hone their speaking skills and
feel valued by their company,
which they are!

2) Centralized corporate governance can maintain a company or optimize a product but it can never be transformative.

Steve Jobs founded Apple and imbued it with revolutionary ideas and innovative principles.
After his death, he was replaced by Tim Cook, who maintained and managed the company.
This is not at all a criticism of Tim Cook,
since Apple became much more profitable and successful under Tim Cook than it was under Steve Jobs.

The point is that Steve Jobs was a transformative leader who built a company that people FBR (feel, believe and remember).
Tim Cook was never a transformative leader
nor did he ever intend to be one.
He was an amazing manager,
a powerful product optimizer and a great team builder.

Maybe we can think of it like this:
In Hindu theology, there are the three central deities:
Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.
Brahma is the creator, the force of creativity and transformation.
Vishnu is the preserver, the one who maintains and manages and upholds.
Shiva is the destroyer, the one who clears away the past so Brahma can create anew.

Companies can be compared to this pattern:
Founders and innovators like CEO Phally are the Brahma figures,
creating a new company and new ideas out of nothing.
This is like the stage of decentralized management.

Vishnu is the maintainer, the optimizer,
the preserver and protector.
This is the post-founder stage of a company, similar to centralized management.

Finally, inevitably, Shiva arrives with disruption and destruction.
But this destruction is not negative.
It is an opportunity to return to the creative roots and start over again.

In the SIMA ideological view,
that is the difference between centralized and decentralized management, as well.
If you want t*o improve your products,*
enhance your services,
maintain and extend your market share and
make continued incremental growth,
centralized management might be the best choice for you.
On the other hand, if you want a revolution,

an exponential explosion, a transformation,
you must opt for decentralized management.
Are you seeking optimization or transformation?
Are you seeking incremental or exponential growth?
Whichever one you are seeking is probably what you will find!

Again, to be crystal clear,
there is absolutely nothing wrong with a well-managed business,
growing gradually but consistently.
But, this is not the model that VP.Start selected.
They decided to change the world **more sustainably**.
More radically.
More explosively.
They decided to go for radical transformation.
Decentralized management is an inevitable part of that decision.

3) <u>CEOs and management teams are optional
but understanding of and commitment to a shared vision are not.</u>

According to the SIMA ideology of decentralization,
titles and positions are relatively insignificant.
A great idea is a great idea whether developed by a CEO or a brand new team member.

Are you willing to minimize your position to maximize teamwork and cooperation?
When CEOs and dignitaries from other companies and government bodies visit VP.Start,
they are often surprised to be met by a delegation of ordinary team members.
This is not disrespect.
Or laziness on the part of the management team.

This is decentralization.
The CEO makes a conscientious effort not to cover events and meetings that could be covered just as effectively or even more effectively by others.
Occasionally, the VP.Start team members themselves are surprised to be put in charge of international delegations
like the recent ones to Malaysia and Singapore for product compliance.

While positions, titles and corporate governance hierarchy may be optional,
if decentralization is attempted
without a clear understanding of the destination and
the vision of the the company,
this can quickly lead to utter chaos.

Consider this:
If we get in a car, and half the passengers want to go to Siem Reap to see Angkor Wat
and the other half want to go to Sihanoukville, to swim and relax on the beach,
and if we take turns at driving, changing the driver at fixed intervals,
where will we end up?
Probably not at Siem Reap or Sihanoukville, I dare say.
If everyone share the same destination,
sharing the driving makes life easier for everyone.
If there are multiple, competing destinations,
sharing the driving leads to anger, arguments and chaos.
Not exactly what companies hope for.

That's why **many companies support decentralization in theory but reject it in practice**.

VP.Start recognizes the potential for decentralization to descend into confusion and complication.

But they feel that the answer is not to give up on decentralization but instead,
to *make sure that everyone is on the same page,*
on the same journey,
following the same vision,
to the same goals.
One of the purposes that this book is hoping to accomplish is
to lay out the SIMA Journey
in a written form so team members can stay on track or
get back on track even in a highly decentralized corporate culture.

Are you willing to abandon your personal views at times to stay aligned with the corporate vision?
A highly creative and innovative company like VP.Start CAN survive without a centralized management structure but it won't last a day UNLESS EVERY team member knows the company vision and aligns themselves with it.

4) A decentralized company does not seek qualified, highly skilled employees.
It seeks staff members that are creative, positive and above all else, passionate.

This is an idea that you could easily misinterpret
because this part of the SIMA decentralized management philosophy
might be the *most counterintuitive of all.*
To state the extremely obvious,
most companies look for highly qualified and suitably experienced candidates with direct knowledge, background and skills and expertise for the position on offer.
To do otherwise, to most observers,
would seem foolhardy and ridiculous.
But VP.Start is never afraid of looking foolhardy or ridiculous.
Their theory is that *skills and abilities can be developed later,*

experience and expertise can be honed on the job and
knowledge can be expanded fairly easily.

Conversely, **creativity can not be learned or taught**.
It is a decision to be yourself.
To dare to be yourself.
To ignore what others think about you.
Creativity cannot be forced on someone
but without it, a candidate is simply unsuitable for VP.Start.
Similarly, positive thinking is something that a person must develop and choose by themselves.
Those who lack positive thinking will find working in VP.Start an uncomfortable experience indeed. The VP.Start team spends all their time outside of the comfort zone, testing their boundaries and pushing their limits. If that is not a place or a circumstance that you would choose to be in, you will be unhappy at VP.Start and before too long, you will leave.

But even more than the attributes of creative thinking and positive thinking, **a successful VP.Start candidate must be passionate** about the VP.Start vision.
Without passionate belief in the importance of achieving the goals of a sustainable world,
there is no way that candidates and a new team members will be able to put up with the demanding schedule and meet the challenging deadlines.
What are you desperately, deeply passionate about?
What are you so dedicated to that you are truly "all in"?

In this context, CEO Phally often talks about "optional" team members.
These are people who work at VP.Start but they are not "all in."
They are often very talented and skilled.
As a result, they are open to other opportunities with better pay and benefits.

They always keep one eye open for other opportunities.
Nothing wrong with this, of course,
but it indicates less than total passion for the vision.

Or, in the opposite vein,
some candidates come to VP.Start because all other options have already failed.
As a last resort.
Either way, they do not have an absolute commitment to the VP.Start vision.
At some point, it is highly likely that they will leave.

Recently, I heard the story of two highly qualified candidates
that were rejected by the VP.Start hiring team.
Both were graduates of international universities with very solid reputations in tech.
Both had a high level of skills in their respective fields and considerable experience.
Both were very fluent in English and ready to help VP.Start on its push to the global stage.
But each one had their own fatal flaw.

The first one was a highly creative and talented candidate
who had tried one more than one occasion to start his own business and had failed.
A bit of red flag.
This indicated probable limitations to positive thinking and passion.
But that alone would not derail a candidate.
The real issue was that he had come to VP.Start as a kind of last option after everything else had fallen apart.
That sealed his rejection.
VP.Start and the SIMA Journey cannot be your last choice.
It must be your ONLY choice.

All or nothing.

The other candidate was quite the opposite.
He had had an outstanding career and he saw the potential of working with VP.Start as a great, golden opportunity.
Unfortunately, rather than embracing the VP.Start vision or even making the effort to understand it, he wanted to make changes to bring it more in line with conventional business strategies.
Inside the box thinking.
Inside the comfort zone, "normal" practices.
In other words,
he was not positive about VP.Start corporate culture,
he was not passionate about accomplishing the SIMA Journey and especially the SIMA Ideology
and he looked down on the company as in need of more conventional, traditional thinking.
Many companies would be excited to hire a quality candidate like him
but for an idea-driven company like VP.Start, he was not a good fit.

CEO Phally often says that his current job is "his last job."
This is not a morbid prophecy of impending death
It merely means that he has no intention of doing anything else for the rest of his life.
VP.Start looks for employees with that same mindset.
Mindset over skill set.
Are you willing to adopt a "this is my last job" mindset?

5) <u>If you have a limited, closed mindset, how can you expect unlimited, universal outcomes?</u>
Decentralized management is undeniably a risky philosophy.
It could lead to confusion, chaos and even corporate catastrophe.

It is certainly much easier to adopt a conventional, centralized approach.
The CEO and management team can **make all** the decisions,
chair all the meetings,
lead all the projects,
welcome all the visitors,
give all the speeches,
control the company completely.
Everyone speaks from the same script,
follows the same rules and
all decisions are made in the classic "waterfall" style.
Top down.
Follow the chain of command.
Obey the rules of the hierarchy.

For a conventional company, centralized management may work just fine.
As a matter of fact, for a manufacturing company or an engineering company or any product-driven company, centralized management may be the ideal.
But NOT for VP.Start.

VP.Start **is not** selling a product.
VP.Start **is not** building a brand.
VP.Start **is not** promoting services.
VP.Start **is not** marketing and publicizing and announcing to gain greater traction or profitability.

VP.Start **wants to change the world**.
Make it *more greenable.*
More reliable.
More sustainable.
Radically different desired outcomes require radically different approaches.

For instance, at one pitching conference,
Phally was pulled aside after a speech by the hosts of the event and told to stop talking about "changing the world."
Too bold.
Too aggressive.
Too arrogant.
Furthermore, he was told to stop asking for $100M in investment support.
Stick to $1M, he was told.
$100M is *too massive.*
Too radical.
Too excessive.
What do you think that Phally's reaction was?

Phally responded that it was only arrogant to say
that you were going to change the world,
if you couldn't do it.
If you could change the world
and you had the ideas to do so
and the passion to do so,
where was the arrogance?
If you have earth shattering ideas, why not say so?
And why ask for only a small amount of support when you are trying to change the world?
Such a small ask would mean that you didn't really intend to change the world at all.

Decentralization is the only option for people who are not satisfied to be conventional
and want to spark a revolution.
They know that there are no incredible outcomes without taking incredible risks.

6) The best CEO is not the one who leads from the front but the one who gradually disappears.

CEO Phally is a wise and firm believer in the idea of impermanence.
We have no guarantee of tomorrow,
no promise of next year or of even 5 minutes from now, for that matter.
Therefore, **a wise CEO is ALWAYS preparing his team for corporate life without him.**
If the CEO becomes indispensable,
this guarantees catastrophe down the road.

Directly related to this concept is the further idea of living in the present.
NOW.
Accomplish everything that you can today because you may not have any future beyond today.
Oddly, this is not a sad realization or a cruel expression of the universe, but it is a comfort to innovators like Phally.
There is no longer any need to worry endlessly about the things that we cannot control.
Most of things that we fear never happen anyway.
Be in the now,
live in the now,
love life without limits and
gladly accept the reality that "this too shall pass."

Of course, at the beginning of a corporate lifespan,
it falls to the Founder and the CEO to **establish** the vision,
nurture the culture and
inculcate it into each team member.
At the earliest stages of company development,
the CEO must be a leader at almost all times,

in all meetings, in all decisions.
But this is not the optimal situation and it is not sustainable over the long haul.

As soon as possible,
CEO **Phally began downsizing himself** and
downloading responsibilities and opportunities onto the team.
He became a master of delegation.
He still remained the voice of the company,
the face of the company,
and the arbiter of the the most important, big picture decisions.
But the everyday decisions were left to the team.
The CEOs main job had transformed into monitoring
whether the team was maintaining fidelity
to the core vision of the SIMA Journey or not.

In actual practice, CEO Phally has been gradually disappearing,
spending more time in meditation at the pagoda,
spending more time improving his communications skills,
spending more time "with himself" as he puts it.
His ultimate goal is to become completely unnecessary
and one day to simply walk away.
Hopefully no one will notice that he is gone.

You may find this radical decentralization ideology to be extreme.
And, to be fair, it would be inaccurate to claim that it has already been fully implemented.
Some parts may never be implemented to the most radical extent.
Be that as it may,
CEO Phally believes that emphasizing and envisioning decentralization is in some ways as mission critical as full

implementation.
The SIMA Decentralization Mindset.
How far the SIMA decentralization program takes them, still remains to be seen.

True decentralization is risky, radical, revolutionary.
Are you ready to take the risk, adopt the radical and revolutionary mindset?
Are you ready to walk the walk and not just talk the talk?



Chapter 8

The SIMA Ideology Love Everyone But Don't Care About Anyone

"People who are not interested in people, are the most interesting people."
-CEO Phally

On the surface, this quote may seem like a contradiction.
Love everyone but don't care about anyone?
And in a way, it is.
But sometimes it takes grappling with a contradiction to **get us to the next level** in our thinking.

Do you love others?
Or do you merely want to sell them your product?
If you do love others, do you care about what they think about you?

If we like flowers, we may choose to cut them and put them in a vase.
But not if we love flowers.
But if we love flowers, we will never cut them.
We will *let them grow and watch them grow from a distance*.
If you love people, you will let them grow and leave them alone.
Phally loves his team and indeed everyone else as well.
But he is not interested in them.
He lets them grow *in their own way at their own pace.*

Let's think about an example to try to fathom this concept:
Phally had just returned from a business trip to Germany.
On the off days, he went sightseeing in Potsdam between conferences

in Berlin.
He ate German food.
He saw the Brandenberg Gate.
And yet on his return to Cambodia, he had little to say about his trip.
How was the food? OK.
How was the sightseeing, the culture? Nothing special.
How was Germany? Not too bad, I guess.
When pressed about his experiences,
he said that people are basically the same everywhere.
Same old, same old.

You might think that this means that Phally is not interested in the world,
or at the very least, not interested in travel,
but nothing could be further from the truth.
He loves roaming the world but he is *uninterested in the world*.
He is interested in providing sustainable solutions to the world.
Not for the profits or the prestige or the power.
Just because people need these solutions.

Who needs these ecosolutions?
People who Phally and the team love….
but are not at all interested in.

Are you interested in people enough to customize yourself and your ideas to try to please others?

Phally is not interested in people.
Not at all.
To tell the truth, he is not very good at remembering names and even faces.

At a recent business party, he introduced himself to a stranger.

The "stranger" pointed out that this was not the first time that they had met.
In fact, he had known Phally for more than 10 years.
Each time they met , Phally had acted as if they were meeting for the first time.
Phally freely admitted to that "stranger" that he might not recognize him the next time, either.
That might seem distant and cold to you
but actually such an understanding is not quite right.
Phally *loves people and cares about people but he is not interested in them*.
But, what does this mean in practice?

Think about it like this, if you will:
VP.Start wants to provide services and solutions that genuinely help people.
Therefore, it is anathema to their corporate ethos
to try to use marketing to sell someone something
that they don't really need.
If the VP.Start team explains the advantages of their solutions
but for whatever reason,
they don't resonate with the potential customer or
the customer sees no need to implement these solutions,
VP.Start is more than happy to let them walk away.
No high pressure sales.
Ever.
In that sense, they definitely care about people and care about making better outcomes for people, even if that outcome is to decide not to become a customer.

In other words, as Phally likes to put it,
"We love people but we don't care about people and what they want."
What that also means is that VP.Start is unwilling to customize its products and services

to make customers happy and satisfied
because in the words of Steve Jobs, often quoted by Phally,
"*the customer doesn't know what they want until we tell them.*"
VP.Start offers their solutions.
Customers can choose to *take them or leave them*.
Implement them or reject them.
Either one is fine to VP.Start.
What the customer cannot do is change them.

Do you have principles and perspectives and rules that you will not change, no matter what the customer might tell you that they want?
Do you think that it is wise business practice to have some unchangeable guidelines?

This may well seem to be an *arrogant, cocky, overconfident* attitude.
Perhaps, to some extent, it is exactly that.
But let's say that you go to the doctor when you don't feel well.
You ask the doctor for his solutions and remedies to your ailments.
Do you try to **customize or modify** the medicine that the doctor gives you?
Do you **dispute** the diagnosis or treatment plan?
Do you decide to take the doctor's advice that you like and **ignore** the part that you don't care for?
That is not what you do if you are wise.

So, does that mean that doctors are arrogant?
No.
Doctors want to help us based on their advanced knowledge, skills and experience.
Knowledge, skills and experience that we patients do not have.
Of course, we can choose to walk away and ignore the doctor's suggestions.
Conversely, we can also, needless to say, choose to follow the doctor's advice.

But what we cannot do is try to make the doctor change her or his advice to meet our needs or requests.
We cannot write our own prescriptions.
A wise doctor would never allow that.
Take it or leave it but don't try to change it.

In a similar way, all are welcome to accept or reject VP.Start's solutions, implement them or ignore them,
but **you do not have the option of changing them**.
On this point, VP.Start is **adamant**.

Does it matter to you who your customer is? Should it matter? Would you be more likely to customise and alter your ideas for a rich, powerful, well-connected potential customer?

Furthermore, in that sense, to VP.Start, it really makes no difference who you are.
You may be an important government official,
a well-respected professor or academician,
a wealthy business tycoon or mogul or
an influential overseas investor or
just an average consumer or individual customer.
For VP.Start, your position, title, influence, power and wealth matter not at all.
VP.Start changes its vision for no one.
In a positive sense, this means that VP.Start respects everyone equally.

So, clearly VP.Start does not "care" about people, in the usual meaning of the word.
This may seem like a strange business model but actually, it seems to work.
Why?
Because **VP.Start may not care about people, but they definitely love people.**

And *people seem to recognize that, at the deepest level*.
VP.Start may not be even remotely interested in people and what they think they want,
but they are deeply interested in making their world a better place to live in through the power of innovation and data-driven technology.

Do you care what others think about you?
Do you build your self-worth on the positive or negative evaluations of others?
Add to the SIMA ideology one more ingredient:
CEO Phally does not care if you love him or hate him.
He has experienced long-time teammates and supporters who told him
how much they loved him,
his ideas,
his solutions and
the entire SIMA Journey.
A short time later, these erstwhile "lovers" were slandering VP.Start,
stealing their proprietary secrets and codes,
luring away other team members surreptitiously and
spreading lies about the innovative solutions of VP.Start.
Phally is not bitter.
As we will see in the next chapter, people come and people go.
Phally is not bitter but he is wiser than he was.
He knows that you should **never let praise get you too high or a discouraging word get you too low.**
In other words, *love others, yes,*
but care about them and what they say, no, not in the least!

Can a company go to the global stage, the world market, and succeed with this approach?
That, of course, remains to be seen

but I suspect we will all know the answer to that question in fairly short order.
Whether they win or lose with this approach, despite all odds,
VP.Start has decided to go all in on this strategy,
believing that in the long run, people want a company who loves them and makes products and services to express that "love" for the users, more than people want a company that caters to their whims and temporary wishes.

Let me ask you a question, dear reader,
How much do you care what others think about you and your innovations?
Are you willing or unwilling to customize those innovative solutions to make them more profitable in the short term?
Or, do you imbibe the VP.Start ideology, if you will,
and refuse to customize your ideas, your products and yourselves?

Make your choice and test your theory. Let's see what happens a few years down the road!



Chapter 9

The SIMA Ideology
People Come and People Go

"As people come and go, appreciate the role that they play in your story.
Each one contributes a chapter to your life."
-Author unknown

At VP.Start, we are always talking about **the SIMA Journey**.
Not the SIMA Project.
Not the SIMA Strategy.
Not the SIMA Plan.
The word "Journey" is very important.

What does the word "journey" indicate?
A journey is a long-term development over time.
A journey is sometimes arduous and includes overcoming obstacles along the way.
A journey is full of surprises and adventure, the unexpected.
And….
A journey is a movement that people can join or leave at any time.
Have you found your journey yet?

People come and people go.
This is true both
inside VP.Start and among the supporters of VP.Start externally, as well.
Some people come for a season and *leave amicably* when times change.
Others *leave in anger or disappointment*
when the journey goes in a way that they do not agree with or approve of.

Ronald Wayne was the least known member of the trio that started Apple, along with Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak.
But he was not insignificant.
Mr. Wayne created the Apple logo and wrote the first partnership agreement.
He provided the very first funding to support Apple.
He had a 10% equity stake in the corporation.
But he decided to leave Apple *after only 12 days*
because he was worried that Jobs was accumulating too much debt.
He *didn't like the financial direction of the journey* so he left.
His 10% stake would be worth 100s of billions of US dollars currently if he had stayed with the company.
Instead he sold the 10% share back to Apple **for $800**.

What will you do when the company vision and journey start to differ from your own personal perspective?

Jef Raskin was the 31st employee of Apple and
he founded the Macintosh (Mac) Computer division at Apple,
which ultimately became the most powerful and most profitable division.
He was widely considered to be a brilliant computer programmer and designer.
His radical dream was to build "an affordable all-in-one computer" for ordinary consumers.
(At this time, personal computers were rare.
Most computers were used by large businesses and educational institutions.)

Unfortunately, Jobs and Raskin had radically different visions for the Mac computer, with Jobs wanting a sophisticated and more expensive mouse-based interface but Raskin pushing for a simpler, cheaper text-based keyboard interface. When the management team sided with Jobs and his approaches, Raskin left in anger.

When you are overruled and your ideas disregarded, how do you handle the rejection?

One more.
Steve Wozniak, the co-founder of Apple, designed the Apple 1 and Apple 2 computers which were in the early days, by far, the most popular products made by Apple.
However, Jobs convinced the management of Apple
to decrease funding for the Apple computer division and
to increase funding for the newly founded Mac computer division.
Jobs also mobilized a massive marketing campaign
that completely excluded the Apple computer division.
Frustrated, Wozniak soon left Apple to start a new company, CL9, which developed the first programmable remote control.

When your journey is blocked, do you start a new one?
When your dreams are not fulfilled, do you give up or try again elsewhere?

Three different powerful members of the Apple Journey.
Three different problems but the same final outcome.

One was worried about finances and left of his own accord.
Another left in bitterness when his plans and goals were overruled.
The last one left when his innovations were gradually surpassed by other products in the company, neither bitter nor completely happy,
but ready to follow his own journey as it separated from the Apple Journey.

I mention these three Apple employees because they serve as a template for what has happened in the SIMA Journey as well.
And every other innovative journey in history, I suspect.

There were those who left VP.Start and the SIMA Journey because they grew concerned about the radical, revolutionary approaches of VP.Start.
Unconventional business practices.
Low pressure sales.
Limited efforts to build governmental contacts.
Marketing by word of mouth, voice and powerful example.
Refusal to leverage influencers and popular culture figures.
Hiring people based on passion more than skills.
An insistence on going to the global stage that some found premature.

Conversely, some team members and outside supporters left because they felt that **they** could do a better job managing and marketing the technologies that VP.Start had created.
As mentioned before in the Story section,
some left in anger with the goal of establishing their own company based on the internal information that they took with them from VP.Start.

Others chose to leave the SIMA Journey
because they felt uncomfortable with the direction that the journey was taking.
For example, some investors and consultants told CEO Phally to
tone down his big picture thinking,
reduce his requests for funding,
build a local company with only very limited international aspirations and
focus more resources on traditional marketing strategies.
They urged him to stop talking about "world-class" and
"earth shattering" and
"game changing" soultions.
They were concerned
that **the global market was not ready to accept a Cambodian tech company** that dared to call its campus, the "Sen Sok Valley Campus"

as a rival to Silicon Valley and
dared to call its new annex, a "Global Innovation Hub".
They wanted a quieter,
more modest,
more local,
more incrementally growing journey.
Not at all surprisingly, CEO Phally and the management team refused.
If anything, the VP.Start team wanted to go faster, bigger,
bolder, crazier,
more disruptive, not less.
If some people doubted Cambodian tech potential,
that was their mistake, not the mistake of the VP.Start team.
They knew what they could do and what they had already accomplished.
These "take it slow" consultants also departed the journey.

What do you do when "consultants" doubt your ideas, your plans, your abilities?
How do you avoid discouragement?

But **as people left, more and more came**, as well.
During a very recent job hiring campaign to fill 5 positions, for example,
VP.Start got more than 300 applications,
some of them, for the first time,
from outside of Cambodia, as well.
Universities are *lining up* to sign MoUs with VP.Start
because they want mentorships, training and research opportunities for their students.
They want access to the SIMA Journey.
Government ministers and official delegations like ones from the Cambodian Senate began to arrive at VP.Start *more and more regularly*,
even though VP.Start never went out of its way to cultivate these contacts.

Business forums started *seeking and inviting* CEO Phally as a main speaker.
Business leaders,
government leaders,
education leaders and
leading students all wanted to participate in the SIMA Journey..

People come and people go. Simple.
Not a very amazing observation.
Rather obvious.
But, the SIMA Ideology interprets this obvious situation in a counter intuitive way.

Of course, when new people join the SIMA Journey,
it makes the journey faster, stronger, wiser.
And yet, when people leave the Journey,
talented, qualified, amazing people depart,
this makes the SIMA Journey **even stronger**.
As a matter of fact,
people leaving the Journey is often more empowering than people joining the Journey.

Why?
It likely sounds crazy that losing talented people
and their experience,
expertise and skills,
knowledge and abilities,
can be a plus, a positive.
But you have to remember that for the SIMA Journey,
the most important attribute required is passion.
Team members who lack this passion are toxic.
Not because they are malicious actors or nefarious workers,

but because **a lack of passion can spread to others**, like a disease.

What is needed is passion!
Not outstanding skills and talents.
These can be learned.
Not incredible experience and expertise.
These can be acquired over time.
Not vast, encyclopedic knowledge of technology.
It will become obsolete tomorrow.
You must have passion for the vision.
You must have dedication to the SIMA Journey.
Otherwise, **you MUST go.**

Are you full of passion, addicted to your journey?
If not, it is probably because you have not found your true journey yet.

If you lack passionate love for the vision, you must go.
Not because the VP.Start team hates you.
Not at all.
Because **everyone has the right to find their own journey**.
If the SIMA Journey of VP.Start is not your journey, go find your own journey.
No hard feelings.
Warm wishes for your success.
To reach a brighter tomorrow, we need many people on many journeys.
If other journeys succeed and bring us closer to the sustainable world, this is a cause for celebration,
even though this success may have come outside of the SIMA Journey framework.

There is an engineer at VP.Start.

Let's call him Dara.
Dara is very dedicated and very talented.
I recently had a chance to hear him speak on the power of IoT to change the future.
Very passionate.
Very lucid.
Very detailed and knowledgeable.

A year or so before, I was informed that Dara almost left VP.Start.
Some of the "slanderers" who had left VP.Start a year or so prior tried to recruit him to join their company.
Dara seriously considered the opportunity to take on a higher position in their organization,
to promote his ideals with them,
to follow a different journey.
Conflicted and confused,
he met with CEO Phally in private and expressed his thoughts.

Since Dara was and is undoubtedly an important member of the VP.Start team with superior skills and advanced knowledge,
you might expect that CEO Phally would try to convince him to stay.
Phally did not.
He said that Dara was welcome to stay if he felt like dedicating himself to the SIMA Journey.
If he felt a different calling and a different journey,
he could leave at any time with Phally's blessing.
If Dara wanted to start his own company and pursue his own journey in that way,
Phally would do what he could to support that new journey.
This was not at all what Dara was expecting to hear.

Dara took some time to consider what journey he really wanted to pursue.
A good salary.
A higher position.
A new company.
New responsibilities.
Ultimately he rejected those and decided that his journey was
the SIMA Journey of VP.Start and
he rededicated himself to remaining with the company and
moving forwards toward the destination.
But I can say with absolute confidence,
that **CEO Phally and the VP.Start would have proudly supported him whether he had stayed or had decided to started a new journey.**

In the end, no one stays together forever.
Sometimes the paths split and the journeys separate.
Other times, age becomes a factor that cannot be ignored.
For whatever reason, impermanence is inevitable and unavoidable.
The SIMA Journey continues even though at some point,
we no longer are able to.
Instead of feeling sad, looking at impermanence, we can choose to embrace it.
Welcome it.
Celebrate it.
Long after we are long gone,
the journey will go on and on.

There is no greater joy than finding your journey, your calling.
If you don't feel that joy, may I suggest that you need to keep looking?
When you find that journey, hold on tight and never let go!

Chapter 10
The SIMA Ideology:
Celebrate your milestones……briefly

"Remember to celebrate milestones as you prepare for the road ahead."
-Nelson Mandela

Mr. Mandela captures the SIMA Ideology exactly in this quote.
It is **important to celebrate** milestones and successes
WHILE we are preparing for the next challenge.
We *never overlook the milestone*
but we also *never stop preparing for the road ahead.*
Overlooking the milestones makes work a drudgery.
Stopping preparations for the road ahead sets us up for failure.
The celebrations and memorials give us energy and encouragement.
But we can never focus on our milestones for very long.
We overcome one obstacle in order to get to the next one.
And the next one is usually bigger than the previous one.

How do you feel about your work? Do you enjoy it? Or do you survive it?
In your opinion, are our feelings important to our success and perseverance?
Our resilience?
How do we achieve the proper balance of remembering the past and preparing for the future?

As you saw in the Story Section of this book,
VP.Start has reached a number of major milestones.
The first customers,
the first breaking even,

the first turning a profit,
the first international visitors,
the first pitching conference,
the first contract with the EDC,
the first university MoU,
the new SIMA Journey Annex,
selection for ASEAN meeting,
selection as keynote company for Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Day,
selection by EuroCham as speaker on the sustainable EV future,
selection by GGGI (Global Green Growth Institute) as a grant recipient,
selection for the smart grid modernization pilot project in Laos.

The list of milestones could go on forever and
we would still surely leave out a few of the milestones along the way.

The point is not to boast of our achievements.

The point is to recognize the importance of valuing *each step* on the SIMA Journey.

The SIMA Journey, like any journey, is about *the travel as much as the destination.*

But one other thing that CEO Phally promotes actively and unflinchingly is ***staying in the moment.***
Actually, **failure to stay in the now** means failure to continue making progress.
Let me explain why.

In a recent and fairly typical week for the CEO and management team,
CEO Phally **hosted** a major conference on cybersecurity,
held a strategy session with the management,
researched funding and grant options for the pilot project in Laos,
met visitors from the EDC including the Managing Director,

visited the offices of the ASEAN Secretary General for a meeting and pitching,
organized training session for the newly established international liaison team, and
then he was down to the airport for **a two-day business trip to Laos** to meet the management of the EDL (the utility of Lao PDR).
After each event, of course,
Phally takes *a few moments to reflect*,
decompress and internalize any lessons learned.
But then, quickly, **it is time to move on** to the next *topic,*
meeting,
event,
conference.

Spending too much time **dwelling on failures** or **rejoicing over successes *could be fatal*** to the the next project.

Do you take the time to learn lessons, reflect and enjoy the moment?
Do you do this quickly and promptly and move on rapidly to the next stage?
If you wait for tomorrow, remember that, it is "always a day away."

That might sound **hectic**…
and it definitely is.
And yet, that is not the whole picture, by any means.
If it were, VP.Start might be an intense, stressful, pressure packed workplace.
And like all workplaces, at times, it certainly is.
Deadlines to meet.
Obstacles to overcome.
Projects to complete.
Products to produce and innovations to innovate.
All in a timely fashion.

Yet, if you visit VP.Start on a typical work day,
you will almost certainly notice **two** things.
Smiles. Plenty of smiles.
And laughter. Genuine laughter. Lots and lots of laughter.
VP.Start is a fun place to work.
There is a corporate culture of joy that is **hard to create and harder to maintain,** but VP.Start has fostered and cultivated that atmosphere.

How can a **frequently** busy,
occasionally stressful,
often challenging job
also be **usually** fun and **always** enjoyable?
It doesn't happen by accident or coincidence.
Creating a fun atmosphere requires conscientious effort.
It is **hard work to have fun**, perhaps.
Work hard. Play hard. Live hard.

How do you do the hard work required to develop your ideas and build your innovations
WHILE enjoying the journey with plenty of smiles and laughter?

I saw one example that was very telling
on a company trip to Siem Reap and Angkor Wat
to celebrate 12 years of successful business operations.
In the evening, the entire team went out to enjoy themselves in Siem Reap.
Usually Phally does not take part in such activities. Not at all.
It seems *frivolous* to him and he has little time for "playing"
that does not advance the SIMA Journey.
However he confided to me that he thought that
it was *mission critical for him to celebrate with the team* on this particular evening even though that wasn't really inside his comfort zone.

With intentionality.
Drinking, singing, dancing, joking….*laughing*.

For CEO Phally, this was a sacrifice, a struggle,
but he realized the value and **significance of celebrating milestones, briefly but intensely.**
Taking a step forward.
A stepping stone on the SIMA Journey.

Are you ready to celebrate milestones "briefly but intensely"?
If the celebration is too long, momentum can be lost.
If the celebration is not intense, the purpose may not be met.

We will talk later about the meditation and mindfulness training
that VP.Start incorporates into its SIMA Methodology.
At this point, let's just say that *meditation requires relaxation.*
True relaxation requires trust in your team members.
To build that trust, in the mindfulness training,
there were **several games to build team work and cohesiveness**.
Silly games.
Crazy games.
After some team members managed to overcome their initial shyness,
they were **acting, jumping, running, moving, dancing, performing….*laughing*.**

Of course,
it is not always peace and harmony in a company.
Not even in a happy company.
Not all the time.
There are disagreements and disputes.
Occasionally, an idea must be rejected and

the originator of that idea is unlikely to be pleased.

Bad news **must be delivered**.

Criticism **must be delivered**.

Faults **must be pointed out**.

Failures **must be pointed out.**

Inadequacies **must be reprimanded.**

Laziness **must be reprimanded.**

However, CEO Phally constantly maintains an **attitude of humor** that is infectious.

He lightens the mood and breaks the tension.

Humor spreads throughout the company as team members feel greenlighted to share their humorous sides as well.

When you feel frustrated and unappreciated,

when you face issues with your colleagues and coworkers,

when they fail to understand and value your ideas and innovations,

how do you maintain a positive attitude?

How do you bring laughter into the picture for healing and growth?

According to the Bible, **"laughter and a happy heart are good like a medicine."**

Whatever your religious perspective,

I think you should be able to appreciate these words.

Laughter brings us back to our original point: celebrate milestones, briefly.

Briefly but intensely.

Briefly but vibrantly.

Briefly but with plenty of laughter.

Briefly but with a big smile.

Life is too short to ignore successes and milestones.

Please don't forget.

If we don't enjoy today, we may not have tomorrow to enjoy.

A wise company and a wise corporate culture finds **the proper balance** between *staying in the present,*

remembering the past and

focusing on the future.

A corporate culture that **takes the job seriously**

without the team taking themselves too seriously.

Yes, of course,

Dedication and

commitment and

sacrifice and

industriousness and

proactivity.

Covered with laughter and joy and love.

A true innovator must find the balance between three competing desires.

The desire to remember and honor the past.

The desire to to focus and prepare for the future.

The desire to stay in the present and live in the now.

How do you intend to achieve the balance of these three contrasting factors?



Chapter 11

SIMA Ideology
Public Speakers HAVE a Voice, World-class Communicators ARE a Voice

"Be a voice, not an echo."
-Albert Einstein

"**What is the saddest story?**"
Occasionally when the mood hits Phally,
he likes to pose challenging questions to his audience.
How would you answer, dear reader?

"Is it the man with no ideas, no dreams,
no vision, no innovation,
nothing to drive him forward?"

This is certainly a problematic situation, but it is not difficult to overcome.
Learn to be yourself and those ideas, dreams and visions will come to you.
That is *the way of nature* and no one can hold it back.

Phally continues, "There is something *much sadder than that*. Try again."

"Is it the person with greatly imaginative and innovative ideas
But no practical way to put these ideas to use?"

Innovation, if it is true innovation, always finds a way to be useful and consequential.
The most seemingly impractical innovations will eventually find their place in transforming our world and making it a better place to live.

Ridiculously fanciful flying machines eventually led to air travel and even space travel.

"Well then," Phally continues to challenge his audience,
"how about the man who has great innovations, amazing vision,
grandiose dreams to change the world but fails to bring these ideas to reality?
This must be *the saddest situation*, right?"

But no, this too *could be rectified*.
Indeed, this situation happened and still happens all the time
but it could be solved at a moment's notice.

"I suppose I could even live with unfulfilled dreams
if people understood my dreams and
chose to reject them for some valid or not so valid reason.
I would be sorely disappointed but I would know that I had been true to myself."

"In that case, would *the saddest story* be that of the man
who was unable to be true to himself,
who lived in constant fear of what others would say
and therefore customized himself to fit their expectations,
losing his dreams and himself in the process?"

This was the silver medal answer but it came up just *a bit short of the gold medal*.

"I would say that the saddest man by far is:

the man who has powerful vision,
innovative dreams, creative thinking,

the man who refuses to be molded and modeled by society,
the man who has ideas destined to change the world,
the man who remains steadfastly true to the greatest version of himself,
the man who has a visionary solution, both valid and worthy,

BUT…

the man who lacks a compelling voice to get his message out to the world.

We talk a lot about **Voice** in this book.
Having a Voice.
Raising your Voice.
Being a Voice.
In the SIMA Journey, in your journey, there is probably **nothing more critical than Voice**.

Many great ideas throughout history have been lost or tragically delayed because there was **no one with a powerful and persuasive voice** to bring that idea to the world."

The last statement,
while perhaps not empirically verifiable,
remains at the core of Phally's view of the world and history.

According to CEO Phally,
Innovation has never been the exception;
it was and is the default mode for humanity.
People are innovators by definition
because *innovation is the natural order of things* and
people are also a part of that order.

And yet,
innovation has consistently lagged behind the progress
that should have already been made long ago.
Why?
Because while people might be *naturally-born innovators*,
they are definitely ***not*** *naturally-born orators*.

In other words,
For every **10,000 ground-breaking innovations** happening every day,
innovations custom-made to turn the world upside down,
there might be but 1 or 2 persuasive speakers able to bring
just a few of these ideas into fruition in the real world.
The problem is not a lack of outstanding thinkers,
but a lack of effective speakers.

VP.Start's motto is "Innovation through Technology" and
what this means is that,
innovation when it is not coupled with technology
is mere daydreaming and science fiction.
Technology is the logical methodology that brings
creativity and innovative thinking
out of the world of dreams and into our world.
However, technology cannot move forward **without a persuasive voice.**
What good is the greatest innovative technologies created by mankind
if there is no voice to make them become known to mankind?

Put differently,
some ideas die because they lack the rigorous thought
required to round them out into complete solutions.
Other ideas die because they lack a realistic and cost-effective technological
strategy to bring them to fruition.

But both of these predicaments can be overcome with additional time and effort.
Overwhelmingly, ideas die,
not because they are not plausible or logical or doable;
they die because the person or group who hatched the idea
lacked the mesmerizing voice needed to get that idea off the ground.
The ideas and **innovations die due to neglect**,
remaining dormant until someone else comes along to revive the idea,
Someone who could provide the requisite powerful voice.

Some innovative ideas, in Phally's estimation,
have died many a death already
like Shakespeare's cowards who "*die many times before their deaths.*"
Some of these long deceased innovative ideas
were still awaiting a voice that could revive them once more.

Phally was determined that, yes, *his innovative ideas could certainly die*
if they were unwise
or impractical
or unrealistic
or financially nonviable.

Phally could accept all those "deaths" as part and parcel of the
"Fail fast, fail often, fail safely" mantra.
However, on the contrary,
Phally could not permit and would not allow,
an idea of his to die
because there was no world-class communicator to make sure that that idea did not.
That was unacceptable.
To Phally.

To nature.
To the universe.

When you have an amazing idea,
how do you make sure that you have the voice to keep that idea alive?
To keep innovation going and *keep creativity alive*,
there must be a world-class communicator,
a persuasive and mesmerizing voice,
a powerful, positive and very unique voice.
And at the end of the day, for VP.Start,
*that voice **must** come from the CEO and Founder*.

This is not about pride or arrogance,
selfishness or a desire to take away the opportunity from anyone else to raise their voice.
Of course, needless to say,
every member of the VP.Start team
and the greater VP.Start family of supporters and stakeholders,
needs to have a powerful voice and possess a compelling message.

Nonetheless, great ideas throughout history have been raised up
by those unique voices that stood alone.
Their ideas.
Their voices.
Their transformation.

Do you dare to raise your voice? How dare you stay silent?
For instance,
when Einstein developed the theory of relativity,
there were a number of scientists who did not go along with the theory.
They even published a book critical of Einstein,

the infamous *"100 Authors Against Einstein,"*
to dispute his theory of General Relativity.

Einstein famously retorted,
"*Why one hundred? If I were wrong,*
one would have been enough!"
In other words a powerful and innovative idea raised up by a compelling voice **can not be drowned out** by 100s of critics whose voices lack the same credible authority.

So, if communication is the key,
how do you become a world-class communicator?
If someone **must** have a persuasive, powerful, compelling, riveting voice,
if this is the **ultimate** *key to success*,
if this is the difference between *life and death* for innovation.
how do you go about developing one?
It is unlikely to be an easy goal to achieve.

This question, became and in some ways, still remains the questions that will define the success or failure of the VP.Start experiment, the SIMA Journey, going forward.

As Phally worked through some of the challenges
of developing a powerful voice and presence to go along with it,
he came up with some ground rules:

The Six Commandments of the World-Class Communicator
1) There can be no powerful voice without powerful content.
2) There can be no powerful voice without passion.

3) There can be no powerful voice in another language if you lack it in your own language.
4) There can be no powerful voice from someone who is poor in listening skills.
5) There can be no powerful voice without empathy.
6) There can be no powerful voice without practice outside the comfort zone.

Rule 1: There can be no powerful voice without powerful content
There are many **who** speak smoothly and fluidly,
who have mastered advanced grammar structures and sophisticated vocabulary,
who are well-experienced in public speaking and
who nonetheless are definitely not world-class communicators.
Many of them are not even above average communicators.
So, what's the problem?
They lack *world-class content*.
They speak endlessly but they *don't really have anything to say*.
Anything worth saying.
If you don't have anything to say that MUST be said, that could not NOT be said,
how could you possibly have a powerful voice?

They use the buzzwords of technology
without really knowing what they are discussing.
They use quotes and passages from books,
AI selections and clever phrasing and public speaking techniques
but in fact, they have nothing to say.

You will never become a world-class communicator
unless you have incredible content.

The difference between meaningful, powerful, explosive content and repetition of jargon and buzz phrases is clear within seconds of a presentation. As a matter of fact, sometimes, it is clear even before the presentation has started.

Do you have something to say?

If not, the world-class communicator chooses silence.

There is **a burden** on every speaker
to show that they have something to say AND something to listen to.
They must demonstrate this in **the first 15 seconds** of their speech.
If they begin with introductions and greetings and traditional practices,
they will have lost the audience before they have even gotten started.
But perhaps this is just as well,
since they didn't really have anything to say anyway.

When you stand up to pitch or make a speech,
everything about you should tell the world that **you have something to say**,
something that **they need to hear**.
Before you even start to open your mouth,
you have already captivated your audience.
World-class communication must rest on the foundation of *world-class content*.
To be otherwise, is to attempt to deceive the audience.
It will not succeed.
But why try to deceive the audience anyway?
How much better it is for you and the audience,
if you can give them something they need and
give it to them in a way that is *fresh,*
exciting and
captivating!

How will you capture your audience before you even open your mouth?

How will you use those first 15 seconds to show the audience that they absolutely need to listen to you?

Rule 2: There can be no powerful voice without passion

The second rule springs logically from the first.
It is not enough just to have world-class content to share with your audience.
You **must feel passionate** about delivering that content to your audience.
If *you are not thrilled* beyond words to have this chance
to express your innovative solutions to the audience,
how can you blame the audience,
if they are similarly *uninspired and unmoved*?

Simply put, an audience naturally tends to take on the characteristics of the speaker.

A bored, listless, unenthused speaker creates a similarly unexcited audience reaction.

A nervous speaker causes the audience to feel uncomfortable and to lack confidence in what is being told them.

But when **a speaker is consumed with passion** for the topic they are discussing,

how can the audience resist getting pulled in?

We all know that *a small flame indeed can start a massive forest fire*.

But **passion cannot be manufactured**.
You have it or you don't.
If you don't feel passionate about what you are speaking about,
stop speaking and sit down.
Think about and figure out why you should care and
why your audience should care about what you are presenting.
When, and only when, you catch that spark of passion,
stand up again and complete your speech.

To tell the truth, innovation, **true innovation,**

naturally generates passion.

If there is no passion,

it probably means that what seems to be innovation is

in fact, just *optimization of a pre-existing idea*.

When you drill into the ground and strike the oil of innovation,

there is no way to hold back the emotion.

Phally would defy any ***true innovator***

to be less than deeply passionate about their innovations.

How do you feel about your innovations and creative solutions?
Are you deeply passionate "beyond words" about your innovative ideas?
How do you intend to make sure that your audience feels your passion and shares it?

Rule 3: There can be no powerful voice in another language if you lack it in your own language

A funny thing about voice is that contrary to what you might think,
in the SIMA ideology,
a powerful voice has little to do with language skills or ability.
If you have a powerful voice,

you can learn to have a powerful voice in English or Chinese or whatever languages you choose. Effort is required, of course, but it is within the realm of the achievable

***IF* you have a powerful voice** in your own language.

This might seem counter-intuitive.
We are all native speakers of our own language.
Of course, we *should have a clear and powerful voice in our own languages*.
But surprisingly,
this is not always or even often, the case.

Phally has often pointed out that many Cambodians speak Khmer ineffectively and

are not able to explain difficult concepts concisely and clearly.

Needless to say, this applies to speakers of all languages.

The problem is obviously *not grammar or vocabulary* when dealing with our own languages.

The problem is **logic and content and passion**, as noted above.

We can't speak well in any language

if we have nothing to say or

if we care nothing about what we do say or

if we cannot organize our thoughts around clear themes in a rational and logical progression.

This is where so many speakers fall apart.

When Phally determined to become a world-class communicator,
he was convinced that to speak on the global stage,
he would need to be **a powerful speaker in English**.

This is not about disrespect of the Khmer language or overestimating English.

It is just the nature of communication in the world today, for better or worse.

Khmer is not going to take one very far in international business.

And yet, as you might expect from Phally by this point,
his first step to becoming a great communicator in English was anything but conventional.

The first step was to master communication in Khmer.
If he couldn't be the most **powerful,**
logical and
passionate Khmer speaker in the room,
if he couldn't take control of the meeting and

make himself heard in Khmer,
what chance did he stand in English
in a meeting room full of native speakers?
He threw himself into public speaking opportunities in Khmer.
He also started learning English at this point
but he kept **a solid focus on becoming a world-class communicator**
in the sadly less than world-class business language of Khmer.
In the Khmer speaking world,
he became known as an effective and enchanting communicator.
In Phally's ideology, once he was able to **become a powerful communicator in his own language**, *transferring those skills to English*
or any other languages as needed would be relatively easy.

Are you effective at presenting your ideas in your own language?
Learning another language for business is a great skill to acquire,
But make sure that you are persuasive in your own language first!

Rule 4:There can be no powerful voice from someone who is poor in listening skills

Who is the best speaker?
Phally would insist that **the best speaker is the best listener**,
just as the best writer would be the best reader.
Speaking and writing are production skills based on listening and reading.
In Phally's terminology,
listening (and reading) are forms of data acquisition
whereas *speaking and writing are data simulation and application*.
The greatest data simulation and application will necessarily occur
only where the best data is acquired and stored.
Where data acquisition is limited or faulty or improperly stored,
only very limited and poor quality data application is possible.

It is important to note what active listening **does and**

does not mean in the SIMA Ideology.
It does not mean only listening to interesting, captivating
world-class communicators.
After all, we are **listening to grow, not to imitate**.
Therefore, we need to listen to everyone.
The great speaker.
The mediocre speaker.
The unmitigated disaster of a speaker as well.
It is all data that we need to acquire.
Often, we can **learn more** about how to become a great speaker
from listening to a very poor one,
even if we are just learning from their cautionary example.
Answering the question: *Why is this speaker average or below average?*

While considering the weak points of a speaker,
another aspect of the SIMA Ideology is that **we can learn something from virtually everyone**.
As the saying goes, "Even a broken clock is right twice a day."
Even a very poor speaker might just have *a successful approach* every now and then.
Similarly, even the greatest speakers are likely to *miss a beat* on occasion.
These are the moments that **only the most active listeners** are in a position to take advantage of.

Interestingly,
we should note that when listening closely to others and
finding what aspects of their speaking works or fails to connect,
we often notice that **we are making those same mistakes**.

Listening to recordings of 100s of our own speeches are
unlikely to reveal these errors,

whereas we can often pick them up from **just one speech of someone else**.
Perhaps, we are too close to ourselves to see the forest for the trees, as it were.
Sometimes stepping back and seeing others can suddenly make everything clear.

Are you the active listener to others that you want others to be to you?
If your speaking skills are not what you'd hope, why not try listening more?

Rule 5: There can be no powerful voice without empathy
Another part of active listening is empathy.
We don't listen to a speaker just to evaluate, to judge, to critique.
We must **genuinely want to know what the speaker really wants to say**.
Otherwise, it is pointless to listen, however actively we might.
By the same token, we must have empathy for our audience and
share with them what they want to hear,
not just what we want to say.
On the surface, this might sound like customizing ourselves to satisfy the audience but actually,
it is **understanding the audience deeply** and crafting our message to touch their understanding.
We do not need to change our message in its essence,
nor do we need to modify what we have to say;
but we do need to give a message that is meaningful to the audience.
Without empathy, this is impossible.

According to the SIMA Ideology,
most speakers *have great messages and meaningful innovations*
but they **don't take the time to know their audience**
in a profound way.
Therefore, the audience cannot clearly pick up on

why the message should be important to them.
The truly great speakers don't necessarily have any greater ideas or content
than the average speakers
but they **understand the audience so deeply**
that they are able to format their message in a way
that is digestible to the listeners.
That is the key to **making a complicated topic seem simple**.

Richard Feynman, the amazing professor,
had an uncanny ability to take some of the most complicated and arcane topics of physics and
make them seem as obvious as pure common sense.
How did he do that?
Was it because he had such a deep mastery of the content?
Yes, of course, this played a crucial role.
But even **more importantly,**
Professor Feynman had **a deep understanding of his audience** and what they *could and could not* assimilate.
He was able to fine tune his speaking to *the exact level and requirements of the audience*.
His famous four step model of emphatic speaking was as follows:
1) Choose a concept that you want to learn.
2) Explain the concept to a child or a lay person with no background in the subject.
3) Identify gaps in your explanation that were difficult for the listener to understand.
4) Refine the explanation further.
This is world-class empathy and **the SIMA Ideology adopts a very similar approach**.

This calibration is absolutely critical.
If you oversimplify and *"dumb down"* your speech too much,
you show *disrespect to the audience* and

you can also *introduce misconceptions or outright errors* into the speech.

If you raise the level of complexity beyond that which the audience can handle, a common error of tech speakers,
the audience will likely be impressed,
but confused and leave no wiser than they entered the proceedings.
We must have **masterful balance**.

But the only way to achieve that kind of calibration is to deeply know your audience.
Empathy.

But remember,
you as a speaker may have **never encountered this particular audience before**.
As a matter of fact,
this exact combination of people,
this specific audience may have never existed before right now.
Furthermore, within this audience,
there may be **a wide variety of levels of expertise**,
meaning that some audience members will need near novice-level explanations while other may be able to handle much more sophisticated content and examples. Preparation is critical, obviously, but a speaker may sometimes need to try to **evaluate all these factors** and respond appropriately **"on the fly"** at times.

If it sounds like an impossible task, that's because it is.

But as we know, ***"Only the impossible tasks are worth doing!"***

Do you have a deep understanding of and care for your audience?
Before an audience decides if they like your ideas, they will decide if they like you.
What is your audience likely to decide?

Rule 6: There can be no powerful voice without practice outside the comfort zone.

Going on directly from rule 5,
in the SIMA Ideology,
truly world-class communication can only happen
when we step **outside the comfort zone**.
A great example of this is a panel discussion,
a common occurrence at VP.Start.
It is simply *impossible to anticipate all the questions* that might be asked.
Therefore, by definition, answers are impromptu, generated on the spot.
Does this *create the risk* that something inappropriate or inaccurate might be given in response to an unanticipated query?
Yes!
Does this open the door to unscripted and overly emotional answers?
Yes.
In other words, stepping outside your comfort zone forces you to **be authentic**.
If you are inauthentic,
it will be *visible from the moon*.

Another aspect of forcing yourself outside of your comfort zone is forcing yourself to speak on topics about which you are not supremely confident. For Phally, a speech about grid modernization or data-driven technology is right up his alley.
A speech on government-academia-industry collaboration or on the advantages and drawbacks of launching an IPO are speeches getting into topics well **outside his area of comfort** and expertise. Therefore, rather than *avoiding* these topics or *leaving* them to others, Phally **insists** on attending conferences and joining meetings where he will **be forced** to give speeches about and

answer impromptu audience questions about these very subjects. At times, I am not sure if this is a display of genius or of self-torture, but one thing is certain;

Phally and VP.Start are all in.

They may ultimately succeed or they may fail but they will definitely not go down without a fight.

Are you willing to talk about any subject, even those that are outside your comfort zone?

Will you seek out and embrace opportunities to delve into these less familiar areas?

Do you grant yourself the grace to make mistakes and perform poorly as a stepping stone to better results down the road?

If you dare, you will not regret it



Chapter 12

SIMA Ideology
Innovators Become Themselves

"Just be yourself. Let everyone see the real, imperfect, flawed, quirky, weird, beautiful, magical person that you are."

-Mandy Hale, author of "The Single Woman"

The most essential point of the SIMA Ideology is deceptively simple.
So simple that a child can do it.
Easily.
And yet, often quite difficult for an adult to achieve.
Be yourself.
Let me say that again, Be yourself.
One more time, all together now, "BE YOURSELF!"
As Oscar Wilde has reportedly and famously stated,

"Be yourself; everyone else is taken."

In a way, this concept **encapsulates the entire SIMA Ideology** in one phrase. *If you are yourself*, you are on the SIMA Journey, your SIMA Journey. *If you are not yourself,* you are on someone's else journey, a journey to dissatisfaction.

Today I was playing with my nephew.
5 months old.
He is himself. You can believe me on this point.
When he wants to cry, he cries.
When he wants to laugh, he laughs.
He touches whatever he wants to touch,
makes whatever sound he wants to make.
He doesn't care if you are the Prime Minister or his older sister.

If he wants to grab your nose,
he will grab your nose.
He is himself 100%.

Are you 50% yourself? 70% yourself? 85% yourself?
If you are not 100% yourself, you are still not yourself AT ALL!

Something happens as a baby becomes a primary school student,
then a high school student,
then maybe a university student,
then a worker, an adult.
Something sad happens.
Most people stop being themselves.
They start to worry about making a mistake.
They start to get embarrassed and shy.
They start to care deeply about what others thinks.
They start to obey the rules,
the rules of society,
the rules of the school,
the rules of the company,
even *unwritten rules that exist ONLY inside their minds.*

Am I saying that there should be no rules or
that we should do whatever we want?
No, of course not.
But the SIMA Journey invites us to **recapture some of that lost spirit of freedom**, of daring and risking being myself,
that attitude of *rule breaking and chance taking*.

We live in the age of "so-called" AI,
even though Phally would insist that **true AI does not yet exist.**

AI gives us tremendous opportunities,
access to knowledge and logic that would have been impossible a few short years ago.
Regrettably, along with all the advantages of AI,
it brings a tremendous opportunity **to stop being yourself**.
What do I mean?
You can use AI to write reports, emails,
essays, speeches,
slide presentations and so on,
as you all know well.
Sometimes it is *a great way to save time*
and *reduce unnecessary effort*.
But it **removes your creativity from the process, as well.**
AI can create a speech on, for example,
digital twin technology,
in minutes,
with real-world examples,
technical details and logic that we could not achieve in several hours of speech preparation.
But that speech will **lack creativity and positivity**.
It will **lack the spark of originality.**
It will **lack "you"**.
It may be a great speech,
a meaningful speech but **not really, your speech.**

A lot of people are worried about **losing their jobs and being replaced by AI**, needless to say.
Please don't get me wrong.
I am not saying that we should not use AI for repetitive and menial tasks or when we are on a tight schedule.
It can be a helpful tool for writing and speaking

but if we **use AI exclsuively** and
ultimately **lose our own creative voice**,
we have already been replaced by AI even if we still have our jobs.

Are you leveraging the power of AI to be more effective and productive?
Or is AI getting ready to replace you and are you helping AI in that process?

Think about it like this.
AI levels the field.
You may be an expert in quantum mechanics with a PhD and years of experience.
I know absolutely nothing about that field.
But thanks to AI, I can formulate a speech on quantum mechanics just **as accurate and in-depth and detailed as you can**.
So, how does an expert keep her or his competitive edge
in an age when technology makes everyone an **"instant expert?"**

You keep ahead of the curve
as long as you bring **your creativity,**
your positivity and
yourself to the process.
AI can never do that and
AI-based "so-called" experts can never do that, either.

Are you taking the necessary steps to stay ahead of the AI curve?
Is your creativity making you indispensable or
is your AI dependency making you dispensable?

AI can take the pressure off workers and students.
Again, obviously, at times, this is necessary and useful.
But for most people to be truly successful,

they **need to turn the pressure on,**
not take the pressure off.

Are you reducing the pressure on yourself when you need to be increasing the volume?

Recently, Phally gave a major speech on cybersecurity.
By his own admission, this is not a favorite subject of his.
The topic is technical and abstract, well outside of his comfort zone.
Phally **could have chosen** to speak on another topic.
He **could have asked** someone else to make the speech.
No one would have criticized either decision.
But **he chose** to give the speech himself on that topic.
Outside the comfort zone.
Putting the pressure on himself.
Forcing himself to be himself.
Forcing himself to face his weaknesses.

Phally gives the example of a caterpillar.
Crawling across the tree, eating leaves.
Comfortable.
Peaceful.
And yet, the caterpillar has not reached his potential yet.
One day, the caterpillar will enter a transformation, a period of metamorphosis.
Violent, radical change.
Absolute disruption.
But at the end of the process, that caterpillar will fly in the sky as a butterfly.
The pressure, the violent change, the radical revolutionary transformation, it is not comfortable and relaxing.
At times, it may be *disturbing and distasteful and displeasurable*
BUT you must go through it, ***if you WANT TO FLY.***

Are you ready to go through the challenge,
the discomfort and even
the suffering,
of radical transformation?
Are you satisfied with crawling OR do you insist on flying?





“Technology Without Innovation is Just a Toy For Kids”

The SIMA Methodology



Section 3

The 12 Strategies of the SIMA Methodology

"If you want to change the world, start with yourself."
-Mahatma Gandhi, Indian political and spiritual leader

You have a story,
a unique story,
a story that belongs only to you and no one else in the world.
You are the only you in history.
Believe in your story,
Understand your story,
Accept your story, failures as well as success.

You also have an ideology,
your unique ideology,
an ideology that no one else can copy because your ideology is
in many ways a result of your unique story.
Treasure your ideology,
protect your ideology and
follow your ideology without hesitation.

By the same token,
you have a methodology,
a unique and distinct way to try to achieve your goals and plans,
your way to turn your dreams into reality.
Like the old song, "You do it your way."

But quite unlike your story or your ideology,
you **can and should change** your methodology
based on results and data.
If you try something and it works, keep going.
If you try something and it does not work, feel free to change gears.
The only caveat is that sometimes it takes time for a methodology to really work,
So please *be careful not to change your methodology too quickly.*
Give it time and space but if your methodology is simply not working, it must be changed.

VP.Start has **never changed its ideology** and never will.
VP.Start's **story is what it is** and obviously, the past cannot be changed.
On the other hand, VP.Start **changes its methodology flexibly and frequently.**
As the saying goes, *"Fail fast. Fail often. Fail safely."*

Have you found the methodology that works for you to achieve the goals that you want to achieve?
If not, are you looking for new strategies and methodologies?
Either way, how do you determine if your methodology is working or not?

The 12 Strategies of the SIMA Methodology

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Changing Plans on the Unchanging SIMA Journey 281
2. The "Negative" Sales Pitch 289
3. Smart Teamwork Comes from a SIMA Smart Team 296
4. A Day in the Life of a SIMA Engineer 303
5. Branding is Everything and Everything is Branding 311
6. Innovators Love Collaboration 320
7. Predicting the Future with Digital Twins 329
8. he SIMA Journey is Green 339
9. A Deep Dive into the LMS System 346
10. The IoT Mindset 355
11. Cybersecurity in an Insecure World 364
12. The Time is Now for Mindfulness 373

Chapter 1

SIMA Methodology: Changing Plans on the Unchanging SIMA Journey

"Innovation survives only when people believe in their ideas."
– Levo League, Carrer Networking Platform

The management team was getting ready to welcome an important visitor.
A first time visitor to the the Sen Sok Valley Campus.
A dignitary.
A diplomat.
The Secretary General of ASEAN.
He could only grant them a 30 minute visit.
VP.Start was determined to make sure that the time was well spent.

The management team thought about the dress code,
the seat arrangements,
the menu items,
the proper way to address the distinguished visitor.
Of course.
Nothing wrong with politeness and respect.
Decorum and diplomacy.

However, Phally struck a slightly different note.
Politeness, yes.
Respect, of course.
Protocol, certainly.
Excessive humility, absolutely not.
Do you believe in your innovations and value them above all else?

Do you respect your ideas and respect yourself enough to consistently defend your ideas?
Whenever? Wherever? With whomsoever?

Phally wanted to make sure that his team was crystal clear that
they were not coming to the ASEAN Secretariat
to plead for support or
to beg for connections or
to humbly request assistance.
Innovators don't plead. They lead.

VP.Start had a simple message for ASEAN.
They stated that they had solutions that could **accelerate grid modernization** and create a *greener,*
more equitable and
more reliable power system across the entire ASEAN region,
in countries both large and small,
countries heavily and sparsely populated,
in countries of mountains and islands,
in countries with calm weather and those with extreme weather events,
In countries both affluent and impoverished.
All **the incredible diversity of the ASEAN region.**

VP.Start has plans that could benefit ASEAN in many areas
that are challenging to ASEAN now,
such as
extending the grid into remote, rural areas,
providing affordable electricity across the region,
integrating energy systems more effectively between different countries when geopolitically possible,

advancing renewable integration,
accelerating smart grid adoption and
promoting regional energy independence.
Above all, **making** the ASEAN region more holistically
sustainable.
Across all sectors.
All countries.
All challenges.
Forging an ASEAN that is a bankable place for outside investment.

Do your solutions and creative ideas align with felt and experienced needs in your target market?
Do you have the *persuasive* voice and *persuasive* evidence to publicize your ideas *persuasively*?

But from the methodological perspective,
even more importantly than showcasing all the advantages that VP.Start brought to the ASEAN table, VP.Start needed to show clearly that **they would not customize their vision** and their SIMA Journey. For anyone.
Not for ASEAN.
Not for the UN.
Not for a Climate Fund.
Not for SIlicon Valley.
Not for anyone,
anywhere,
anytime,
any place.

The details, the strategy, the day-to-day plans,
these were all open to negotiations,
points to be hashed out in various meetings along the way.

On the other hand,
the vision **was not allowed to be changed.**
The Journey must always keep going to the same destination.

Many *powerful companies*
started by *true innovators*
with incredibly *creative solutions*
have gone astray when they decided
to change their vision,
to revise their journey and
to alter their destination.
They tried to **please** their customers or
satisfy the regulators or
keep up with the competitors or
follow the trendsetters or
reduce the intense pressure of being innovative.
Whatever the reason,
if an organization changes its vision,
it will shift immediately from growth to maintenance.
Innovation brings growth.
Customization brings maintenance of the status quo.
EVERY TIME.
WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

Are you seeking growth or seeking to maintain the status quo?
Growth is not easy. Innovation is not easy. Are you up to the challenge?

Let's be honest.
It is a lot easier to customize than to innovate.
Innovation is not some crazy scientist walking around in circles
until amazing ideas suddenly appear.

Innovation is hard work.
It takes time.
And, it takes boldness.
Sometimes even the closest allies,
the strongest supporters and
the internal team, themselves,
will **start to doubt** the Journey.
This is human nature.

At VP.Start, the methodology is very clear.
If you FBR (feel, believe and remember) the SIMA Journey and
if you **believe wholeheartedly** in the destination,
you will be rewarded for your sacrifice.
If you **stop believing**,
you are welcome to leave at any time,
no questions asked and no criticism leveled.
After all, *everyone has their own journey* and
if your personal journey **ceases to align with the SIMA Journey**,
it would cruel and also pointless to try to make you stay.

This is the methodology that informs all other SIMA methodologies.
No compromise on the big picture.
This is why VP.Start can welcome *foreign dignitaries,*
international ambassadors,
leaders of multinational organizations,
top government officials,
international utility directors,
leaders in the education field, such as
university presidents and
a whole host of VIPs without feeling
nervous or humble.

As Phally put it,
"If Elon Musk walked on to the Sen Sok Valley Campus and
offered VP.Start US$1T to change their vision,
we would politely say, "No, thank you."

What would you do if you were offered a massive amount of money to alter or discard your idea?
Would you *"take the money and run?"*

On the other hand,
if anyone has ideas on how to **achieve** the vision,
accelerate the SIMA Journey and
arrive at the destination more efficiently,
those ideas are welcomed.
Whether they come *from a tech CEO*,
an online TED Talk,
an intern or new recruit at VP.Start or
a random statement by *a tuk tuk driver* or security guard,
it doesn't matter.
Great ideas are great ideas wherever they come from.
Interestingly, non-experts often have the best ideas
because they are freed from all of the suppositions and assumptions
that might slow down the so-called "tech experts".
They don't enough to know that they don't know enough.
They are not afraid to say any idea, no matter how crazy.
And every once in a while, **the crazy idea is the one that provides the solution**.
As Confucius,
the ancient Chinese philosopher said,
"If I happen to be walking with two other men,
they will both serve as my teacher.

I will learn from the good ideas and good character of one and
I will learn from the bad ideas and weak character of the other."
Similarly, Phally makes a point of spending time with "ordinary" non-tech savvy people.
He loves to listen to the lessons of **the monks**.
He loves to spend time with **children**.
Inspiration can come from anywhere if you have a vision set in stone.

Innovators are always gaining new inspiration from a variety of locations and scenarios.
Are you ALWAYS ready to learn, to grow and to find new ways to be inspired?

One of the greatest challenges for any innovator is
to **clearly express the vision** and the destination.
It is not at all surprising that sometimes
even the most senior members of the internal team
seem to **briefly lose the vision** and wander off from the journey.
Phally never criticizes his team in this situation.
It is a normal development.
Phally criticizes himself for not making the SIMA Journey clear enough.
He rededicates himself to
advancing the Journey,
showing the direction,
pointing to the destination and
raising his voice powerfully.

You have amazing innovations and powerful ideas. *No doubt about that.*
But, are you expressing those ideas clearly, forcefully and persuasively?
Do your friends, supporters and stakeholders occasionally "lose your vision"?

Often Phally spends time alone,
at his home or at the pagoda or in nature,
communing and communicating with himself.
Making sure that he is **still on the right track,**
still headed towards the destination.
If others get off the track,
he can help get then back to the right path.
Conversely,
if Phally gets off the track,
the SIMA Journey will be lost.
For an innovative founder and CEO,
there is no greater challenge and no higher responsibility
than keeping yourself on course.

How do you make sure that you have not "lost" your own vision?
How do you reconfirm that you are still headed on the right track to theright destination?

The most powerful SIMA methodology is the simplest.
Know the destination.
Change the methodology
as often as necessary but
never, never, never change the destination.

Are you clear about the journey and destination of your innovative ideas?
Does your support team REALLY understand that journey and destination?
Are you making sure that you are not deviating from your journey and destination?
Are you changing the details while staying faithful to your journey and destination?

If you can **answer YES** to all of these questions,
you will *complete your journey* and *reach your destination*.
WITHOUT A DOUBT.



Chapter 2

The SIMA Methodology
The Negative Sales Pitch

"Your customers don't care about you.
They don't care about your product or service.
They care about themselves, their dreams, their goals."
-Steve Jobs

A key part of any business methodology is sales and marketing.
Pretty hard to dispute that perspective.

So, what is the best way to pitch your idea,
your product,
your service,
your company?
You probably think that the best way to sell a product or pitch an idea is
to *bring up all the advantages* that accrue from using the product.
Not exactly an outside the box approach.

Or perhaps, you think that best way to market a service or promote an idea
is to *understand your customers deeply,*
build a deep rapport,

tap into their wants and desires and
give them solutions that meet their requests.
This too is hardly an innovative strategy.

You might think that the best way to publicize your products is
to *mention the potential problems* that your product can help them overcome.
Another reasonable, if ordinary plan.
You might even consider resorting to *testimonials from satisfied customers*
or famous celebrities.
Been there, seen that.
Many, many, many times.
These are all common sense approaches to pitching
that have been used successfully for a long, long time.
They have statistics and a track record and clearly defined outcomes.
And **Phally rejects them all**.

What is your "go to" strategy of pitching when you really need to make a sale?

As a matter of fact, Phally views pitching in the opposite way of most people.
I suppose that is not surprising.
He sees almost everything **the opposite way of most people**!
He does not see pitching as seeking customers, investors,
collaborative partners, stakeholders.
He sees pitching as providing an opportunity
that **only a few will be wise enough** to take advantage of.
No persuasion.
No tactics.
No sales strategies.
The product had better sell itself because Phally sure isn't going to sell it.

Do your ideas and innovations and creative solutions sell themselves?
If they do not, why don't they?

It is audacious and bold.
You might even say it is **crazy.**
You would not be the first one to say so.
Some have definitely called it "crazy".
They may well be right.
But it is **so counter intuitive and so creatively unexpected that it works.**
The sales figures for VP.Start keep growing year by year.
And the traction is clear cut, towards further increasing and accelerating growth.
Not bad for a company that **"refuses" to sell** its products or compromise on the VP.Start vision.

Would you ever turn down a potential customer for any reason?
What are you afraid of?

In one recent meeting, some potential customers requested Smart IoT sensors for their factory.
They wanted it modified their way according to their specifications.
CEO Phally politely but firmly declined.
Innovators do not compromise,
do not customize,
do not change for others.
Why not?
Because the moment you start changing your innovations
to suit the preferences of the customers and not your own ideals,
you **cease to be an innovative company** and become a product manufacturer, selling products and fighting competitors.
VP.Start adamantly **refuses to go down that road.**

In another meeting,
some bankers came with possible loan opportunities.
Possible investment options.
But they said that were some red flags slowing them down.
They needed and *demanded assets, collateral, balance statements,*
and the adoption of more conventional management strategies,
more traditional sales and marketing,
more incremental growth and more measured plans.
CEO Phally said that he had **no intention of changing** any of those things.
The bankers and investors said that they would be back later to discuss the situation further.
CEO Phally made it clear that **no return visit was needed** and that they would not be welcomed again.

He said that for VP.Start, banks that don't see opportunities have the biggest red flags.
They did not fathom the SIMA Journey so any investments or loans that they might provide,
in the long run, would be a burden, not a blessing.

Rather than recognizing the amazing opportunity they had to work with VP.Start, they valued their own regulatory frameworks and bank policies.
Phally knew well that accepting money from banks
so that they could gain major ROI was something
that VP.Start could provide,
but would not provide to "red flag" banking services.

VP.Start wants customers and investors and partners
that are in the SIMA Journey **for the long haul.**
There is no point to short term collaborations.
Limited partnerships.

They take *too much time and effort*.
They provide *too few positive outcomes*.
Better to spend more time to build long-lasting relationships with customers based on understanding and shared goals.
Because, down the road, there will surely be times when things are not smooth.
Short term investors and stakeholders will run away.
Long term supporters, on the other hand, know the destination so they **will stay the course.**
As Phally has frequently said,
"If you cannot suffer a loss positively, you will never be able to turn a profit."
If you view each customer,
each investor,
each OEM,
each stakeholder and
supporter **as a trusted partner,**
whether they provide a great amount of revenue or only a little,
you will see soon that the goal is building relationships
based on a mutual journey.

How do you view your potential customers, investors, partners and supporters?
Just as important, how do they *think* that you view them?

For anyone who does not share the goals or see the value of the SIMA Journey,
there is no need to become a customer or investor or collaborator.
Not because VP.Start is angry.
Not because CEO Phally is arrogant.
Not because the investors are stupid or unwise.
Not because the customers are insignificant and unworthy.
But because there is too little time to spend it all on persuading the

uninterested.
There is a revolution *to achieve*.
There is a journey *to continue*.
There is a world *to change*.

Let those who see the goal clearly, join the journey.
If you don't see it clearly even after we make our pitch,
there are no hard feelings,
no ill will,
but *we simply don't have time for you.*
Does it seem like a harsh attitude?
I suppose it is in some ways.
But I don't think that the point of the "Negative Sales Pitch" is to belittle people or discourage them.

Remember,
the goal is ***so big***
and
the time is ***so short***.
We welcome anyone who helps us **accelerate** our journey.
On the other hand, without any malice or negative feelings,
anyone who **decelerates** our journey MUST be avoided.
Not because there is anything wrong with them
BUT because our SIMA Journey is about changing the world.
No time for **delays,**
disruptions,
distractions.

Picture this.
At a party held on the deck of a hotel swimming pool,
someone drinks too much, slips and falls into the water.

They don't know how to swim.
They will soon be drowned if no one helps them.
Do you stand on the edge of the pool and **discuss**
why this person should have been more careful and drunk less?
Do you **have a negotiation** about
who should jump in and save the person?
Do you **host an impromptu conference with a panel discussion**
on water safety strategies?
Do you **schedule a meeting** to determine the causes of this situation
so it can be avoided in the future?
I think not.
I hope not.
I think you will ignore everyone else and jump in the pool to save the person in danger.

What if the world is in danger?
What if our earth is unsustainable in its current form?
What if the planet needs solutions to rescue it?
VP.Start is a company that ignores all the bystanders and observers and
jumps in to provide solutions for a better future for everyone.

Our world is in danger.
Will your innovations and solutions make the world a better place?
If your answer is "NO", are you dreams really worth pursuing?
If your answer is "YES", why are you hesitating? We need your innovative solutions NOW!



Chapter 3
The SIMA Methodology Smart Teamwork Comes from a SIMA Smart Team

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." -Henry Ford, Inventor and CEO of Ford Motor Company

There are no smart cities without smart citizens.
There are no smart homes without smart homeowners.
In the same way, there is *no smart teamwork without a smart team.*
A SIMA Smart team.

Put in a different way,
Wise companies have an effective and well-planned out methodology.

Wiser companies implement that methodology effectively and consistently.

The wisest companies implement that methodology with **teamwork from a smart team.**

This is the SIMA Methodology level.

At VP.Start, value is given to every member of the team.
Not because this is a feel good strategy but
Because every team member is essential.
A company is only as strong as its weakest team member.
On the other hand, a company with unbreakable teamwork is a strong company, indeed.

As you promote your ideas and solutions, do you value every member of your team?
Do you implement your methodology consistently, efficiently and with unflinching teamwork?

In this chapter, we are going to change the format and break the rules a bit.
After all, that is what revolutionary companies love to do.
We are going to look at some interview results from randomly selected workers across VP.Start.
From *all departments*.
All rankings.
All different years of experience and heterogeneous areas of expertise.

Sokleap is working in the Accounting and Finance Department where she has worked for 9 months.
She moved on from a previous job at a retailer where she worked in a similar capacity.
She found her previous place of employment "messy" and her work unsatisfying.

A friend told her of VP.Start and she was excited to work for a Cambodian CEO.
She was impressed by his ideas as well.

On an average work day, Sokleap is involved in managing expenses, collecting fees and arranging financing and budgeting for frequent VP.Start business trips.
In the future, she hopes reduce unnecessary steps in the work process, automate routine tasks where possible and eliminate or shrink paperwork, by promoting more software-based digital solutions

In other words, only 9 months into her VP.Start career, she is already focused on improving the work environment and making innovative changes.
This is a constant among all the team member that I interviewed.

Are you ready to "hit the ground running" to move your ideas forward?
Or are you intending to wait for that "better day" that will never come?

Kim Chhean has been working in the Accounting and Finance Department for 5 years already.
She first learned about VP.Start as a university when a professor mentioned the company
as a rapidly developing tech firm with a Cambodian CEO.
Both aspects appealed to her greatly.

Her job focus is cost control and especially working with suppliers of the raw materials
that VP.Start uses to create its amazingly innovative solutions.
She also sees opportunities to increase automation, reduce paperwork and

streamline operations in her department through adoption of online techniques.

Are you always looking for ways to streamline processes?
Great ideas can be lost due to inefficient operational procedures.

Bousong is in the Hardware Modeling Division where he has worked for three years.
He initially learned about VP.Start through social media posts by the CEO and management team.
He was interested in the solutions presented online and the big picture thinking as well.
He felt that this company suited his skill set nicely.

Currently, he is working in monitoring teamwork in his areas and helping his team accomplish their tasks when they have some issues.
Talking with him briefly, it is clear how much he cares for his team and for the solutions.
In the future, he would like to play a role in both technical and commercial growth of the company and he envisions himself possibly working in a management role.
Like many of the young team members of VP.Start,
he is both humble and ambitious.

Do you have the right balance of humility and ambition?
Do you envision a much brighter and bigger future for yourself?
Don't expect to achieve anything that you cannot imagine and foresee!

Panha works in the Production Department, as he has for five years already.
Panha learned about VP.Start during a college visit to the campus.
He works on quality control and product assembly and testing,

using circuit board testing to check on functionality of products.
He works in a very time-sensitive part of the company,
and faces a lot of pressure and deadlines.
In the future, he sees himself working closely with OEM partners for inspections and he hopes to share his experiences with young members of the team.

Are you excited to share your experiences with team members or
do you see them as potential rivals?
Are you able to handle stressful situations effectively?

Phearun is a member of the R&D 2 Team as he has been for the past 4 years.
He learned about VP.Start when he saw some social media posts about home automation products that he found attractive.
He is currently working as a web developer, specifically as a front-end web designer and his goal for the future is to create a universal web platform that can be used by all team members across the company for greater communication and collaboration.

Are you enthused to communicate and collaborate more effectively and efficiently?
Are you building the framework to make such communication and collaboration possible?

Kahnchana is in the R&D Team 1 with the Application and Design Team where she has worked for 8 months.
She learned about VP.Start when she was doing some job hunting through LinkedIn.
She was impressed with the hardware solutions of VP.Start and
sent in a CV, not expecting to be selected.
An ordinary for her includes designing mobile app configuration for some

of the DRC solutions
to increase their connectivity and ability to interface with hardware.
Her goal is to become "more than she is now", including reaching a senior grade in the company.
Her pride in her work is obvious and undeniable.

Are you looking to reach a higher "grade" with your innovative ideas?
In addition to amazing ideas, do you have undeniably obvious pride in your work?

Seng works in the Embedded System Design section as he has for the last 4 years.
He mentioned that a large part of his skills were learned "on the job" as there weren't at that time, many schools focused on these technical areas.

Seng first learned about VP.Start from Facebook posts that explored the DRC series.
He sent an online application to the HR and was surprised to be accepted.
He is currently working on the internal programming of the DRC-010, gradually moving away from his earlier role as an IoT programmer.
He pictures himself playing a role in the international development of VP.Start in the future.

Often times, innovators shift roles over time and move into completely new areas.
Are you ready to be flexible enough to make the change when the situation necessitates it?

These interviews revealed several things that seemed consistent.
Many team members, including quite new members, handled a variety of tasks.

But no one seemed unhappy or stressed about that.
Many team members were attracted to VP.Start by social media posts or by the fact that the CEO is from Cambodia.
I personally don't see this as racism or nationalism but a desire to build up their own country.
Many team members had transitioned over time from one role to a different one.
Sometimes a very different one.
Many team members, including younger ones, foresaw a future where they were helping to raise up a new generation,
the new Angkorian generation perhaps, of young Cambodian tech professionals.

Finally, one thing that they all shared was their love of the company work atmosphere.
This atmosphere is, according to them, unique and at times, a little odd.
But extremely friendly and familiar.
Mistakes were quickly forgiven.
Disputes are quickly forgotten and help is freely given.
I wonder if I am too old to apply for a job there, haha!

What is the atmosphere that you are creating for people who work on your innovative ideas with you?
Please never take your team for granted.

Chapter 4

The SIMA Methodology
A Day in the Life of a SIMA Engineer

"Engineers like to solve problems.
If there are no problems handily available, they will create their own problems."
-Scott Adams, Author and Cartoonist of "Dilbert"

On a busy street, the street stalls and shops are lined up.
A coffee stand.
A fried noodle shop.
A sImple roadside auto repair place.
Shoes pilled on a tarp on the sidewalk.
And a shop selling beverages from a cart of a motorcycle.
A very ordinary scene on a very typical street in Phnom Pehn.
Almost stereotypical.

Behind the mobile drink "shop",
there is a thick, metal fence.
Locked.
Behind the fence,
there is a small, yellow building, made up of cinder blocks,
looking like an off-limits, discontinued public restroom.
Unlock and open the doors to this shed, and
you will suddenly see *a huge medium voltage transformer,*
an array of electric lines, gears, connections,
monitoring systems, grid infrastructure,
power cords submerged in water,
breakers and other aspects of a functioning substation.
Hidden in plain sight.

There is *an entire "world" of grid infrastructure*,
beneath the streets,
or above our heads
or behind this shop or that home.
Forests of electricity poles connecting us all to electricity
without us even noticing.

The strange thing about the electric grid is
that we all rely on it every day.
But **we rarely notice it**.
When we **turn up** the temperature of our AC,
when we **fire up** our laptop,
when we **heat up** some coffee,
when we **wash up** with heated water,
when we **light up** our house,
we are grid users.

But how often do you and I actually think about
what is going on behind the scenes?
If you are like most people
and like me, to be honest,
we usually don't think about the grid
EXCEPT
when there is an outage.
When the power is ***down*** and our frustration is ***up***,
we notice the power grid.
We complain to our friends and family about the unreliable grid service,
while day after day, we have been taking advantage of reliable electricity
without much of a second thought.

When people take advantage of your innovative ideas, do they notice you?
Is it your goal for people to notice your solutions or enjoy your solutions without noticing?

At midnight,
often in bad weather,
on weekends,
during Khmer New Year,
engineers are always working,
keeping the power flowing.
As a matter of fact, the times that we enjoy the most,
weddings, celebrations, festivals,
are often the times when electrical engineers are working the hardest,
making sure that ***our good times and happiness are not interrupted*** by power issues.

Similar to the substation hidden behind the drink stand,
engineers are often hidden, unseen.
In fact, the best engineers are the ones
that **work so well that we never notice them**.

Think about a sports match, say a football game.
Is it a good game if we notice the referee frequently and question their decisions?
NO.
The best football match is the one where we hardly notice that the referees were there at all.
If you go to hear a speech,
do you want to notice the translator?
NO.
In the best speeches,
the translator works so effortlessly that we forget that they are translating.
Do we want to notice the engineers and operators of the grid?
NO.
NOT AT ALL.

We want them to work so well and
the grid to be so reliable and efficient
that *we forget that they are even there*.
This is the goal that VP.Start is striving for,
the SIMA methodology that we are promoting.

Are your solutions so effective and
your operations so seamless
that consumers often forget
that they are using your product?
How do you intend to attain that level of trustworthiness?

Two VP.Start engineers park the company car on the narrow sidewalk.
They slip behind the drink shop,
unlock the gates and enter the substation.
Sometimes for repairs,
sometimes for monitoring,
sometimes for upgrades,
sometimes for installation of DRC equipment
to manage grid data.
If it is a simple installation,
they might be in and out
in *15 minutes or so*.
If it is a complicated repair operation,
they might need to *spend half a day* in the crowded and humid conditions of the substation room.

Some days, they are off to distant provinces,
leaving early in the morning and spending most of the day on the road.
Other days, they visit local Phnom Penh metropolitan substations,

often visiting a number of substations on the same day.
Still, other times they are in conferences and communication,
online or at the headquarters,
with main operators, support staff from the EDC and other stakeholders
coordinating their actions to **increase efficiency and reduce unnecessary trips**,
which generate unnecessary carbon emissions.

Are you promoting maximum efficiency in your solutions?
Are you able to maintain your innovations successfully
WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY
reducing your carbon footprint?

Safety is crucial, to state the blindingly obvious,
whether *working on a medium voltage transformer* in a **sweaty substation**
or at the top an electrical pole making adjustments
or *making repairs to an auto recloser* beneath the **burning midday sun**.
And yet, speed is also essential.
These two are in continuous fluctuation, tension.
How do we achieve maximum safety
while maintaining maximum speed of operations?

In some ways,
a SIMA engineer is not particularly different
from an electrical engineer for any company.
And yet, at the deepest point,
there is **a fundamental difference.**
The engineers of the SIMA Journey are **not** just working for
a paycheck,
working for a living wage,
not just maintaining the grid,

not just fixing problems and
repairing equipment and
monitoring operational performance.
There is nothing wrong with any of those things, needless to point out.
But, if that was all that motivated our engineers and technicians,
they would be *exactly the same as other engineers* everywhere.

What is the motivation that keeps your innovations moving forward?
That keeps your dreams moving forward?
That keeps you moving forward?

The difference is the Big Picture.
SIMA electrical engineers **see** the overarching view,
they **see** long-term,
they **envision** the future.
They don't maintain.
They upgrade.
They don't repair.
They solve problems before they happen.
They don't gather data only to know the current state of the grid.
They gather data to garner actionable insights
that they can apply for better decision making.
They don't forget tomorrow.
They build ***tomorrow TODAY.***

Do your solutions and innovative ideas help you to envision the Big Picture?
Do these innovative solutions do the same for user and customers of your ideas?

Does the mindset of the engineer really matter?
If they have skills, talents, experience and expertise,

isn't that enough?

In the normal working world,

YES.

In the SIMA Methodology,

NO.

The SIMA Methodology is never just a plan or strategy.

It is **a way** of thinking,

a way of living,

a way of creating the future.

Think about it like this.

A lot of people study English all over the world

but very few achieve the level of English that they want to reach.

Why?

What is the problem?

Are they lazy?

Are they stupid?

Are they unwilling to work hard?

Usually no!

The problem typically is that they don't have clear enough goals for their English development.

Yes, they want to **speak English well.**

OK, But what does that mean?

Order coffee in English?

Chat about the weather or music in English?

Run a business meeting in English?

Pitch a product in English?

Write a proposal for grant funding in compelling English?

If you **don't have clear goals** and

you **do not envision** what success looks like,

you will not achieve a satisfactory outcome.

On the other hand,

the clearer your goals are,

the easier it becomes to make a realistic plan to accomplish your objectives.

Our SIMA engineers have **a very powerful vision** of the sustainable future that they are working to attain.

While they may be working in a small substation

on "ordinary" maintenance and monitoring tasks,

they are able to see how these actions fit into the bigger,

more enormous picture of a sustainable energy future

MADE IN CAMBODIA and MADE FOR THE WORLD.

As the astronaut, Neil Armstrong said when he stepped on the moon,

"One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind."

Each small step that our engineers take day by day,

in the heat and the rain, in the dark of the night,

whenever and wherever and for whatever reason,

they know that this **is part of a giant leap** for mankind.

The revolution of transformation.

The sustainable future.

As you develop your innovative ideas, how clear are you about your goals?

How certainly can you envision the Big Picture that you are striving to attain?

Can you share that Big Picture with others effectively and concisely?

Chapter 5

The SIMA Methodology Branding is Everything and Everything is Branding

"Products are made in a factory but brands are created in the mind."
-Walter Landor, pioneering brand designer and consultant

Building a brand is hardly a unique methodology of VP.Start.
Companies all over the world strive to *build their brand,*
maintain their image and
market their products.
And yet, in the SIMA Journey,
we take a radically innovative approach to brand building.
After all….
How could a revolutionary company have a conventional brand?
How could a radically transformative firm opt for traditional marketing practices?
How could we burnish our image as innovators unless the image we create is innovative?

What is your methodology of branding your ideas, your company and yourself?
According to data and reliable metrics, are your branding approaches succeeding?

VP.Start follows the SIMA Branding Methodology and it causes us to **reject some typical branding practices**.
At the same time, the SIMA Methodology leads VP.Start to **adopt some unorthodox strategies**.

Let's take a closer look at branding, SIMA-style.

First, what are the brand building techniques that the SIMA Methodology avoids?
One is *relying on influencers* and celebrities
to promote their products.
Influencers, podcasters and other online figures have expressed interest
in promoting VP.Start and its solutions for payment, from time to time.
The VP.Start answer is unequivocal and always the same.
Thank you, but no thank you.
We welcome word of mouth exposure
but we will not pay for it.
Don't get the wrong idea.
We are *not opposed to podcasts* per se.
For instance,
Phally has appeared on a CarCam podcast
by a major influencer
in the car racing community.
Instead of the usual podcast, introducing the latest racecars and engines,
the podcaster decided to dedicate an episode
to the ecosolutions of VP.Start
after a visit to the Sen Sok Valley Campus.
Much appreciated exposure to a new audience.
But there was no reciprocal arrangement
and no financial reimbursement.

After all, if you pay enough,
you can get some influencers and celebrities
to endorse or recommend almost anything.
Needless to say, this is a common practice
across a wide variety of industries and economic domains.

But from the SIMA Methodology perspective, this is **unethical**.
Companies that employ this strategy are trying to use
the influence of influencers,
the celebrity of celebrities and
the fame of the famous
to convince, persuade or coerce people into buying a product
whether they really need it or not.
This is not a customer-first methodology.
For many companies, this is a popular and wise strategy.
For VP.Start, it is completely unacceptable.

Are you committed to branding ethically?
Will you reject branding strategies that take advantage of the consumer?
Do you realize that how you do branding is a major part of your branding?

Another common practice is **Search Engine Optimization** for increased visibility.
There are ethical and less ethical ways to do this.
Ethical practices might include *improving website architecture* and *posting updated information regularly* online in various forums and formats.
Less ethical practices might include **misleading labeling and click baiting**, using **false or inaccurate tags** in online content to promote access **DESPITE the content**, not because of it.
Similarly, *paying a search engine for better placement* would fall into the somewhat unethical approach category from a SIMA standpoint.

Are you determined to represent your ideas and content fairly and avoid misleading labeling that might draw more responses

but would do it in an unethical and inaccurate way?
Do you want to be branded as "tricky" and "dirty" or "clean" and "honest"?

VP.Start's approach is much more organic,
"word of mouth" marketing.
Nowadays, *fewer people trust* what they see online and the influence of influencers is becoming diluted as well.
On the other hand, *the power of a recommendation* from a trusted friend or colleague who has nothing to gain from recommending VP.Start's solutions is at **an absolute premium**.

Think about it.
Are you more likely to drink *coffee* from a *coffee shop* that is recommended by a famous football player who has probably **never been in the *coffee shop*** and is definitely **getting paid by the *coffee shop*** to recommend the *coffee shop*?

Or are you more likely to listen to the recommendation of your co-worker who really *loves coffee* and **recommends a coffee shop** where he or she is a regular customer?

While some will be swayed by the football player, surely,
VP.Start puts its energy into the co-worker.
VP.Start actually ***does not want you to be a customer if you are becoming a customer for the wrong reasons.***

Radical? Yes.
Crazy? Maybe.
Ethical? To a fault.

If you are able to garner customers who misunderstand your products or
who are influenced to buy your innovative solutions
by celebrity promoters who have never used your product,
will you embrace these customers or will your turn them away?
Which do you value more, one sales or your long-term reputation?

So, in a similar vein,
VP.Start does not search out
podcasts **to appear on**
or forums **to appear at**
or journals **to appear in**.
As Phally puts it,
"We don't go to the world. The world comes to us."
This really does sound like a crazy strategy for an
upcoming young company
but incredibly, it seems to really work.
The CEO is on podcasts and at forums FREQUENTLY
even though he NEVER approaches them.
Some of the biggest speeches to the biggest audiences were given at
conferences where Phally was requested as the keynote speaker.
Conferences and forums that VP.Start had never even heard of.
Lucky?
Good timing?
Maybe occasionally but surely not time after time after time.

Why does this happen?
If you ask Phally, it is simple.

We tell our story.
The product sells itself.
We don't tell what our product can do.
We tell **why we made the product**.
We don't tell you why you need the product.
We are not salespeople.
We tell you who were are and
what we believe
because **we are storytellers**.
People will pay a lot of money to go to see a good storyteller.
Not many people will pay to see a salesperson, even a world-class one,
I dare say!

In terms of branding, have you decided to become a salesperson or a storyteller?
For you personally, do you prefer meeting storytellers or salespeople?
How do you think your potential customers and stakeholders feel about this choice?
One strategy that **is** essential to the SIMA Branding Methodology is **purpose-driven Brand Identity**.
We don't just *go beyond* telling about the products that we sell;
at times, we **don't bother to even mention what we sell at all.**
The customers have to ask us!
And they do!
We *focus on our core values*,
mission and brand mindset.
These are what attract loyal customers.

Our brand's identity.
Our brand's mindset.
Our brand's purpose.

And if these attributes *don't attract customers,*
we don't think that it is time to change our strategy.
Instead, we think that it is time to *upgrade our voice*
to tell our story and our perspectives better.
If that still fails,
we probably *didn't want them as a customer* anyway.
No anger. No regret.
Tell our truth and accept the outcome.

Are you ready to tell your "truth",
upgrade your persuasion and storytelling
but refuse to change your basic strategy,
even if some customers walk away?
Do you have enough confidence in your branding to let some sales opportunities slip by?

In other words,
"branding is everything because everything is branding."
Most observers would agree that the greatest branding success in tech and maybe in business, is Apple.
People want to buy Apple products for many reasons
but most of them come back to FBR
(how the Apple brand makes them **f**eel, **b**elieve and **r**emember).
Apple doesn't spend a lot of time **explaining its features** and
technology and
internal workings
to the general public.
If they did, they would become *just a good brand* or a quality brand.
Since they do NOT,
they become **an iconic brand**,
an unforgettable brand,

a "must have" brand.

Branding can **make or break a company**.
A reputation takes years and years
to build but can be *lost in an instant*.
In the SIMA Methodology,
there is nothing more powerful than branding
BUT
true branding comes from who you really are and
what you really believe and
the people and ideas that you really value.
Otherwise, branding is like a fake ID that people use to hide their true identity.
That's why "branding is everything"
but even more importantly,
"everything is branding."
Every action you **take**,
every decision you **make**,
every rule you **break**,
every morning you **wake**,
you are ***continuously*** branding.
You are either building your branding or
tearing it down,
but you are ***always, always branding***.

That's why we need to mention VP.Start's most peculiar type of branding.
VP.Start frequently holds workshops and forums aimed
at university and high school students.
Building the brand.
Burnishing the reputation.
One notably strange condition, however.

These students **are not able** to become customers, not at this point.
Too young to buy their own IoT devices.
Unlikely to participate in the SIMA City Initiatives
or SIMA Smart Grid modernization.
What is the purpose of building up branding
to those who are not potential customers or investors?
This comes back to the meaning of branding.
The purpose is surprisingly simple:
Branding is what we do,
not because we want to acquire and keep customers,
not because we want to persuade investors,
not because we want to impress potential collaborative partners,
not because we want to amaze government stakeholders,
but because, simply, that is who we are.

Branding is *not a gimmick.*
Branding is *not a strategic plan.*
Branding is **not a high pressure sales technique.**
Branding is VP.Start being itself, the team being themselves, **us being ourselves**.

At the end of the day, branding, true branding, is about being yourself.
Your authentic self.
Your imperfect self.
Your vulnerable self.
Are you brave enough to "become your own branding" without gimmicks, strategies or pressure?
Respect to you, if that is your decision!

Chapter 6

The SIMA Methodology Innovators Love Collaboration

"Great things in business are never done by one person; they are done by a team of people."
-Steve Jobs
"When you need to innovate, you need collaboration."
-Marissa Mayer, former CEO of Yahoo!

Let me tell you **a contradiction**.
In traditional Asian spiritual thought, contradictions can often lead us to deeper truths.
First, a true innovator and founder MUST stand alone.
Simultaneously, innovation requires teamwork and collaboration.
How can both of these be true at the same time?
The SIMA Methodology rests on
individuality AND partnering,
isolation AND connection,
learning from others AND ignoring others.
This is not an easy concept to grasp.
This is not an easy methodology to implement.
But the SIMA Journey does not go forward without it.

Let's break this down a bit.
First, an innovator must stand alone.
A founder must be **true to his vision** even though at times, his own team doesn't understand it.
The team may love the founder's vision and
they will FBR (feel, believe and remember) the vision but

they won't be able to really completely fathom the vision.
That is not a problem, not really.
The innovator must spend time alone, with himself, quietly.
Before an important conference,
Steve Jobs would famously often "disappear" for a few weeks,
leaving others in charge with instructions to disturb him only in case of emergency. Similarly, Phally often "disappears",
spending time in nature or with underprivileged kids or especially, at the pagoda.
His management team knows that his time alone is often more productive
than his time in the office so they give him ample space to be himself.
By himself.
With himself.
No distractions.
No disruptions.
No disturbances.

If you want to become an innovator, you must find time to *be "with yourself"*
Are you ready to find time to spend with yourself in the midst of your busy schedule?
It will not be easy to find that time, to be sure, but will you proactively set aside that time?
Do you value *yourself, your time and your ideas* enough to remove all interruptions?

While an innovator must be alone with her or his thoughts and
must adamantly refuse to copy or imitate others,
innovation requires collaboration.
Innovators love collaboration.

Innovation grows through collaboration.

Collaboration springs from a mindset.
The detailed contracts and legal frameworks,
the MoUs and joint ventures that make up the legal side of collaboration will never work unless all the parties involved have **a collaborative mindset**.
VP.Start *values,*
emphasizes and prioritizes teamwork and collaborative partnership.
Why?

Do you have a collaborative mindset?
Are you always looking for opportunities to work with others?
Do you see teamwork and partnership as key pillars of your methodology?
Innovation never thrives ALONE.
First of all, no one person has all the answers.
Einstein did not.
Professor Richard Feynman did not.
Stephen Hawkins did not.
Neither did *Alan Turing*.
Steve Jobs did not and
CEO Phally does not either.
To state the blindingly obvious.

If you don't have all the answers, you need to work with others.
When done *properly*, this does not weaken your ideas,
it **makes them stronger**.

Do you have all the answers? *Do you even know all the questions?*
If not, wouldn't it be wise to collaborate with people who are strong in areas that you are particularly weak in?

VP.Start does not try to do **everything**,
handle **every** aspect of **every** business operation,
micromanage **every** detail and process.
VP.Start has *no desire to become an enormous conglomerate,*
a slow-moving behemoth with a massive workforce and *monstrous campus*.
VP.Start intentionally chooses to remain **agile and flexible**,
quickly able to respond to changes in the tech sector.

Do you need to micromanage every detail of your operation?
Do you need to constantly oversee every aspect of your innovative solutions?
People who cannot let go and delegate and outsource are defeated by their own limitations.
Without exception.
VP.Start is wisely building partnerships and relationships with OEMs and outsourcing parts of the sustainability system, such as aspects that include:
construction of infrastructure,
manufacturing of IoT equipment and
building an AI support structure for the SIMA Journey.
VP.Start is not an expert company in construction.
VP.Start is not an expert company in manufacturing.
VP.Start is not an expert company in AI Data Center building.
VP.Start could try to master all of those areas, I suppose,
but **they choose to focus on innovation and ideas**.

Sometimes *the greatest superpower* that a company or an innovator can have is the ability *to see their own limitations.*
What are some areas where your skills and talents are limited?
What are some parts of your innovative dream that you should delegate to others?
What are the core aspects that you MUST keep for yourself?

Are you clear on the distinction between the core aspects and the outsourceable parts of your innovation?

The overarching sustainability system has an *almost infinite number* of components,
from renewable energy integration to EV adoption,
from AI infusion to telecommunication implementation,
from data storage to energy storage to battery storage.
It would be **unwise** for VP.Start to try to master all of these components.
Completely impossible and completely unnecessary.
There are already powerful companies working in each of these areas.
VP.Start intends to keep its **focus on its big picture missions** and delegate these myriad of smaller detail aspects of the sustainability system to others.
If you want to become an innovator, you must keep your methodology focused on the *big picture*.
Do you feel like your methodology has a clear, big picture focus?
What aspects of your methodology would you do well to change to better align with your ideas?

Of course, while collaboration and delegation are important methodological approaches,
OEMs and other potential partners need to be *selected and screened carefully* based on their *skills*, their research and development *abilities* and
their *capabilities* to complete work in a timely fashion at a high level of quality.
VP.Start is constantly ascertaining whether or not
its OEM partners are providing work of sufficient quality.
After all, **VP.Start's name and brand are on the solutions.**
If the manufacturing, testing, quality control or after service are subpar, customer and users will not blame the OEMs.

The blame will fall on VP.Start.
As, of course, it should.
When you delegate and outsource,
you take on more risk.
But VP.Start has always made the decision *to embrace risk over inflexibility*,
delegation over excessive workload and
creative big picture thinking over micromanagement.
VP.Start chooses *business, not busyness.*
Every time.

Collaboration, delegation and outsourcing always involve risks. Are you ready to embrace the risks if they help you become more agile and flexible?

If you are truly open to collaboration,
if you are truly in possession of a win-win mindset,
if you are truly willing to make sure that your partner benefits as much as you do,
you don't need to search for partners.
In VP.Start's experience, MoUs with *government ministries,*
educational institutions,
international organizations and
fellow industrial associations
have been signed when
these heterogeneous stakeholders
sought out the Sen Sok Valley Campus.
We don't search for partners.
Partners search for us.
Innovative companies are always like that.

One especially unusual example occurred recently

when two companies,
SNKRP, a local, Cambodian construction and manufacturing company
and Huawei, the Chinese tech conglomerate,
met for informal collaboration talks.
Two companies meeting to discuss potential areas of collaboration is not so out of the ordinary.
A fairly common business scenario.
However,
what makes the situation unique is that
they met and discussed and negotiated **under the auspices of VP.Start**
at the SIMA Journey Annex on the VP.Start campus.
Why would two unrelated companies meet together at VP.Start?

First of all, VP.Start has *close relations with both companies*,
which is especially interesting in the case of Huawei,
since it was VP.Start's ecosolutions that replaced those of Huawei with the EDC.
You might reasonably expect that Huawei would harbor less than kind feelings towards a rival,
but in this case, things are quite different.
Huawei *feels respect for VP.Start, camaraderie and a willingness to work together.*
SNKRP, on the other hand, is a company founded by a long-time friend of Phally who Phally considers something of a mentor or teacher.

So, VP.Start brought the two companies together,
not because it would benefit VP.Start directly, or *even indirectly*,
but because the collaboration of these two parties would help further sustainability in Cambodia. **True innovators and truly innovative companies love collaboration and foster collaboration** even when that collaboration does not include themselves directly or indirectly.
True innovators seek a better future and

are *not so concerned about how that better future is achieved*.
Phally and the VP.Start team provided *a location,*
logistical support and
professional guidance to help a collaboration move forward.
A collaboration between **two OTHER companies**.

Are you willing to support collaboration for the good of innovation,
even when you are not directly involved in that collaboration?
Do you embrace progress whether you are directly involved or not?
This is the advanced stage of the true innovator. Are you up to the challenge?

The most powerful collaboration, by far, for VP.Start,
is its close relationship with the EDC.
The utility has been willing to adopt the DRC and other IoT solutions
on very favorable terms,
helping VP.Start overcome its lack of outside investment support.
VP.Start has sent teams, often spearheaded by Phally, himself,
to give training sessions and workshops at all 16 local headquarters
of the EDC,
to make sure that the solutions are being used to maximum efficiency.
This is an essential part of the collaborative mindset and methodology.
Reciprocity.
For VP.Start, collaboration is always a two-way street.
EDC provides feasible, doable financial terms.
VP.Start provides extensive training.
Everyone benefits.
VP.Start would never want to enter into a relationship
where they provide all the benefits to the other party.
Obviously.
But by the same token,

VP.Start would not be willing to receive benefits from their partner if
they could not provide any. Mutually beneficial.
Win-win.

In the near future, the VP.Start team will travel to China
and shortly thereafter, Japan and South Korea,
in search of *more collaborative OEM partners*.
Phally will visit the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta with a similar goal of
gaining access to potential OEM and other partners in the ASEAN region.
Once again, let me remind you that **collaboration is not** a business plan.
It is not a strategy.
It is not approach to
gain value capture.
It is **a methodology**
based on a mindset.
A mindset that says,
"We need help from others.
We do not know everything.
We can provide help to others.
We know some things that others do not know.
We do not need to do everything.
We can delegate and outsource.
We are stronger together.
We grow faster together."
The SIMA Journey moves forward together.

The time has come to make a choice.
Do you want to be a true innovator?
Are you willing to adopt a collaborative mindset?
The SIMA Journey advances. Are you ready to participate?

Chapter 7

The SIMA Methodology
Predicting the Future with Digital Twins

"Trying to predict the future is like trying to drive down a country road at night with no lights while looking out the back window."

-Peter Drucker, Investor and Futurist

Digital twin technology is an important part of the SIMA Methodology.
A core component.
A mission critical element.
Many people would consider digital twinning
to be a cutting edge, state of the art technology.
Phally would disagree.

According to him,
digital twinning is as old as human life on earth and
maybe much older than that.
Why does Phally say that?
Digital twinning is simply taking data and **making predictions based on the data**.

How effectively do you use data in your daily life?
What does that suggest to you about how effectively you use data in your innovations?

For example,
as I get ready to go outside in the morning,
I look out and see that it is a cloudy, overcast day.
I grab my umbrella.

Why do I do that?
I am *making a prediction based on the available, limited data.*
I am creating a mental digital twin.
However, let me ask you, when it is cloudy, does it always rain?
Of course not.
I might take the umbrella needlessly.
I don't have enough data,
enough actionable intelligence, to make a highly accurate prediction.
But I could opt to get the weather forecast from an online app,
based on data gathered from IoT devices.
I could acquire more data,
better data,
more thoroughly tested data.
Now my data is much more reliable and accurate…but **still not perfect.**
For example, the app might tell me that there is a 75% chance of rain.
I will probably take my umbrella in that case
But I realize that there is still a 25% chance that it will not rain.

This example shows the fundamental ideas of the digital twin.
Gathering **more and more accurate** data.
Taking into account **more and more factors**.
Covering **more and more** of the big picture.
Building a **more and more high-fidelity** replica.
But….***never achieving absolute identicality.***
And since that is the case, always striving to further upgrade and become **more and more accurate.**
In an endless loop.

Do your innovative solutions and products continually leverage more data?
Are they in a constant stage of upgrading and approaching greater fidelity?

You can think of digital twin technology as answering **two questions:**
How do we make predictions more accurately?
How do we continuously upgrade the data that we base our predicitons on?

VP.Start is aggressively moving to integrate digital twin technology into **every** aspect of the SIMA Journey,
all five missions:
the SIMA Smart Grid, the SIMA Smart City, the SIMA Home,
the SIMA Universal Connectivity Network app and SIMA Big Data.
The more accurate the predictions, the better the results.
The faster the data is collected and upgraded, the more accurate the predictions.
The ***more DRC devices deployed,*** *the faster data is collected and upgraded.*
This is a positive cycle that benefits everyone.
Are you determined to introduce data-driven digital twin concepts into *every* **aspect of your ideas?**

In the case of the **SIMA Smart Grid,**
digital twins are used to create *a digital replica of the entire grid* architecture.
This is an indispensable step in the methodology of SIMA grid modernization.

First of all, digital twins monitor **every** aspect of the electricity network **from** massive power generation plants and BESS
(Battery Energy Storage System) complexes
down to small components like individual substations and smart meters.
Everything placed into one digital model for easy visualization and management.
Bottlenecks *can be recognized* and alleviated instantly.
Battery storage systems *can be charged* and discharged with maximum efficiency.
Supply and demand *can be varied* instantly to reduce volatility and
outage frequency and duration *can be shrunk* dramatically.

Everything based on data accumulated and updated by DRC series IoT sensors and meters
instantly
and
continuously.

Secondly, digital twins can be used powerfully for **predictive maintenance of equipment.** Conventionally,
infrastructure and grid equipment has *an arbitrary lifespan*.
At the end of a fixed time period, infrastructure **must be** replaced.
Automatically.
After all, who has enough time to monitor every component of infrastructure.
Twinning changes everything.
Digital twin technology monitors the data
that shows functionality and efficiency of the equipment.
As long as the equipment is functioning well,
it is *kept in service.*
As data shows the onset of potential issues,
the equipment is *replaced BEFORE it fails*.
Less unnecessary replacement.
Less equipment failure.
Better outcomes.

On the third hand, *if I had three hands*,
digital twins allow operators to **test out scenarios** on the grid
that would be **expensive and dangerous** to test in the real world.
Cyberattacks.
Severe weather events.
Excessive peak demand situations.
Physical line breaks and equipment failures.
Digital twins allow operators to find the best solutions

to problems that **might occur**,
so they can try to make sure that these predicaments
never do occur,
or if they do, there is a plan in hand for them
to be mitigated effortlessly.

On more major benefit of digital twin technology is
effective **integration of renewables** into the grid.
Renewables are important for a sustainable,
carbon footprint reducing SIMA future and yet,
renewables present considerable challenges
when they are integrated into the power network.
Intermittency.
Unreliability.
Weaker power generation.
Digital twins take these factors into account with
data,
data,
data.
Weather data.
Power Generation data.
Demand data.
Battery storage data.
Conventional fossil fuel generation data.
Big Data.
Harnessed by AI capabilities.

Are your solutions leveraging Big Data and DIgital Twins to their maximum efficiency?

Taking digital twin technology to the next level,

we can create **a digital twin of an entire city,**
an "urban brain", if you will,
a replica that is based on all gathered IoT data converged into one digital twin.
Moving urban planning from guesswork and assumptions to data-based predictions.
Moving the SIMA City Initiatives from imagination to reality.
Digital twinning can improve *traffic systems and mobility.*
You simply cannot have a smart city without mobility.
Digital twins can be used to *test infrastructure* like bridges and new road construction safely.
To optimize *recycling systems, waste collection and storage*.
To upgrade *emergency prediction and management* such as flood preparedness and response.
To enhance *sustainable urbanization* and population growth.
The SIMA City Digital Twin combines three key parts:
data collection by IoT devices,
visualization and mapping on the UCN app and
intelligent application of the acquired actionable insights for augmented urban outcomes.
Creating a replica of the city so we can recreate a better original city.

Digital twin technology also comes into play in **SIMA Smart Home Automation.**
Digital twin technology moves home automation from *individual, disconnected,**siloed** appliances*
to an overarching **replica of the entire digital home**.
The entire energy footprint of a home is monitored digitally.
This can be used for **smart shedding**,
a process where *autonomous* raising or lowering of smart curtains
based on real-time temperature and weather data can lead
to greatly reduced household energy costs.

Similar to monitoring grid infrastructure,
individual appliances can be monitored by data to determine lifespan and degradation. *No unnecessary replacements, no unexpected appliance failures.*
Proactive warnings to alert us to imminent appliance and gadget failure
to avoid emergencies and reduce waste.
For example, if a refrigerator fails unexpectedly,
a lot of food could be lost.
If the failure could be predicted and
the refrigerator replaced BEFORE problems occur,
waste is greatly reduced.
Thanks to the digital twin, these inconvenient scenarios can be avoided.
Similar protections can be afforded to water and electricity systems that are monitored by IoT devices and fed into the personal home digital twin.
This, of course, can be applied to
offices,
shops,
restaurants,
businesses,
factories,
schools,
hospitals and
so on and so on.
A digital version of your home to improve the quality of your life in your own physical home.

Digital twins can improve grid operations, urban experiences and home automation.

How are digital twin technologies

improving the experiences of the customers of your innovative products?

The **UCN** takes all that digital twin data and brings it into **visualization**.
One significant problem of digital twins is that ***they are digital.***
And ***we are not.***
While a digital twin *inhabits the artificial world*, so to speak,
we *live in the physical, material world.*
So when the digital twin creates benefits and insights and actionable intelligence
in the virtual world,
we need to find a way to bring that *into the tangible world, our world.*
That is one of the functions of the UCN.
AlienCheck connects us to *our IoT-infused devices,*
our IoT managed cities and
our IoT monitored and operated smart grid.
In other words, AlienCheck **puts us in contact** with the variety of SIMA digital twins,
but in a way that we can understand.
You see, digital twins speak *the language of data,*
the language of coding,
the language of the digital future.
Unless we are data analysts or data scientists,
we are probably not very fluent in digital language.
You can think of the UCN as ***a translator***
that helps us communicate with the IoT devices and
by extension, the digital twins, themselves,
while enabling them to get in touch with us as well.
Our SIMA digital twin methodology brings about **the interface of man and machine,**
natural and artificial,
digital and physical.

Our final mission, **SIMA Big Data**,
absolutely depends on digital twin technology.
We follow three main processes:
acquire data, simulate scenarios with data and apply data.
As we **acquire data**, we are *building the skeleton* of the digital twin.
A digital twin requires copious amounts of data,
clean, accurate data,
continuous data,
a wide variety of data.
But a skeleton is not going to walk very far.
As we start to use this **data in simulations,**
we are *putting the flesh and muscle onto the bones* of the digital twin.
We make **millions upon millions of simulations** with slight variations,
all performed virtually **simultaneously**,
until we find the simulation that best fits the data.
But a skeleton covered with skin and muscles is *still not alive*.
When we start to **apply the data** into real-world tests and pilots
in the SIMA Grid, SIMA City and SIMA Home,
the digital twin roars to life.
But, of course, *tests have results* an
they are not always exactly what we might have expected
or hoped for.
This creates **a new wave of data** rushing back to fortify the skeleton,
starting the process again.
Upgrading.
Endlessly.
Relentlessly.
Unflinchingly.

This brings us back to the digital twin mindset.
The two questions.
How do we make predictions more accurately?

How do we continuously upgrade the data that we based our predicitons on?
Every loop in our amazing cycle of upgrading brings us a step closer to
perfect accuracy.
Absolute ***identicality***.
A digital twin in the true meaning of the word **"twin."**

A step closer and yet, *perfection remains elusive.*
A 100% identical replica remains an unreachable goal.
At VP.Start, this effort to *access the inaccessible,*
this bold *approach to the unapproachable,*
this *attempt to reach the unreachable,*
it moves us forward.
After all, we seek a true sustainability system for a sustainable world.
This, too, is an attempt to reach the unreachable.
Is a sustainable world even possible?
Maybe no.
Will we achieve a sustainable world in our lifetimes?
Probably no.
Is it going to be easy to get there?
Absolutely no.
Will we stop striving and trying to achieve a sustainable future?
Definitely no.

Some tasks are challenging. Others are truly daunting. And a few tasks are unreachable.
Do your solutions and innovative ideas take us closer and closer to the unreachable ideal?
Do you leverage data-driven and digital twin technology in a way to improve outcomes?

Chapter 8

The SIMA Methodology
The SIMA Journey is Green

"The best way to achieve a green revolution is to have innovative, greenable ideas."
-CEO Phally

Nowadays everybody is talking about **green**.
Green energy.
Green solutions. Green products.
Green technology. Green strategies.
Green investment in green companies.
A green planet with a green future.
Unfortunately, the one "green" that you rarely hear about is **"green ideas"**.
At VP.Start,
we insist that you can never achieve any methodology without having ideas first.

No green ideas? No green methodology.
No green methodology? No green future.
Ideas always come first.

With your innovative solutions, do ideas always come first?
Are your green products and green services built on the foundation of green ideas?

You might not think that VP.Start is a green company.
We don't manufacture solar panels or wind turbines.
We don't invest in renewable energy generation.
We are not involved in lobbying the government for more environmental legislation.
We don't do research and development of green, carbon-friendly strategies.
Not directly.

But, we at VP.Start are clear on one key point.
The best green solutions are solutions
that make the grid and power generation **more efficient and less wasteful**.
Renewable energy is not going to be very useful
if the power system is full of
leakages and outages,
waste and faults,
power losses and inefficient storage.
Wasted energy hurts the environment even if that energy was *generated "greenly"*.
As a matter of fact,
it is **better to have conventional power generation** with fossil fuels
when *losses and waste are kept to the bare minimum*
than to have **solar and wind generated power**
that is overwhelmingly *wasted and mishandled*.

Do your solutions do more harm than good?
Do your ideas keep losses, waste and inefficiencies to the bare minimum?

Furthermore, green energy solutions that are *highly effective*
but **prohibitively expensive**,
are **not really effective** at all.
Governments and industries will not adopt solutions,
no matter how great they are,
if they are excessively expensive.
SIMA Green ideas *require grid efficiency and require it to be affordable.*

Are your ideas both amazingly innovative and affordable?
Many solutions have one or the other but very few have both.

The ***VP.Start mindset is sustainability-driven***.
Let me reiterate.
The SIMA mindset is sustainability-driven.
The SIMA Journey has **one destination**:
a sustainability system for a sustainable future for our planet.
Reducing our carbon footprint and
protecting the environment are
important in their own right
but they are just **components** of the overarching sustainability system.

So, how can the SIMA Smart grid modernization solutions
make the grid and the overall power system greener?
The greenest energy is the energy that we never have to generate in the first place.

Let me give you an example.
When **electricity travels long distances** on the transmission lines,
some power is lost as heat.
These "line losses" force greater generation of energy than is really used.
The data-driven digital twin-infused SIMA grid solutions
can recognize these losses in the data.
This, in turn, can lead to **actionable intelligence** for preventative maintenance such as upgrading the materials of certain portion of the transmission line network.
Reducing losses and waste.
Sustainable.

Further more, data can indicate cases

where using **High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) is advantageous** over conventional High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC).
HVAC changes directions frequently
whereas HVDC flows in one direction only.
In the case of long distance transmission lines,
HVDC use can reduce friction and diminish energy losses and leakages.
This is especially useful
when renewable energy sources
like *wind turbines or solar farms*
are in remote areas,
as is often the case.
It is also absolutely necessary
for *underwater cables*
in island nations like the Philippines.
The *data-driven solutions of the SIMA Journey*
can indicate when these special measures
need to be taken and,
on the other hand,
when more conventional approaches
are sufficient.
In this way,
the DRC series *reduces the cost*
of unnecessary distribution line changes
while **simultaneously** *reducing wasted energy*
when transmission line upgrades are needed.
With Big Data in hand,
we can choose highly accurately
where to make changes and
where not to make them.
A *greener* future based on grid modernization technology.

Do your innovations solve problems of waste and problems of cost simultaneously?

Another way in which SIMA Smart grid solutions
can promote a greenable tomorrow are in terms of promoting
the Electrification "of Everything" (EoE).

Electric buses.
Electric trains.
Electric vehicles.
Electric subways.
Electrification of the entire transportation infrastructure.

This electrification can greatly **reduce fossil fuel usage**,
carbon emissions,
pollution and
promote renewables integration.

But it can only succeed,
if **the grid is resilient enough** to handle the added demand of EV charging stations.
To *facilitate* meeting this increased demand,
the SIMA Smart Grid *anticipates* peak demand
by predictive data analysis and
staggers charging to *reduce* excess consumption at any one time.

For one example, most electric buses and vehicles charge at night which puts **a strain on grid capacity**.
Data-driven solutions spread out the charging while preparing the required excess energy.
A resilient battery storage system
that can be efficiently integrated into the system as needed
is mission critical to this overall **spreading and shedding strategy**.
Based on the data-driven solutions of VP.Start, this process becomes possible.
Every new advancement, such as EV adoption or renewables integration, brings new challenges.
Are your solutions adaptable enough to face the challenges, not just current ones, but those of the future, as well?

Another issue on the road to a more greenable economic future is
how to cope with increasingly **extreme climate events.**
Climate change is causing more severe weather development worldwide,
including increased *wildfires, storms and unprecedented heat waves*.
In addition to being harmful to nature and people directly,
these events have **a negative impact on the electric grid** and grid infrastructure that must be mitigated by a resilient grid that has *self-healing capabilities*.
For instance, the IoT sensors deployed by VP.Start
can instantly recognize **a line that has fallen** due to environmental factors or **a line that has been compromised** or damaged due to various extreme weather events.
Automatically, within milliseconds,
the power flow can be *rerouted to avoid the damaged section*,
which can be isolated and subsequently repaired,
either remotely or in person, depending on the damage.
No loss of service.
No loss of energy.
No waste.
That is **the methodology of VP.Start**.

Problems will happen. More often, more seriously and of more duration.
Do your innovative solutions take these problems into account?
Do they leverage problems as opportunities for systemic growth and advancement?

Intermittent renewable power generation **requires the data-driven**

solutions of VP.Start.
A resilient grid **requires the data-driven innovations** of VP.Start.
Answers to extreme weather challenges **require the data-driven ideas** of VP.Start.
Expanded electrification **requires the data-driven approaches** of VP.Start.
Carbon footprint reduction **requires the data-driven measures** of VP.Start.
A green future for our planet requires the SIMA Journey.

One of the greatest challenges facing our planet,
our people and our innovations
is forging a green future.
Innovations that build a greener tomorrow affordably will be embraced and implemented. Innovations that fail to do so will be rejected and discarded.
What will happen to your innovative ideas?



Chapter 9

The SIMA Methodology
A Deep Dive Into the LMS System

"Your power transformer is not aging in isolation. It is aging according to the decisions that you make today."
-Dr. Nadajaran Moodley, CEO of Power Transformer Health

To this point,
our book has avoided a deep dive
into technological structures, parameters and specifications.
A generous explanation for this avoidance would be that
the audience of this book is the general reader
who may or may not have detailed knowledge of technology.
A less generous but probably more accurate explanation is
that the author of the book
is not an engineer or tech expert and
would struggle to explain *deep technological topics*.
While both of these are true to some extent,
it would be remiss of this book
not to include one chapter
that took a deep look at *the technological underpinnings*
that bring the big picture ideas into reality.
The SIMA Methodology.

Are you able to explain the deep, technical parts of your innovative ideas
in ways that would appeal to and be understood
by the general listener, reader or audience?

Remember that, at its core, at its soul,

VP.Start is a company based on ***"Innovation through Technology"***.
"Innovation" means the amazing, outside the box, creative ideas,
the dreams that form the vision of the SIMA Journey.
On the other hand,
"Technology" means the detailed plans and projects,
equipment and gadgets,
the hardware and the software,
that make these dreams come true.

While we tend to **glorify** the Big Picture ideas and
honor the sweeping vision and
respect the impossible dreams,
we **cannot forget** the engineering technology
that makes those *ideas,*
vision and
dreams come to life.

Do you have the technology **in hand to back up your *innovative ideas*?**
Do you have the innovation **in hand to give meaning to your *technology*?**

One of the the key components of the grid,
whether conventional grid or smart grid, are the **transformers**.
If you believe in transformation, as Phally does,
You need *powerful, effective, hardworking transformers.*
Transformers are used to raise voltage or lower voltage as needed.
When energy is generated in a power plant, it is at a very high voltage.
This voltage is maintained as the electricity travels long distances on the transmission lines.
This is necessary because electricity traveling at a high voltage
will have less leakage from the power lines
because of facing less resistance.

However, high voltage cannot be delivered to a standard house or shop.
It would create an explosion.
Therefore, we need transformers.
Transformers are required to *reduce the voltage to safe levels*:
medium voltage for large businesses, factories, hospitals and the like,
low voltage for distribution to individual houses.
When transformers are working effectively,
The SIMA Smart grid runs smoothly,
outages are diminished and
energy loss is kept to a bare minimum.
When the transformers are ineffective,
outages increase,
leakages become more frequent and
infrastructure degradation accelerates significantly.
When transformers fail,
this can cause major, **lengthy outages**,
costly and time consuming repairs and
equipment damage or failure.
So, it goes without saying that transformer *proactive maintenance* and *preventive monitoring* by means of **data analysis** is absolutely essential.
It is at this point that **the LMS System** comes into play.

What systems do you have in place to make sure that the key components of your innovations:
Do not fail?
Work effectively?
Are maintained preventatively and proactively?
The **LMS System (Low Voltage Management System)** is an integrated

framework encompassing increased *transformer visibility and virtualization*
to monitor functionality, operational quality and lifespan issues.
Successful implementation of the LMS into the power grid network
promotes *enhanced load balancing*
which can be critical for renewables adoption and uninterrupted coverage.
Furthermore, it is indispensable in *reducing outages and power failures*.
LMS utilization can lead to dramatic **reductions in CAPEX (Capital Expenditures)**,
in other words, the upfront costs of building and installing infrastructure
while SIMULTANEOUSLY
decreasing significantly OPEX (Operational Expenditures),
the cost to operate and maintain infrastructure.
Finally, LMS adoption can enable better SIMA Smart Grid
operations for *greater data-driven loss reductions* and
more digitized asset management by the EDC.
In layman's terms, **cost savings,**
waste reduction,
greater efficiency.

Yes,
SUSTAINABILITY.

The **SIMA Methodology** practices involved here are critical to notice.
Don't let the Methodology get lost in the technical details
of the previous paragraph.
Simply stated, we solve problems!
But invariably, ***solving problems creates new ones***.
ALWAYS!

Think about it this way:
How many car accidents were there **300 years ago**?
How many traffic jams were there **300 years ago**?
How many parking issues?

Drunk driving? Speeding? Dangerous driving?
How serious was the problem of carbon emission from cars **300 years ago**?
Obviously, before the invention of cars,
these problems **did not exist.**
Similarly, issues of electric grid *functions and*
operation and
efficiency did not exist
when there was no electric grid.
In other words,
each new development,
each new advancement,
each new technology,
creates problems that did not exist before.
Remember, nuclear weapons were never a problem
BEFORE nuclear energy was discovered.
The SIMA Methodology comes in 3 steps:
1) Solve "old" problems,
2) Discover the "new" problems that arise with these solutions and Solve these "new" problems
(which, of course, creates more "new" problems).
In an endless creative loop.

What problems do your solutions create?
Do you have solutions to the problems created by your solutions?
Do you have the mindset required to continuously solve "new" problems as they arise?

As we solved grid modernization problems cost effectively
with data-driven DRC equipment,
it became clear that transformers,
the machinery that raises or lowers voltage

to make sure that we are able to transmit electricity efficiently and
receive electricity into our homes safely,
transformers needed their own data-driven solutions.

The LMS System.

Unless you are technician or electrical engineer,
you probably don't need to know exact mechanical details of how the LMS works.
You probably don't need to understand all the physics and mathematics.
That is good news for me
because I couldn't explain the highly technical aspects to you
even if I completely understood them.
And I don't.
If you need detailed mechanical information, please contact VP.Start directly.

But **I do understand**
the benefits of solving problems.
I understand
how solving problems can create new ones.
Just as gaining new knowledge makes us **understand**
how little we really know.
I understand
that problem-solving is a continual process.
More importantly,
VP. Start understands this as well.

The LMS provides real-time monitoring
of Low Voltage Distribution transformers.
Informed decision making.
The LMS provides early warning

for current and temperature overage,
current anomalies and abnormalities and
alarms when there is transformer loss or malfunction.
Proactive decision making.
The LMS balances load flow and
monitors 3-phase current,
the current designed to foster continuous and consistent electricity flow.
Data-based decision making.
The LMS enables peak load analysis and optimization
as well as future capacity planning,
based on the gathered data.
Wisely planned decision making.
The LMS framework includes
a centralized dashboard of data analytics
for more accurate conclusions about operations and asset lifespan management.
Better decision making.
The LMS system supports
preventative maintenance to reduce equipment failures and outage duration,
which makes these LMS solutions compliant
with government SAIDI (outage duration) and
SAIFI (outage frequency) regulations.
Regulatory-based decision making.
The LMS architecture has already been successfully integrated in Phnom Penh and
starting with four EDC provinces,
the intention is to spread it across Cambodia and
in short order, abroad.
Exportable decision making.

As you hopefully noticed,

the LMS, and indeed,
all of ***the SIMA Methodology*** is based on decision making.
Wise.
Informed.
Proactive.
Data-driven decision making.
The SIMA Methodology is
NEVER
about making new **pro**ducts,
new **pro**fits,
new **pro**grams,
new **pro**curements.
The SIMA Methodology is
ALWAYS
about *solving problems,*
overcoming obstacles,
making better decisions.
Building sustainability.
Promoting sustainability.
Enhancing sustainability.
Reinforcing sustainability.

The LMS is
the **Low Voltage Management System**.
But actually, the LMS is just one more way to
Leverage
Methodology
Sustainably.

How do you make decisions about your solutions?
Are your decisions proactive?

Effective?
Wise?
Sustaianble?
Data-driven?
The way you make decisions IS the way you succeed OR fail.
Nothing more and nothing less!



Chapter 10

The SIMA Methodology
The IoT Mindset

"If you think that the Internet has changed your life, think again. The Internet of Things is about to change it all over again." -Brendan O'Brien, CEO of Number0

One of the key methods for the SIMA Journey to achieve its goals is to harness IoT.
Not just IoT devices, gadgets and appliances.
Not just IoT technology.
The IoT mindset.
The IoT mindset is the soul of the IoT revolution.

Why do we need an IoT mindset as opposed to just needing IoT technology?
Why does innovative thinking always have to come before technical application?

When we think about IoT, many people think of home automation.
Smart switches and IoT-infused appliances.
Some more technically savvy folks may think of grid modernization.
Equipment like the DRC series of VP.Start that use IoT sensors to collect data from the electric grid.
Others may think of IoT sensors deployed in smart city operations.
IoT sensors to monitor weather conditions, traffic patterns,
waste generation and collection patterns.
A few may think of smart medicine, smart agriculture,
smart fisheries, smart mining and so on.
IoT sensors and smart switches to improve the efficiency of medical equipment,
IoT sensor to monitor soil moisture levels for smart irrigation and crop rotation,
IoT sensors to monitor water conditions and fish growth levels in aquaculture and fish farming,
IoT sensors to monitor air quality and other safety concerns in mining operations.

These are all aspects of IoT technology and there are many more across all economic sectors.
And yet, this is only scratching the surface of the IoT mindset.

At its core, the IoT mindset is the inescapable,
indispensable key pillar of the sustainability system.
There is no SIMA Journey of VP.Start without the IoT mindset.

IoT by definition is about "things".
Equipment, machinery, ranging from small home appliances and personal devices to massive machinery in smart manufacturing and robotics-based engineering.
IoT is the method that determines how
machines interface with people,
people interface with machines and
most powerfully, how machines interface with other machines,
automatically and eventually autonomously.

Are you ready to leverage the power of the IoT revolution?
Are you willing to interface with machines for a more sustainable future?

At the basic level,
it might be something as simple

as you monitoring your air conditioner's electric usage on the AlienCheck app or as simple as your electric water pot *informing you* that it is losing efficiency and approaching the end of its lifespan.

At a more sophisticated level,
it might be equipment in a factory *coordinating* to maximize efficiency and minimize power usage and cost and
to avoid overloading the power system to keep manufacturing moving forward robotically
24 hours a day.

At the highly advanced level,
it could be IoT sensors monitoring weather conditions in conjunction with AI weather models
to *make predictive maintenance* of vulnerable aging infrastructure and
to prepare for weather-related developments in power usage,
including adjusting levels of renewable energy integration in real-time at millisecond intervals.

The SIMA Journey is working in **all of these levels**,
creating smart switches and smart metering for home appliances and office equipment,
developing IoT sensors for a wide variety of heterogeneous smart city monitoring systems and
producing IoT-based Grid Enhancing Technologies **(GETs)**
to upgrade the efficiency of the power grid,
such as IoT sensor-based smart rerouting
of electric current around bottlenecks **(Transmission Topology Optimization)** and
IoT-sensors that monitor real-time weather conditions to constantly and instantly update a power lines true carrying

capacity **(Dynamic Line Rating)**
As powerful as all of these emerging and developing IoT capabilities are,
they are still not as powerful as the IoT mindset.
This is the mindset underpinning IoT technology,
a mindset that promotes the collaboration of humankind and machinekind.
We are *no longer enemies* struggling and competing
for precious resources like fuel and money and rare earth minerals.
Man and machine are partners working together to make the world more sustainable.
This is the powerful IoT mindset that empowers the SIMA Journey.
Reframing and redefining electrical equipment and appliances as our friends,
this is the revolutionary aspect of the IoT mindset.
Just as we "friend" the people that we want to communicate with on social media,
It is time for us to "friend" our gadgets and devices,
our cities and factories,
our power grid.
The IoT mindset provides the framework that makes this possible.

Are you prepped and primed to adopt the IoT mindset?
You will never succeed in IoT adoption until you succeed in IoT mindset adoption

VP.Start has been aggressively and unflinchingly pushing forward the IoT mindset.
We have already, as of this writing, integrated more than 10,000 IoT-infused DRC devices
into the electric grid across all the provinces of Cambodia.
Not bad for a start,
but we want to integrate more that 1,000,000 IoT devices to bring

the conventional Cambodian grid up to the SIMA Smart Grid-level.
Simultaneously, we are just starting a pilot project backed by NGO grants
to bring this same IoT power to the electric grid in Laos.
These are just the opening salvos in our SIMA IoT Revolution
as we spread the power of IoT across ASEAN,
across South Asia and
across the developing world.

According to research by the McKinsey Global Institute,
there has been *a major shift* in IoT adoption with a major acceleration in China and also across the emerging world.
China, for example, is shifting from a major IoT manufacturing hub to increasingly a major IoT purchasing market.
The research suggests that by 2030,
China will account for 26% of the global IoT market
and emerging markets of the developing world will account for 19%,
both major increases over 2020.
Furthermore, B2C sales are expected to grow exponentially and outstrip B2B sales of IoT
which is currently the largest area.

The time is right for a company like VP.Start
that has IoT devices and solutions that are uniquely suitable to the developing world because their cost-effectiveness makes them budget-friendly to countries dealing with substantial budgetary constraints.

When the time is right, are you prepared to be in the vanguard of change?
Or would you rather play it safe and let others take the lead?

Unfortunately, there are *4 major factors* that are hampering and hindering IoT adoption.

The first, of course, is **price.**
Potential consumers, both individual and corporate,
are concerned about the initial costs of IoT and
have doubts about the long-term ROI of IoT integration.
Such fears are certainly not warranted with the IoT revolution of VP.Start.
The EDC, Cambodia's utility, has already had a long-standing relationship with VP.Start,
using the DRC and other IoT solutions for more than 12 years.
It goes without saying, but I will say it anyway,
Utilities don't like to waste money or pay massive start-up costs for limited return on investment.
As already stated repeatedly,
the IoT solutions of the SIMA Journey are **plug-and-play (low installation costs), intuitive (low training and maintenance costs),**
leverage the **existing infrastructure (low operation costs)** and
VP.Start is also willing to make **unique financing arrangements** such as pay-as-you-go as needed.
ROI begins from the moment of installation
as the grid or the factory or the home devices become more efficient
so that the initial cost is quickly covered and the savings continue to add up.

Are you willing to pay initial costs for greater ROI down the road?
Do you have the patience and fortitude to accept slightly delayed gratification?

The second concern is **complexity**.
Especially for B2C IoT purchasers for home automation and small-scale IoT usage, many potential buyers are reluctant to adopt IoT solutions because they feel that IoT devices may be too technical and too complicated to use.
To be completely candid, many factory owners and large business leaders share a similar fear of IoT complexity.

This also is an unwarranted concern.
The IoT devices of VP.Start are intuitive and easy to use.
No advanced technical expertise is required.
For example, in the case of IoT devices in the grid,
the RPM Grid lays out the details of the IoT monitoring system
in **clear, easy to understand visualization.**
The UCN app takes visualization and intuitiveness to the next level,
meaning simple understanding of the grid data is available on a mobile device.
In the case of home and office automation, the IoT devices, smart switches
and the like, interface with **the highly user-friendly AlienCheck app,**
makes IoT usage very simple and efficient, indeed.

Are you able to overcome your fear of complexity to join the IoT revolution?

The third concern is **interoperability.**
This is, to some extent, a valid concern.
IoT devices, sensors, smart switches, smart meters and so on,
are produced, as you might expect, by a wide variety of IoT providers.
Different specifications.
Different parameters.
Different compliance frameworks.
If each device from each company requires its own app to monitor,
this will quickly become an exceedingly troublesome and inefficient situation.
Furthermore, buying all IoT devices from the same company is neither
cost-effective nor wise, either. As a result, many potential IoT customers
ultimately decide against IoT adoption.
Fortunately, VP.Start has already recognized this dilemma and solved the
problem of IoT fragmentation and the lack of IoT interoperability in
advance.
The UCN, AlienCheck, is an app designed to accommodate a wide variety

of IoT from various providers in one unified platform.
After all, it can hardly be called "universal" or part of the overarching
sustainability system
unless it is open to the full spectrum of IoT.
AlienCheck does not favor or encourage the use of IoT produced and
provided by VP.Start or by any other provider.
It is completely provider-agnostic as an effective Universal Connectivity
Network MUST be.

Are you willing to be customer-centric instead of sales-centric?
Can you put the needs of consumers and users above the desire to sell your products exclusively?
Customers are looking for companies that value them more than they value their bottom lines.

The final and largest concern is cybersecurity.
This challenge is so large and significant that it merits its own chapter
in the SIMA Methodology.

The IoT Revolution has already started. It will not stop.
What role do you want to play?
Make your decision quickly. Time waits for no one!



Chapter 11

SIMA Methodology
Cybersecurity in an Insecure World

"The very best cybersecurity is to have innovative ideas.
They cannot be stolen or hacked."
-CEO Phally

We live at an insecure time on an insecure planet.
Insecure **geopolitically**.
Insecure **economically**.
Insecure **ethically**.
Insecure **environmentally**.
How can we hope to achieve cybersecurity, or any kind of security, in the current circumstance?

Do your innovative solutions help people to cope with life in an insecure world?

One of the most **important methodologies of the SIMA Journey is cybersecurity**.
It is the methodology that investors and customers and potential partners ask about the most.
By far.
And yet, we live in an age when *malicious actors are getting smarter,* hacking tools and approaches are *getting more sophisticated* and the reasons for cyber attacks are *becoming more diversified.*

Are your solutions and creative ideas well-equipped to face the growing cyberchallenge?

A good framework for cyber security impacts everything that VP.Start does, especially:
1) SIMA Smart Grid Modernization
2) IoT Connectivity in the SIMA City and SIMA Home Initiatives,
3) SIMA Big Data and Cloud Computing and
4) AI capabilties such as those in the AlienCheck UCN app
In other words, EVERYTHING.

Let's be clear on this.
This is **not** a book on cybersecurity technology.
This is a book on *cybersecurity methodology*.
And ultimately,
this is a book on **the mindset that makes cybersecurity work** or fail.

Do you have the cybersecurity mindset that is required by all innovators?

Let's start with the **SIMA Smart Grid** because this is the foundational mission.
The SIMA Smart Grid is powerful because it *integrates* smart meters,
IoT monitoring devices like the DRC series for data acquisition,
SCADA systems like the RPM Grid for data visualization,
the PLUM app for remote data management and
many other digital components.
These digital attributes make the grid *efficient, reliable and affordable*
BUT they also make it **digitally attackable.**
Increasingly, militaries in various countries are studying
cyber warfare strategies to disable smart grids.
Such an attack could put a nation's entire grid infrastructure at risk.

Based on this threat,
the SIMA Smart Grid practices **strict segmentation**

which means that a successful attack on one component can be contained and isolated.
Furthermore, all remote and vendor access is subjected to **multiple authentication steps**.
Additionally, VP.Start carries out regular "red-team exercises"
to **simulate cyber attacks** and counter them effectively.

But let's be clear and completely honest.
There is **no 100% foolproof methodology** to prevent all possible attacks.
You might feel fearful to hear that.
You might even think that *attacks are basically inevitable* at some point.
Perhaps you are right.

But let me ask you something.
Do you use internet banking with a banking app?
I suspect most of us do.
Are you convinced that *banking apps are invulnerable* to attack?
They are not.
They can be attacked just like any other digital platform.
Our money is at risk.
And yet, *we continue to use these apps*.
And unless, we are extremely tech savvy individuals,
we probably are *unaware of the cybersecurity protocols* that the banks use.
We use the apps because they are convenient and helpful.
AND **we trust** the banks.

The same is true for *online shopping,*
internet browsing,
email usage,
social media posting and
any other online activity.

There is risk and ***the risk is real.***
Still, we continue to use these apps because we **appreciate the convenience and trust the provider.**

The SIMA Smart Grid is a similar situation.
Even if you were told all of the latest cybersecurity advancements of VP.Start, no disrespect intended, would you really understand them?
I certainly would not.
Only a dedicated cyber security specialist would be able to understand such a complex topic.

BUT…is the SIMA Smart Grid convenient? **Absolutely, in so many ways.**
Do you trust the provider? **Do you trust VP.Start?**
That is the ultimate cybersecurity question.

Are you building trust in your ideas, your plans and your organization?
Are you forging trust so strong that it can last even when the customer doesn't really understand?

IoT connectivity follows a similar pattern to the SIMA Smart Grid in terms of cybersecurity.
The SIMA City initiatives places **IoT devices all over the city**.
The SIMA Home initiatives places **IoT devices in homes, offices, factories, businesses and shops.**
The SIMA Universe, the AlienCheck app **unites those IoT devices and their data** in one powerful connectivity network.
Outstandingly efficient and helpful.
But each IoT sensor is a potential target, creating ***a wider target surface***, many potential points for nefarious actors to launch their attacks.
For example, sophisticated hackers and cyber criminals can create

"shadow" IoT devices to infiltrate the UCN.
They can alter or compromise existing IoT devices
to make them malignant and
to infect the system.

Once again, the keys are **restricted access and network segmentation**.
The number of people able to access the system is kept *to the absolute bare minimum* and authorization protocols are *intensified maximally*.
IoT devices, while connected by the UCN,
are simultaneously **isolated and segmented**
so that any attack on one IoT device or sensor does not spread throughout the entire network.

And yet, I must return to the point at **the soul of cybersecurity**.
Authorization, restricted access, encryption and firewalls are powerful but not omnipotent.
It is not easy, needless to day,
but they can be breached and overcome.
The two questions:
Are the benefits of urban automation and home automation considerable?
No doubt.
Do you trust the SIMA Journey? This is the one essential question.

Do people trust your journey?
If no, why not? If yes, how can you build that trust even further?

SIMA Big Data is the part of the SIMA Journey where
all the data that VP.Start has gathered from *the grid, IoT devices and the UCN*
is used for simulations to turn that data into ***actionable intelligence.***
Data acquisition leads to data simulations.
Data simulations inform data-based decisions.

The results of those decisions generate more data.
In an endless cycle.
Yet this valuable data can be **tampered with at any stage** in the process.
There can insider access to data repositories.
There can intentional data manipulations, additions or eliminations.
There can be cyber attacks at the point of
acquisition,
storage,
retrieval,
simulation or
application.
One altered piece of data can set off a chain reaction through various data sets, digital twins, simulations and
can even **damage projects and large scale plans**.

Of course,
these threats can be mitigated with strict *data governance*,
encryption across all data transit points,
frequent *cloud reconfiguration* and
regular *vulnerability screening*.
Mitigated but not completely eliminated.
As we have already seen repeatedly,
these strategies can *greatly lower the risk* but cannot absolutely prevent a cyber breach.

Since cyber challenges cannot be prevented absolutely, should we let our customers know that?

In some ways, **AI presents the biggest challenge** in terms of cybersecurity.
And yet, it is absolutely essential to a powerful Smart Grid and to a meaningful Universal Connectivity Network.

AI cyber security attacks can come in many forms.
Malicious actors can introduce *"data poisoning"* to sabotage real results,
can craft malicious examples and prompts that overcome AI defenses and
worst of all,
can attempt to *alter the underlying prompt guardrails* to change the core LLM instructions.
AI capabilities can even be used to find ways to overcome AI protocols.

Who could even begin to dare to try to counter AI-infused cyber attacks?
It requires *constant monitoring with humans in the loop* and
even then it is unlikely to be sufficient in all cases.
Yes,
there is the *4-part FEAR Framework*
(Firewalls, Encryption, Algorithmic Passwords and Restricted Access).
Yes,
there is *CIA (Confidentiality, Integrity, Availability)*,
the triad that supports cybersecurity doctrine.
Yes,
there are *countless new strategies* for cybersecurity and they are growing exponentially.
Yes,
VP.Start outsources cybersecurity to the *industry leaders for cutting edge solutions* as well as developing *in-home solutions* for both prevention and recovery.
But if you gained anything from this chapter,
it should be the fact that **cybersecurity is never sufficient,** not perfectly, at least.

So, do you trust VP.Start and the SIMA Journey?
Let me give you my perspective.

I don't care for salespeople.
They try to convince me to *buy things I don't want,*
I don't need and
I can't afford.
In other words, **they don't care about me**.
They only care about selling a product and making a profit.
VP.Start is never like that.
They recommend solutions and find out if they suit my needs.
If these solutions are helpful and profitable for me,
they are *happy to have me as a customer*.
On the other hand,
if they are not particularly useful for me,
outside of my budget or not interesting to me,
VP.Start will *never use pressure to try to sell them to me.*
Even if they are very useful and cost-effective for me,
if I don't see that,
if I don't FBR (feel, believe and remember) the solutions,
VP.Start will *never give me sales pressure*.

What does that have to do with **cybersecurity? EVERYTHING.**
I trust in VP.Start
because they care about me and they respect their own ideas, as well.
I can trust them in the things that I understand and
so in the areas that I don't, as well.
I know that they will do the best to protect their data and cyber systems
because
they care about me and
they care about their outcomes and
they care about a sustainable future.

As Phally said in the opening quote,

the best way to have cybersecurity and indeed, any kind of security,
is to have very innovative ideas.
Data can be hacked.
Information can be stolen.
No one can steal innovative ideas.

A few years back,
several ex-team members left VP.Start to start their own company.
When they left, they **stole** a lot of coding,
product specifications and
detailed, confidential internal information.
VP.Start did not sue them or take them to court or try to stop them.
Why?
Because VP.Start knew well that ***creative, innovative ideas can NEVER be stolen.***
They belong to the innovator and no one else can harness them. **EVER.**

That is what cybersecurity really means.

Do you believe in your ideas enough to protect them?
Is your protection plan adequate?
Do you have a backup plan if the first plan fails?
Do you care enough about your customers to protect their data as if it were your own?
Do you have the kind of innovative, creative ideas that are impossible for others to steal?

Chapter 12

SIMA Methodology
The Time is Now for Mindfulness

"The present moment is filled with joy and happiness.
If you are attentive, you will see it."
-Thich Nhat Hahn, Vietnamese Buddhist teacher and author

When you think of business methodology, what do you think of?
Probably,
business plans and marketing strategies,
joint ventures, partnerships and collaborations,
customer research and product development,
investment and pitching,
testing and quality control,
and any number of other strategic plans come to mind.
Of course, **VP.Start employs all of those techniques** as part of the SIMA Journey.

Furthermore, **team building** is another important aspect of many companies' business models. Companies increasingly recognize the power of *staff buy-in* and
decentralized brand ambassadorship.
VP.Start values these areas of focus as well
but being VP.Start, they take these concepts to **a revolutionary, radical place.**

What strategies do you consider mission critical to growing your business and building your ideas?

In your honest opinion, are these strategies succeeding as you would hope?
The SIMA Journey doesn't require mere teamwork and buy-in.
It requires mindfulness on behalf of all the team members, all the time.
Radical mindfulness.
Unequivocal mindfulness.
Is such a lofty goal even attainable?

Are you as mindful as you want to be?
Do you feel like you have sufficient, adequate powers of concentration?
Are you pleased with your overall productivity and growth, personally and professionally?

VP.Start in conjunction with Vipassa International
has started meditation and mindfulness training for ALL employees.
Not just the management.
Not just the upper levels.
Everyone in the workforce.
Every three months, using one full work day of the ENTIRE team for this training.

Now, let me be quick to say that this is **not a religious training**.
While Buddhism is very popular in Cambodia,
not all VP.Start team members are Buddhist.
This training is **not** in religious meditation.
It is about **developing concentration.**
Deepening focus.
Increasing productivity by moving into the present fully.

Do you think that you could benefit from being more fully in the present?

Mr.Chhunny of Vipassa, a famous author on mindfulness in Cambodia, himself, stated that the goal of this training is to get at the human system behind innovation.
At VP.Start, the emphasis is on innovation through technology, as you kno by this point.
Innovation MUST come before technology.
According to mindfulness theory,
a strong inner foundation MUST come before innovation.

The goal is not creative thinking.
This is just the result.
The goal is creative being, which is living in the moment.

The very first training session focused on "Building the Inner Foundation."
This is achieved through:
deep listening,
achieving a balance of EQ and IQ and
developing powerful, positive habits.
While these lessons, of course, apply to everyone and every situation, they are especially salient for a progressive and idea-driven company like VP.Start.
They are the methodology that takes VP.Start to the global stage and allows VP.Start to **dare of dreaming to change the world.**

Do you feel like you have a solid inner foundation?
Or do you feel like you need to strengthen your inner being to become more innovative?

In the business context, what is **deep listening**?
It means to listen to every idea, opinion and business proposal *without judgment*.

This is not as easy as it sounds.
Every team members has ideas that should be *respected, understood and, at times, implemented.* Even if they are not implemented,
the team member needs to feel that **her or his idea is valued** and **time has been taken** to understand the ideas correctly.

A *deep listener* is not concerned about preparing a good response to what they are hearing. Unfortunately, often in business and even sometimes at VP.Start, the leadership team can be more concerned about crafting an impressive response
than truly understanding the initial idea.
This is human nature.

A *deep listener* summarizes the opinion or proposal back to the originator, to **make sure they have understood accurately.**
At this point, the originator either accepts the summary of the deep listener or makes modifications if the deep listener has not perfectly grasped the concept.
In this deep listening approach to communication,
wanting to understand is just as important as actually understanding.
This **forges a deep bond of trust** among all team members and allows everyone to share ideas freely.
In such a workplace atmosphere, just as importantly,
even if an idea is ultimately rejected, bitterness will not develop.

Are you a deep listener?
What benefits would accrue to you from learning to listen more deeply?

Another issue in building a powerful team that can be truly mindful is making sure that every team member has **IQ and EQ in balance.**
In a simple way of thinking about it,

IQ is like the logical intelligence and knowledge that we have.
EQ are the social skills that allow you
to express your emotions and ideas effectively and non-threateningly.
As you might imagine, in an innovative tech company like VP.Start,
team members are generally of an **above average IQ**.
After all, they are working in areas of advanced technology.
Unfortunately, in some cases, **EQ lags behind** which can lead to
miscommunication.
"A lot of people communicate, but only a few connect."
Mindfulness theory realizes that if these two forces are not in balance,
it is *easy for people to get offended,*
for team members to feel disrespected and
for teamwork to break down.
Meditation can be a way to remove from our own mind the unnecessary
that is hampering our EQ development.
Facing our own story honestly, can also be helpful in EQ improvement.
EQ takes practice as does all communication and
these training sessions are a great opportunity
to get in touch with impediments to our own EQ growth.

Are your IQ and EQ in balance as much as you would like?
Why would it be beneficial to you if your IQ and EQ were more balanced?

Finally, the mindfulness speaker focused on the importance of **developing good habits**.
One such habit that he particularly emphasized was being on time.
He warned the class that tardiness would **not be tolerated**.
"What you tolerate, you teach."
Anyone arriving late would be denied admission.
This may seem a bit harsh on the surface but in mindfulness theory,
this is absolutely indispensable.

Why?
As he stated, *what you do now becomes what you do in the future.*
What you think and what you practice becomes who you are.
If the habit of being late is allowed and practiced now,
it will grow through hours and days,
months and years of repetition.
Similarly, the habit of promptness and always being on time,
can be solidified in the same fashion.

Think of it this way,
Isn't it better to be barred from attending a training session due to tardiness in the present and
learn a pivotal if tough lesson from that experience,
then to be barred from a major international conference or pitching event down the road.?
Much better to **learn the hard lessons when the consequences are not that severe**
so that you don't need to face severe consequences at some point in the future.

Are you developing the habits now that will keep you out of trouble in the future?
Are you adopting habits that will make you more productive or less productive in the long haul?

Let me ask you a question.
How productive are you?
No judgment.
Feel free to answer honestly.
Assuming you work an eight hour day as most people do,
how many hours are spent in actual productivity?
How many hours are wasted in less than productive ways?
In the training session,

team member answers ranged **from 1 to 6 hours of productivity a day**.
If we are brutally honest,
I think most of us are closer to the smaller number than the larger one.
Does this mean that we are all lazy workers trying to avoid accomplishing anything?
I don't think so, at least, not in most cases.
We are not mindful.
We are not perfectly clear as to what we must be doing at this moment.
It is not a problem of scheduling and prioritizing, per se, although these can be issues as well.
It is a problem of not being in the current moment,
not being fully focused on what we are doing now.
Meditation and mindfulness theory seek to give us that concentration.

Would you like to be more productive? I know I would!

Some of you may have read this chapter and thought to yourself that this topic is more about ideology than methodology.
You are not completely wrong in thinking this.
But in the SIMA Journey,
while we divide things into Story, Ideology, Methodology and Amazing Innovation, they all are *deeply and profoundly connected.*
We cannot perfectly separate them into distinct parts.

I made the choice to include this in the methodology section
because of the strategic value invested in mindfulness training by Phally.
He realizes that any sustainability system can only be built
on **the foundation of a productive, mindful team**.
As already mentioned, considerable time and financial resources have been deployed to bring this training to *the entire team.*
You might think that at a time when VP.Start is becoming busier and busier and as the SIMA Journey is *scaling up,*

ramping up and
speeding up,
there would be no time to **"waste"** on mindfulness training.
But Phally has the exact opposite opinion.

As VP.Start becomes more and more powerful and
the SIMA Journey becomes more and more global,
there is no chance of success without **increased concentration.**
Increased focus.
Increased productivity through increased mindfulness.

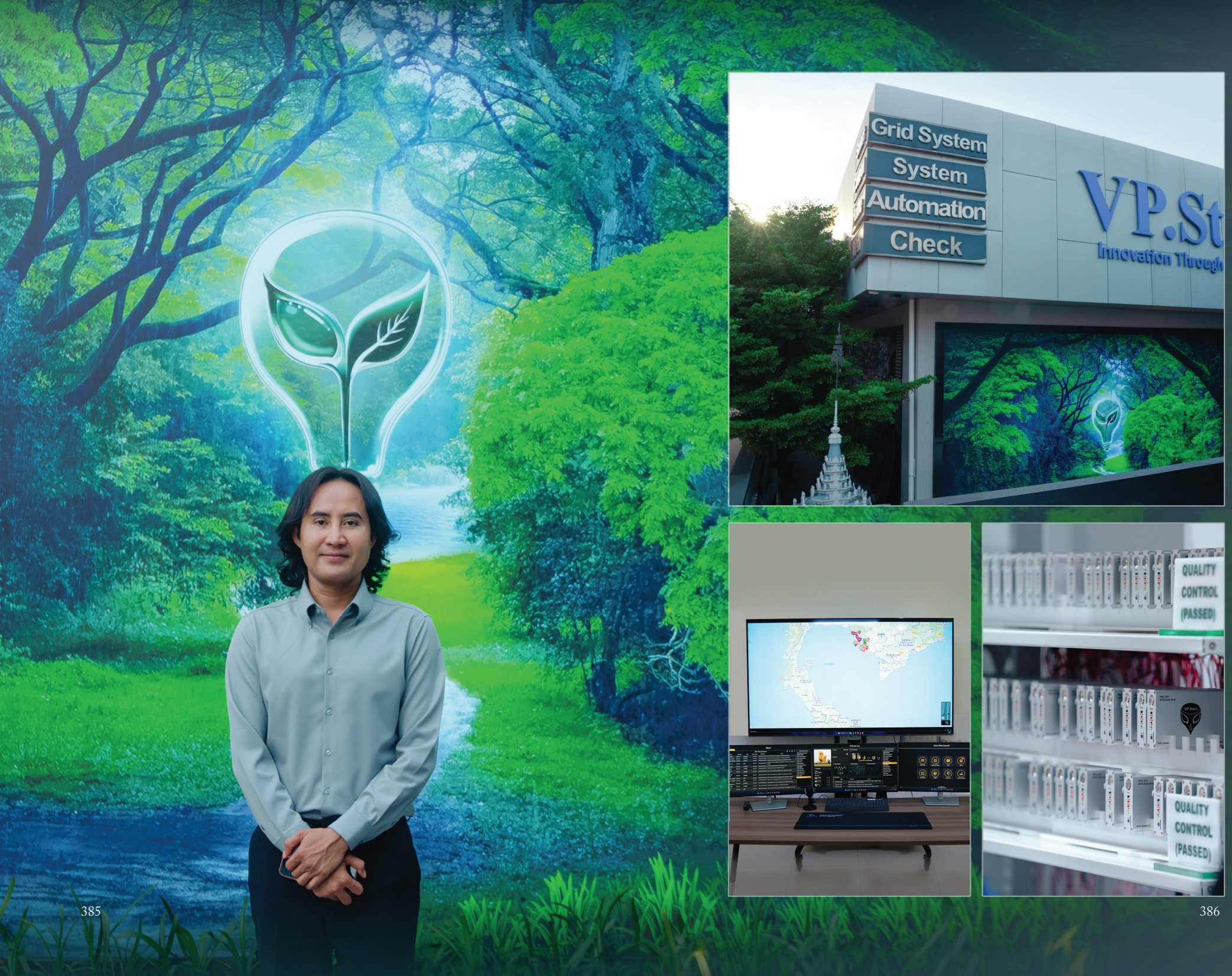
How important is it for you to gain increased concentration,
focus and productivity through mindfulness?
Are you ready to make mindfulness a pivotal part of your journey as well?




ພິທີເຊັນບົດບັນທຶກຄວາມເຂົ້າໃຈ
ລະຫວ່າງ ບໍລິສັດ VP.Start Technology Co., Ltd


ทึกถอามเข้าใจ




Grid System
System
Automation
Check
VP.St
Innovation Through
QUALITY
CONTROL
(PASSED)
QUALITY
CONTROL
(PASSED)

The SIMA Amazing Innovation



Section 4

SIMA Amazing Innovation

"You were born to fail. You were born to grow.
You were born to be an innovator. Become who you are."
-CEO Phally

As you have heard many times by now,
we are travelling on a SIMA Journey.
All of us.
No exceptions.

We all have stories, although only a few of us take the time to remember and review our stories
to try and gain the lessons that our personal life stories want to teach us.

We all have an ideology,largely a by-product of our stories.
The way we view the world, the way we understand life, the way we envision ourselves and others.
And yet, regrettably, many of us, perhaps, most of us, hide our ideologies and ignore our philosophies in order to fit in and be acceptable. We hide our ideology so well that many of us forget what our beliefs and dreams and goals really are.

Furthermore, **we all have a methodology**, a way to try to accomplish our goals.
Some methodologies are very successful. Others not at all.
While we are welcome to adjust our methodologies as new information arrives, we must never alter or adapt our ideology.

The ideology is the destination. If you keep changing the destination, how can you hope to get anywhere?
On the other hand, the methodology is the way we get to the destination. Sometimes a car. Sometimes a bicycle. Sometimes an airplane. Sometimes even on foot.
Depending on the road conditions. But whatever "form of transportation" we choose, we are still headed to the same destination.

This gives us the SIM of the Journey. All we need is the final "A".
Amazing Innovation.
Let me tell you something.
We have said it before but it is impossible to say it too often.
We all need to hear it over and over, because we all forget it over and over.
You were born to be an innovator.
Let me say that again.
You were born to be an innovator.

And yet, if that is the case, and I believe it is,
why don't we all have amazing innovations?
The core idea of the SIMA Journey is that the "A" must follow the "SIM" in "SIMA".
You will never have amazing innovations UNTIL
1) You believe in and learn from your Story,
2) You practice your Ideology no matter what others say, and
3) You search until you find the Methodology that brings your ideas to fruition.

If you do those three things,
there is absolutely nothing that can stop you from becoming
the amazing innovator that you SHOULD BE.
The amazing innovator that you were BORN TO BE.
The amazing innovator that you ARE.

As we take time to look at the amazing innovations of VP.Start's SIMA Journey, **never stop seeking** your own amazing innovations.

The 12 Solutions of the SIMA Amazing Innovations

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Innovation is the Result, Not the Starting Point 391
2. Ecosolutions for Ecoproblems 399
3. The Overarching SIMA Sustainability System 409
4. Grid Modernization: From Cambodia, For the World 419
5. AI Meets the SIMA Smart Grid 430
6. Smart Cities for Smart Citizens 437
7. Smart Homes for Smart Homeowners 445
8. AlienCheck is NOT a Social Media App 453
9. Universal Connectivity 462
10. SIMA Big Data is the Big Picture 469
11. The Greatest Innovation is an Innovative Voice 478
12. The Future of the SIMA Journey 488

Chapter 1

SIMA Amazing Innovation: Innovation is the Result, Not the Starting Point

"It does not matter how slow you go as long as you do not stop."
–Confucius, Chinese philosopher

We have just stated in the introduction to this section that everyone
should be an innovator,
can be an innovator,
was born to be an innovator.
While we believe that this is absolutely true,
it doesn't take long to look at people and see that many of them,
perhaps, most of them,
are not creative,
they **are not innovators,**
they are not producing amazing innovations.
There are two possibilities:
Either *our theory is wrong* and we were not born to be innovators OR
something is blocking and hindering many people from becoming innovators.

Are you the innovator that you want to be?
Are you creating and developing the amazing innovations that you want to create?
If the answer is *"NO"*, in your opinion, what is holding you back and hindering you?

VP.Start knows that innovation is the result of a process.
Do you know that, as well?

Innovation is the outcome, not the starting point.
If there are any disruptions or blockages along the way to innovation,
as if there were a power outage in our "innovation transmission lines",
you and I will never become the innovators that we were designed
and destined to be.

What are the disruptions and faults that threaten to block your "innovation transmission lines"?

Innovation is the natural order of the universe.
Let me say that again.
Innovation is the natural order of the universe.
When you see a plant growing out of a crack in the road, that is innovation.
Plants don't plan or try to grow out of the cracks in the pavement.
But when they face less than perfect situations, *they find solutions.*
They innovate.
A bird builds a nest out the materials that they can find.
They are not always the most optimal materials.
Birds can't go to the store to buy "nest materials".
If a bird cannot find the perfect materials to build a nest,
they innovate with the materials that they can find.
They are innovators and
we are innovators because
that is the fundamental principle of nature.

VP.Start adopted the principle,
the universally natural principle of innovation,
from the time that VP.Start was just an idea in the mind of a young Phally.
Remember, the first step in the innovative process called the
SIMA Journey is
to know your story,

to accept your story,
to learn from your story.
Stories are not always good or always bad.
It goes without saying that there are
successes and failures,
honors and humiliations,
victories and losses.
When we look squarely and unhesitatingly at our personal catastrophes,
we are **empowered to become innovators.**

Are you empowering yourself to become an innovator?
If you don't empower yourself, who do you expect to do it for you?

As we saw in the **SIMA Story** section of our book,
Phally and VP.Start were **not always successful.**
Phally grew up in *poverty* in a small village with very *limited access to education.*
He was very poor at and *uninterested in math* until the age of 12.
When he first started to have explosive growth in his math skills,
this also perturbed his teachers
who didn't always appreciate
the *chaos that he brought to the classroom*,
Phally's *refusal to follow instructions*
because "there must be a better way"
to answer each of the homework problems and
his *bold defense of his opinions* to his teachers.
For instance, at one point, even when he was threatened with getting
a "0" on his exam because of his poor attitude,
he informed the teacher that he didn't care about scores and marks anyway.

These early experiences of Phally's **set the stage for him to become an innovator**.

He learned to be resilient in the face of daunting challenges.
He learned that when he is interested in something he can learn rapidly but when he is not interested in a topic or doesn't see the purpose, he won't learn it in a 1000 years. *He learned* that he did not care about the approval of others and he was happy to break the rules even if it made some people unhappy.
He learned that teachers, textbooks and **experts were not always right**.

What are you learning from your past experiences that are making you a better innovator?

These are absolutely indispensable lessons for an innovator.
If you are not resilient,
you will never become an innovator.
If you care too much about the approval others or their validation,
you will never become an innovator.
If you are afraid to or unwilling to break the rules with intention,
y*ou will never become an innovator.*
If you are not bold enough to stand up for your ideas when
"experts" criticize you,
you will never become an innovator.

After founding VP.Start on the ideals of innovation,
the young company experienced many more challenges and successes on the road to innovation.

Team members that decided to leave and take internal, confidential information with them.
Investors who said that they loved VP.Start's SIMA Journey but declined to invest.
Government officials,

academic leaders and
international supporters who saw the potential of the VP.Start ecosolutions
even though they did not understand these solutions.
Because of the powerful voice of VP.Start,
they FBRed (felt, believed and remembered) these solutions.
Again, the story and experiences of VP.Start offered up valuable lessons
to the upstart company on what it takes to become an innovator and
to stay an innovator.

If you cannot **overcome disappointment**, betrayal and ungrateful ex-team members,
you should never try to become an innovator.
If you are not willing to **raise a powerful, passionate, positive voice** on behalf of your innovations,
you should never try to become an innovator.

Our Story is sometimes outside of our control.
Where we are born,
what kind of parents we have,
what kind of education we receive,
many of these things are not determined by us as individuals.
But how we react to our Story, namely our Ideology, is much more under our control.

How have you reacted to your Story, your hardships and your moments of glory?
Have you and I always reacted in the way that an innovator would react?

One reason that **many potential innovators *never* become actual innovators** stems from their philosophical approaches, their Ideology.

It doesn't matter what your story was, good or bad,
if you don't have the innovator's mindset and ideology,
you will never become the innovator that you were born to be.
Some of the core philosophies of VP.Start include:
there is nothing wrong with making mistakes,
we learn more from failures than successes,
we must grow or die,
we need to know the rules so we can break them well,
we must develop a powerful voice, and
we must learn and strive to become ourselves.

Let me **brutally candid** with you, dear reader.
If you are afraid of making mistakes or not prepared to embrace failures as learning experiences,
you would do well to **avoid** becoming an innovator.
If you are not enthusiastic about growing above all else,
you would do well to **discontinue** becoming an innovator.
If you want to live within the rules, inside the box, in the comfort zone,
you would do well to **reconsider** becoming an innovator.
If you don't feel inclined to work hard to develop your powerful voice (and it is hard work),
you should **abandon** becoming an innovator.
If you are not bold enough and arrogant enough to value yourself and become yourself,
you should **never consider** becoming an innovator.
NEVER.

Even if you face your Story bravely and honestly
AND
build an Ideology that is focused on innovation,
if your **methodology is faulty**,

you will *never* become an innovator.
Many people make it this far, but most sadly,
they fail at this point in the process and
they do not become the innovators that they should be.
Whereas your Story is in the past and impossible to change
AND
your Ideology is similarly established over time and solidified,
your Methodology can be changing all the time depending on situations and data.
It should be changing if you are an innovator.

Are you constantly and continuously changing your methodologies as needed in the pursuit of innovation?

For VP.Start,
our methodology revolves around a number of methodological principles:
implementing strict cybersecurity,
promoting adoption of renewable energy,
building grid and IoT solutions that are affordable across the developing world,
harnessing AI ethically,
employing digital twin technology for improved consumer and utility outcomes **and**
strengthening the internal team with meditation and other mindfulness techniques.

You cannot build an innovative company if data is not protected **strenuously**.
You cannot build an innovative company if renewable energy is not adopted **proactively**.
You cannot build an innovative company if Smart Grid and IoT solutions are not created **affordably.**

You cannot build an innovative company if AI capabilities are leveraged **unethically and improperly.**
You cannot build an innovative company if digital twin technology is not applied **beneficially.**
You cannot build an innovative company if the internal team is not empowered **regularly**.
You cannot build an innovative company UNLESS you are willing to upgrade methodology **constantly**.

Story, Ideology and Methodology can seem like **three obstacles**
that potential innovators must navigate and surpass
but actually, I wouldn't recommend that you see it in that way.
These are three guideposts to help you find your way to innovation.
If you are not the innovator that you want to be,
let me ask you three questions:

1) Have you ever really considered your Story honestly and gained insights from it?
2) Have you adopted an ideology that will allow you to become a true innovator?
3) Have you reimagined your methodology repeatedly to align it with your innovative goals?

When you are able to honestly, proudly and unflinchingly **answer "YES" to all three questions**,
you won't need to try to become an innovator.
You are already one.
Just be yourself!



Chapter 2

SIMA Amazing Innovations: Ecosolutions for Ecoproblems

"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it."
-Robert Swan, polar explorer and environmentalist

At VP.Start, we **never** talk about products.
We **always** talk about solutions.
Ecosolutions.
Products can be something we need but they can also be something we don't need.
Solutions are different than products.
We always need solutions…if we really understand the problems.

Do you think in terms of solutions or in terms of products?
Why does this make a crucial difference in your approach?

The first step for VP.Start or anyone else, in creating amazing solutions, is **understanding the problems**.
There are no ecosolutions until we understand, fathom deeply, the ecoproblems that we are facing.
Some of the problems are easy and obvious to see, like pollution and climate change.
Others might be more subtle and easier not to notice like the digital divide or lack of electrical access in remote, rural areas.
But we can see all the ecoproblems clearly **WHEN we look at the data**.

Do you have a clear, data-based understanding of the problems that you are trying to solve?

It is outside the scope of this book to look deeply into the various problems and challenges
that are facing our planet in terms of sustainability.
There are already many excellent books in each of these areas.
We want to **focus on the amazing innovations**, the ecosolutions, that VP.Start is bringing to bear on some of these serious challenges.

It is important to note that in most cases,
these global **challenges are not isolated** and separate but **they are directly interconnected**.
Just like sustainability is part of the big picture of overarching transformation, similarly the challenges that we face also form a tapestry connected together.
In other words,
just as we cannot create a true sustainability system *one piece at a time or in one country at a time*, we also cannot solve any one of these problems without solving the others, simultaneously.
Needless to say, this is *a daunting task,*
a herculean task, indeed.

Since many challenges are interconnected,
do you have an overarching strategy to create solutions or
are you trying to solve the massive problems piece by piece?

One of the challenges that our world faces is **climate change** and weather disruption.
It is not for this book to discuss whether climate change is purely man made or if it has a natural component, as well.
Suffice it to say that increasingly unpredictable weather,
including *flooding, forest fires, accelerated desertification and coastal erosion* are serious issues that directly impact the energy sector and energy transmission and distribution.

They directly affect the SIMA Journey.

Does the challenge of climate change impact your innovative solutions?

Obviously, the **energy transition** movement is connected to this climate change problem.
More and more resources are being spent on upgrading recycling,
reducing pollution and
integrating more renewable energy into the overall power system.
Again, to state the obvious,
these challenges directly impact an innovative tech company in the energy sector like VP.Start.

Are you and your solutions involved in the energy transition?
If not, why not?

Related to the energy transition, there is also a move to increase **efficient use of resources**.
Whether we are talking about more traditional fossil fuels or
nuclear power or
renewables or other sources,
we want to make sure that these resources are not wasted and
are used in a way that is efficient, cost-effective and sustainable.
The recent geopolitical situation in the Middle East has made this necessity *even more crystal clear.* Once again, as you can surely see, this increases the need for ecosolutions from innovative companies such as VP.Start.

Another area that is connected to all of the previous challenges,
is the worldwide **digital transformation**.

More and more processes are being *digitized*,
operations are being *automated*,
business plans are being *generated* by AI.
This can be a very positive development but unfortunately,
a digital divide comes along with this benefit.
Countries with access to *ample electricity* that is affordable and reliable are well suited to take full advantage of the move to a digital world.
However, in regions, countries and even continents,
where *electric service is rare, expensive and undependable,*
or where does not exist at all,
the digital transformation will be slow if it happens at all.
This is **a very direct challenge to the SIMA Journey goal of a more sustainable future** for our world.

One more major challenge,
although this is not to say that there are not many other challenges,
is **workforce development for the future**, including education and training.
As we move towards a more technically advanced future with
more digitization,
more AI infusion,
more IoT adoption,
more renewables generation
and more carbon emission reduction,
we will need a workforce with radically different skills than are currently available. Can our educational institutions keep up with *the pace of transformative technological advancements?* Will our future workforce have the creativity, resilience, positivity and passion to keep going forwards?
VP.Start realizes that **this is no small challenge**, by any means.

What kind of workforce development will be necessary for you to

achieve your innovative dreams?
Having looked at *5 serious dilemmas* for our world,
VP.Start felt compelled to create ecosolutions.
The SIMA Journey **does not allow for ignoring problems** or hoping that the problems go away.
Remember, *the more deeply we understand and* ***experience*** *the problem,* the better solution we will be able to bring to the table.
If you think that someone else will solve the problem, you are a part of the problem.

Are you compelled to find solutions or just motivated to sell products?
Different motivations have different outcomes.

Returning to the volatile issue of **climate change**,
this problem directly *impacts VP.Start's grid modernization and sustainability solutions*, like the DRC, SIMA Smart City IoT sensors and SIMA Smart Home
and office automation IoT solutions.
Rising temperatures, especially in a country that is already quite hot and humid like Cambodia,
can **wreak havoc** on sensitive equipment and
drastically **diminish** transmission lines carrying capacity.
Extreme weather events like flooding can **damage** substations, **compromise** digital communication and **destroy** IoT sensors and smart switches.
Of course, *the SIMA Journey does not claim to have all the answers* to the climate change question.
This is a highly complicated and complex situation,
requiring research and planning across a wide variety of sectors.

Still, VP.Start recognizes that one of the most powerful ways to **reduce**

our carbon footprint and improve environmental outcomes is by making the grid more efficient.
That is what the ecosolutions of VP.Start are already accomplishing in Cambodia and now are starting to accomplish, in Laos, as well.
A more efficient grid means less leakages, energy loss and fewer outages, all of which **reduce the carbon footprint.**
A more efficient grid means less waste from power generation to distribution to consumption,
which also **reduces the carbon footprint**.
Finally,
a more efficient grid means less unnecessary generation of power,
which **greatly reduces the carbon footprint.**
No one is claiming that these ecosolutions will completely solve the challenges inherent in climate change overnight. But VP.Start is very proud that the solutions that they have created in the SIMA Journey are promoting a big step in the right direction.

Are you innovative ideas helping people take a step in the right direction?
Are you promoting your "steps in the right direction" in a way to accelerate them?

The energy transition and specifically the greater adoption of renewables in the overall power system is **a key priority** of the Cambodian government.
It benefits the kingdom in terms of *reducing waste,*
decreasing the carbon footprint,
improving environmental outcomes and
diminishing dependence on overseas energy sources.

These are lofty goals and they are shared by many other countries all across the globe.
But these are not objectives that are easy to achieve.

As you know, **renewable energy** like solar and wind power are intermittent in nature.
Some days there is an ample supply of power but on other days, they are insufficient.
Even hydroelectricity is somewhat **intermittent**, especially in Southeast Asian countries and other areas where there are rainy and dry seasons.
Also, using current technology, renewable power is **limited in scope** and not yet ready to meet the full demand of energy consumers, factories, businesses and eventually, AI Data Centers.
How do we integrate more renewable energy without disrupting power service or reducing power reliability?
This is where the data-driven solutions of VP.Start, created in the SIMA Journey, are so essential.
Using acquired data, operators are able to make the grid more flexible, *integrating renewables* as much as possible when possible, *storing excess generated renewable power* in battery energy storage systems for later use and when renewable power in insufficient, rapidly *transitioning to other energy sources*.
Power flow is not disrupted.
Power reliability is not diminished.
The power system is more sustainable.
And in the near future, the whole process will be automated to make these decision instantly.
Once again, this is not an overnight solution but it is another example of the ecosolutions generated by the SIMA Journey moving us **in the right direction**.

Concerning the challenge of **using resources more efficiently**, this is exactly what VP.Start is promoting and striving for with all its might.

A Smart grid based on data,
dynamically digitized and
infused with AI capabilities for advanced automation
will be a grid that uses precious resources in the wisest way possible, based on countless simulation and scenario testings.
Of course, these data-driven ecosolutions will continue to improve our response to climate change and the energy transition, as well.
And, these solutions are **designed to be exported and employed** in countries all over the world, especially in the developing world.

As the ecosolutions are spread more and more widely across the world, giving more and more people access to reliable electricity, grid modernization and the SIMA ecosolutions, *the digital divide will inevitably be decreased*, as well.
Cambodia is a developing country so we can easily sympathize with other countries that are struggling to modernize their energy sectors.
We want to bring our solutions, with **creative pricing strategies**, to improve their situations.

Finally, there is the question of **a quality, highly skilled workforce** able to tackle these challenges.
That is why VP.Start has made **educational outreach a major part of its SIMA Journey.**
Working directly with a large of high schools and universities, in Cambodia and abroad,
creating internships and mentorships for skilled and dedicated students,
signing MoUs with various educational institutions and governmental organizations to increase alignment,
funding research programs at various schools and
hosting frequent workshops for students
to **upgrade their creative thinking**:

these are all essential parts of the SIMA strategy
of *forging* a workforce up to the tasks
that future modernization will require.

Needless to say, none of these challenges will be easy to solve.
Some progress will be made but a complete solution may have to be left to future generations.
Nonetheless, we are proud to say that for each **interconnected problem**, we have been able to create **interconnected solutions**.
We see the problems.
We see the solutions.
We see the future and we see it now!

At the end of the day, there are really only two choices:
You can be part of the problem OR
You can be part of the solution.
So, what is your choice?



Chapter 3

SIMA Amazing Innovations: The Overarching Sustainability System

"Sustainability is no longer about doing less harm. It is about doing more good."
-Jochen Zeitz, former CEO of Puma and Harley Davidson

In this book, you have seen one word many times.
Sustainability.
It really doesn't make sense to talk about VP.Start or the SIMA Journey *unless we talk about sustainability*.

What kind of sustainable future do you envision?
How do your innovations bring us closer to that outcome?

We have also talked several times about **the five missions of the SIMA Journey**.
Each mission:
SIMA Smart Grid,
SIMA Cities,
SIMA Homes,
the SIMA Universe (the UCN, AlienCheck) and
SIMA Big Data are vitally important.
That's why a chapter or more will be dedicated to the innovations each of the missions.

And yet, in some ways,
talking about the five missions is a bit of a misnomer.
In fact, *there is only one VP.Start.*
VP.Start only has one SIMA Journey.

AND the SIMA Journey only has one mission.
Sustainability.

This is not a technical detail.
This is absolutely critical to understanding the SIMA Journey.

Each of the missions succeed if they are **part of the overall sustainability system** and
play a role in creating a comprehensively sustainable future.
On the other hand,
if any of the missions become isolated and disconnected from the overarching sustainability system, t*hey just become products to be sold.*
If that happens,
VP.Start will become a product-driven, profits-driven highly conventional company with many competitors,
no innovative vision and
no distinctions from other tech and engineering companies.

Fortunately, that will NEVER happen.
The five missions will stay together as one sustainability system because **they MUST converge** to forge a sustainable future.
Otherwise, they are basically meaningless.

Allow me to elucidate.
The SIMA Smart Grid is **the foundation upon which all five missions are built.**
The Smart Grid provides reliable, dependable electricity, among other benefits.
Electricity **when we need it,**
where we need it.
After all, what good is a Smart City that has frequent outages and power loss?

What is the point of Smart Home and Office automation
if the power source is so unreliable that it doesn't work most of the time?
What benefit can we gain from AlienCheck
if the WiFi and Internet connection is always going down?
What is the chance of taking advantage of SIMA Big Data
if data acquisition and simulations are regularly collapsing due to an undependable power supply? Yes, without the SIMA Smart Grid, there are no fivefold missions of the SIMA Journey.

Why do your innovative ideas and solutions depend on reliable power?
Why is a reliable source of power essential and mission critical BUT insufficient on it own?

Ok, so let's say,
we do have a data-driven and AI-infused digital SIMA Smart Grid in place.
In hand.
Energy is being provided *regularly and consistently,*
affordably and effectively.
And yet this power is not being employed to make city life better.
There is:
no upgrade in garbage collection and storage,
no improvement in traffic management,
no advancement in weather forecasting,
no progress in public transportation,
no amelioration of building safety,
no augmentation of security systems,
no positive developments in water management or, indeed,
no success stories in any other area of the urban experience.
The SIMA Smart Grid is providing reliable power but it is not ameliorating the city life.
How is this sustainable? How can we call this "sustainability"?

Furthermore, without the Smart City Initiatives,
a large amount of **IoT data is not being generated** and gathered,
data which could have been used in other aspects of the SIMA Journey five missions as well.
Without a sustainable approach to cities, there is no true sustainability.

Do your creative ideas and innovative solutions improve the lives of city dwellers?
Do these ideas help to create better urban outcomes and more positive experiences?

Ok, let's take this a step further.
Let's say that there is a powerful and efficient
AI-infused data-driven digital SIMA Smart Grid up and functioning
AND there are also a number of **IoT-based SIMA Smart City solutions** implemented, additionally, to improve city life.
But, there is no effort being made to move these IoT solutions
into homes, offices, factories and other living spaces and workplaces.
The solutions are in the streets but not in the homes.
It is a better situation than no IoT usage at all, to be sure,
but it is still not truly sustainable.
How can we talk about a sustainable future if it does not improve our daily lives?

SIMA Home is actually the mission among the five which *comes closest to most of us.*
The SIMA Smart Grid seems important in theory,
but unless we are electrical engineers or grid operators,
we don't have much direct contact with it or deep understanding of it.
The SIMA City Intiatives bring IoT closer to us as they improve our lives as city dwellers
when we leave our homes and venture out into the world.

But the SIMA Home and Office Initiatives bring the power of IoT automation directly **into daily contact with us** at the closest levels.
When we eat meals.
When we take a shower.
When we perform basic work tasks.
When we sleep and wake up.

Do your amazing innovations provide benefits to people in their daily lives?
In their workday situations and in their regular, day-to-day home lives?
How do your ideas connect to ordinary people living ordinary lives in the modern world?

OK, then, let's keep going.
Let's say we have the first three missions all working together effectively.
We have a **SIMA Smart Grid for reliable power**,
SIMA Cities for better urban outcomes and
SIMA Home and Office automation for more productive work and more comfortable home lives.
Is this enough for a full sustainability system?

VP.Start would say, ***NO!***

What is still lacking?
We need to have **access to the information, the data**,
of the our home, office and city automation initiatives.
Knowledge is power.
Let me repeat that.
Knowledge is power.
We need that powerful knowledge in our own hands.
We need to manage **our own** data
so we can reduce **our own** waste,
increase **our own** productivity and
diminish **our own** expenses.
Not leveraged or harnessed by others.
We should be in charge of our own data.
Making our own data-driven decisions.
The UCN, AlienCheck, makes that possible.
It also adds AI capabilities and conversational features so we can make wisely informed decisions. AlienCheck ties the three previous missions together in one app,
so we can **interface with the entire sustainability system** effectively.

How do you combine your ideas into one logical, overarching framework?
How do you make your innovations converge into one big picture solution?
One journey?

Ok, let's take it to the next logical step.
Let's say we have a reliable and dependable source or energy thanks to the **SIMA Smart Grid**,
we have better city life courtesy of the *SIMA City Initiatives*,
we have improved home and office outcomes due to **SIMA Home automation** AND
we have a universal connectivity app, **AlienCheck**
that helps us connect seamlessly to all of these missions,
making us participants and not just spectators.

This MUST be enough for a sustainability system, right?
VP.Start says that this is **still not sufficient. Still inadequate.**

We need **the final piece**.

The final component.
We need SIMA Big Data, **the final mission**.
What is the benefit of collecting data from the power grid by the DRC series and other equipment
if we don't use that data to improve grid operations?
What good are IoT sensors of the deployed in the SIMA Smart City
if that data gathered is not being utilized,
in real-time, to make changes, improvements and accelerated growth?
What is the advantage of having SIMA Home or Office automation
if that data is not being used effectively to improve the function of appliance while reducing the cost of their usage?
Especially, what is the purpose of AlienCheck
if data is not being generated, collected, monitored, cleansed, analyzed, simulated, tested and applied in an endless cycle?
Without data, AlienCheck becomes little more than a social media app with AI functions,
not worth the trouble of downloading.

But, when we are able to combine
a highly dependable and affordable **SIMA Smart Grid**
with **SIMA Smart City** solutions improving our cities
and **SIMA Home** automation enhancing our work and home lives
while the **SIMA Universe**, AlienCheck makes all of this data accessible at our fingertips
AND
SIMA Big Data makes sure that all of these missions are data-driven and continuously, relentlessly upgrading themselves,
we have *started to achieve* an **overarching and comprehensive sustainability system**.

How well are you leveraging and harnessing the advantages that accrue from Big Data?
What could you be doing to ensure that your amazing innovations take full advantage of Big Data?

After accomplishing those five missions simultaneously,
all that remains
is to **spread it all over** Cambodia and
then to **spread it all over** the ASEAN region and
then to **spread it all over** the developing world and
then to **spread it all over** the planet.
True sustainability comes when sustainability comes to everyone.
Sustainability that leaves anyone out is not true sustainability.

Are your ideas ready to spread and become viral?
Is the world waiting for your amazing innovations?
Do your creative solutions leave anyone out or leave anyone behind?

Of course, you can say that building this kind of universal sustainability is **impossible**.
Too many geopolitical problems.
Too many logistical problems.
Too many manpower problems.
The problems are **too big** and the time is **too short**.

Yes, of course, you are right, if you think that way.
But as we noted before, VP.Start and CEO Phally love impossible challenges.
Phally has often said that "**if it is not impossible, it is not worth trying.**"

What impossible challenges are you trying to overcome with your amazing innovations?
Do the daunting challenges make you afraid or make you more

audacious and more arrogant?
You might also say that it is **crazy**
for a relatively *small and young company* like VP.Start
in a *developing country*
with a *team of around 100 members* and
an expanding but still *small campus* and
a growing but still *not so large revenue base*
to try to tackle a problem this large and daunting and complex.
Once again, you are not wrong to think so, I suppose.
But CEO Phally would respond that success or failure does NOT depend
on *the size of the team*
or *the size of the campus*
or *the size of the budget*.
They ONLY depend on **the size of the ideas**.
Nothing more and nothing less.
***Big companies NEVER* change the world.**
***Big ideas ALWAYS* do.**

Are you ideas big enough to impact the world positively?
If they are not, how do you intend to expand them?



Chapter 4

SIMA Amazing Innovation: Grid Modernization from Cambodia, for the World

"The key to unlocking sustainability is affordable, reliable electric power"
-CEO Phally

Where do amazing innovations come from?
They come from a deep, transformative understanding
of problems, challenges, predicaments.
VP.Start's team has experienced the drawbacks of the conventional grid
professionally and personally.
Professionally, as it has slowed down production and testing of new solutions.
Personally, as it has made daily tasks like cooking and cleaning inconvenient.
Professionally, as it has caused missed deadlines, failed projects and decreased profits.
Personally, as it has made simple tasks like doing homework much more difficult for kids.
Professionally, as it has decelerated research and diminished marketing success.
Personally, as it has made hot dry season and wet rainy seasons less easy to bear.
It turns out that both ***professionally and personally***,
we all depend on a dependable source of electric power.
In the modern world, everything runs on electricity and when electricity is unavailable or unreliable, everything does not run well.

Are your innovative ideas and creative solutions based on real world problems?

Are you trying to navigate obstacles that people face or just sell products and services?
When VP.Start was first formed as a company, first registered, and even long before that, when VP.Start was still just an idea in Phally's head, there was a clear goal, *an absolutely unshakable objective*.
Cambodia must have a reliable energy supply.
Effective education *depends on electricity*.
Safe medical care *depends on electricity*.
Tourism *depends on electricity*.
Agriculture *depends on electricity*.
Governmental control *depends on electricity*.
Law and order and security *depend on electricity*.
International investment *depends on electricity*.
Literally, everything *depends on electricity*.
If you have always lived in country that has an ample supply of electricity, it may be hard for you to imagine what
it is like to live with unreliable, undependable electric power.

Think about international investment for a moment, for example.
Countries that struggle to maintain consistent electric power
will have a very difficult time garnering foreign investment.
And countries that fail to garner international investment
will face a difficult challenge to build a reliable energy grid.
You need investment for reliable power
AND
you need reliable power for investment.
This is a *vicious cycle* that is very hard to break out of.

A cycle that is hard to break.
But **not impossible to break**.
VP.Start has already shown that.

Some problems are very intractable and almost impossible to solve.
Do you have solutions that are willing and proud to take on "impossible" challenges?

From the very beginning,
from the Very Powerful start,
the SIMA Journey has been **focused on grid modernization**.
This is the foundation of everything that VP.Start does.
The foundation of the sustainability system.

Let me ask you a few question to help unlock our thinking about the SIMA Smart Grid, the flagship innovation of VP.Start.

Why do we need to overhaul the power grid system and build a SIMA Smart Grid?
We must start with the current reality.
We at VP.Start admit that Cambodia's energy network is aging and has been unstable and wasteful in the past. This damages our economy in many ways.
We realize that necessary renewable energy integration can cause volatility in ways that a conventional grid is unable to cope with.
We acknowledge that conventional grid modernization is slow and expensive and unsuitable for developing and emerging countries that struggle to pay for expensive upgrades.
We regret that consumers lack information and that grid often lacks transparency.
Sadly, most consumers have limited information about their electric bills and energy usage.
We adamantly insist that these problems are ubiquitous world-wide. These are not problems unique to Cambodia.

Not at all.
Have you gained a clear picture of the current situation so you know what challenges your innovations face and what issues they are trying to address?
Do you need greater clarity and data in these areas?

Why are the SIMA Smart Grid solutions the best way to address these pain points?
Our SIMA Smart Grid **transforms** the conventional grid into an adaptive ecosystems that change as data changes,
that absorb fluctuations and volatility and
that becomes resilient due to predictive use of data.
Our SIMA Smart Grid **harnesses** AI and digital twins for constant upgrades which means that challenging issues
such as battery energy storage usage and renewable integration become smooth, efficient and streamlined.
Our SIMA Smart Grid **balances** power supply and demand to minimize outages.
Outages can be made rare occurances if actionable data determines decisions.
In this way,
o*ur SIMA Smart Grid* **facilitates** renewable energy source integration seamlessly.
Our SIMA Smart Grid **spearheads** grid modernization,
streamlines the process of modernization and
obtains 150% to 200% of return on investment,
according to our research.
Our SIMA Smart Grid **reduces** waste, **increases** efficiency and **saves** money.
Sustainability.

Actually, let me clarify one point.
The SIMA Grid is not really "Our SIMA Smart Grid".

This moniker is a bit misleading.
Yes, it is our proprietary innovation, created by VP.Start in-house, by our team of local engineers and tech professionals but **the SIMA Smart Grid belongs to all of us.**
ALL OF US.
Innovation NEVER belongs to any one person or any one company.

What evidence can you bring to substantiate that your innovative solutions are the best solutions to solve the dilemmas faced?
As you know well, there are many amazing innovations all over the world. Why are your solutions uniquely designed to best meet the challenges that we must cope with?

What have we ALREADY accomplished at VP.Start to forge a SUSTAINABLE GRID?
We at VP.Start have transformed **the conventional grid into a Smart Grid.**
We have installed more than 10,000 DRC series devices across the grid in all regions of Cambodia, accumulating data, sharing this data to **the RPM Grid or the PLUM app for visualization**, making the situation of the grid clear and easily accessible through the data.
Let's be clear that the grid is not completely smart yet, but it is **getting smarter all the time**.
We are not resting on our laurels but we well on our way to creating a true SIMA Smart Grid that gathers **actionable intelligence** to promote **intelligent actions**.
We are no longer satisfied just to know the current state of the grid but we want to use data to be predictive and proactive.
We are no longer satisfied to reduce outages and handle anomalies and solve faults.
We insist on finding, diagnosing and treating problems with data-driven solutions **BEFORE they happen.**

We at VP.Start have created and developed **plug and play, easy to install, intuitive solutions**.
If solutions like the DRC were difficult to install or complicated to use, the adoption of these solutions would be tamped down and limited.
But, please remember that VP.Start is a company that loves to **make complicated ideas simple** and challenging operations streamlined and easy.
The DRC solutions *do not require* a lot of time to install, usually less than 15 minutes.
The RPM Grid *does not require* advanced technical skills and jargon to operate.
The PLUM app *does not require* you to be in a fixed location to monitor and manage the grid.
Simple to use.
Easy to understand.
Putting tomorrow's technology at your fingertips today.

Do your amazing innovations help make people more proactive and productive?
Are they easy to use, easy to manage, easy to understand and easy to benefit from?

We at VP.Start have leveraged existing infrastructure to dramatically reduce costs.
As we mentioned, garnering international investment for grid modernization in developing countries can be a very challenging process.
At the same time, governments in emerging countries face **tight budgetary constraints**

and fiscal limitations.
Traditional grid modernization is excessively expensive,
usually involving wholesale rebuilding of the grid infrastructure.
Time consuming.
Resources consuming.
Budget consuming.
Manpower consuming.
VP.Start had the revolutionary and radically innovative idea of leveraging existing infrastructure,
using data to verify and extend infrastructure lifespans and
creating **amazing innovations** that were **amazingly cheap** to purchase.
Saving money without reducing quality of service.
The power of creativity.

Are your innovations both amazingly effective and amazingly inexpensive?

We at VP.Start have worked extensively with the EDC and various electric licensees across Cambodia in every province to
make the grid more extensive,
make it smarter,
make it more renewables-friendly,
make it more affordable and
make it efficient and sustainable.
We are already moving these solutions into the Laotian and other international markets.

What will we at VP.Start do next?
We have already made considerable progress towards a SIMA Smart Grid but we are certainly **not feeling complacent or satisfied**.
Each success reminds us of the distance we still need to cover in order

to reach our true destination,
a truly "SIMA Smart" Grid.

We at VP.Start will keep **extending, updating, enhancing and expanding** the Smart Grid until we achieve ***full Smart Grid coverage***.
From 10,000 DRC devices **to** more than 1M.
From Cambodia and Laos **to** ASEAN and the wider world.
From limited smart grid solutions **to** a completely intelligent grid.
We want SAIDI (the duration of power outages) *to be so short* and SAIFI (the frequency of power outages) *to be so rare*
that young Cambodians will hardly remember what a power outage is.

We at VP.Start will reimagine the grid as a ***Dynamic Digital Smart Grid*** with software solutions.
The next step in the SIMA Smart Grid journey of innovation is creating software solutions
that **turn** the DRC series **from** hardware that must be manually installed in a physical location
into digital solutions that can be downloaded
from *anywhere to anywhere at anytime by anyone*.
Ultimately all over the world.
This Dynamic Digital Smart Grid will be able to make decisions based on actionable data
remotely, instantly and increasingly, automatically.

We at VP.Start will fully implement and leverage ***digital twin technology*** to improve grid function continuously.
As we gather grid data through the DRC series,
we will build a replica of the entire grid,
allowing our team to test issues in the grid that would be
too costly, dangerous or time-consuming to test in the real world.

We can turn **data into** insights,
insights into actions and
actions into new data to start the process over again.
Endless upgrades.
Pursued relentlessly.

We will inaugurate an **AI-infused** data-driven dynamic digital SIMA Smart Grid.
Now that we have created a SIMA Smart grid that is *data-driven* for constant upgrades,
digital twin supported for testing and decision making,
digital and dynamic for remote installation and monitoring,
we need to inject AI into the process,
making it *fully automated* and reducing decision making to milliseconds.
But, have no fear,
human supervision will always remain a pivotal part of the VP.Start SIMA Smart Grid journey.

We at VP.Start will **connect the grid with the Universal Connectivity Network app, AlienCheck,**
so all that data that is generated, collected, cleaned, wrangled, organized and stored, will also be easily accessible to operators and others who have directly verifiable access needs.
At the same time, AlienCheck will adopt and maintain the highest levels of cybersecurity standards
to ensure that access is severely restricted and limited only to those who need to have access.

You have amazing, innovative ideas and powerful solutions!
Congratulations!
But do you have a clear road map and vision of where these solutions are going next?
Great solutions are NEVER dormant. They either GROW OR DIE!
Will your solutions and innovative ideas GROW or will they becom obsolete and disappear?

Where is the SIMA Smart Grid Journey taking us? What is the ultimate destination?

We at VP.Start have reduced energy waste by up to 30% across many sectors and communities. Great results but insufficent.
We want:
greater savings,
greater waste reduction,
greater extension to more communities and sectors.

We at VP.Start have increased renewable energy adoption through our IoT solutions.
Great results but insufficient.
We want:
greater IoT adoption,
greater renewable energy adoption,
greater carbon footprint reduction.

We at VP.Start have reduced costs with to plug-and-play, quickly installed technology.
Great results, but insufficient.
We want:
greater cost reductions,
greater equipment lifespans,
greater predictive maintenance outcomes.

We at VP.Start have empowered citizens to proactively manage their own energy.
Great results, but insufficient.
We want:
greater accessibility to data,
greater understanding by consumers,
greater proactivity and productivity
We have already started exporting these solutions to the wider world.
Great results, but insufficient.
We will not stop until our Smart Grid benefits everyone.
We are creating sustainability.
No one left behind.

Most companies are satisfied with **great**.
VP.Start insists on ***greater***.

You are an innovator.
You were born to be one.
You deserve to be one.
You have every reason and every ability that you need to become one.
So, will you be an innovator that is satisfied with "good enough" solutions and "acceptable" ideas?
Or will you demand "greater" solutions with unending relentlessness?
The people who change the world are always succeeding but are never satisfied.
How about you?

Chapter 5

SIMA Amazing Innovations: AI Meets the SIMA Smart Grid

"AI is advancing, but human intelligence remains crucial for true innovation. Let's embrace AI's power while staying true to what makes us human–our creativity, empathy and problem-solving skills."
-Enamul Haque, author of bestselling books on Artificial Intelligence

The SIMA Journey is based on the convergence of **logical thinking, creative thinking and positive thinking,** as we have discussed before.

We can think about these three in a different way.
While AI cannot currently be creative and has no way to be positive, it is a powerful source of logical thinking.
As a matter of fact, you can say that AI ***is*** logical thinking, taking to its highest level.
No human can keep up with AI in terms of logic, information, knowledge and, of course, data.
Needless to say, this is also true in terms of speed of information retrieval. Therefore, if we want to take the SIMA Smart Grid to *the highest possible level* in terms of data-driven decision making as well as speed,
VP.Start must infuse AI into the system.
However, it must be implemented *with human creative and positive thinking* that AI cannot provide, at least not currently.

Do your creative solutions and innovations take full advantage of the logical power of AI?

Do they also rely on human creativity and positivity for successful implementation?

The **DRC solutions** of VP.Start collect data from the grid and
pass this data to the SCADA system, **the RPM Grid** ,
for *visualization* in the control center by grid operators.
It can also be accessed by **the PLUM app** remotely,
to *reduce negative grid outcomes* like leakages,
outages and equipment failure.
Data is digitized and managed by human controllers and monitors.
Anomalies are discovered and fault locations are pinpointed instantly.
But, unfortunately, **human reactions are not instantaneous** or automatic.
By definition.
Human monitoring includes human limitations and potentially
human errors.
Humans can become tired, distracted, overworked, careless.
AI does not have to deal with these **human conditions**.

How do your innovative solutions account for human error and limitation?
How do you leverage AI solutions to augment rather than replace human intelligence?

As AI is infused into the SIMA Smart Grid,
data can be *dealt w*ith in milliseconds,
collected and stored in a variety of formats,
used for a wide variety of purposes,
simultaneously and
utilized **predictively and proactively**,
not only **reactively and retroactively.**
How can we call a grid "smart"
if it lacks the "intelligence" that AI can offer?
Are your ideas "smart"? Are they SIMA smart?

AI capabilities allow the SIMA Smart grid to adopt a totally new approach to

renewables integration,
infrastructure lifespan,
transmission line capacity,
weather forecasting,
peak demand prediction and preparation,
power flow control,
battery integration,
energy volatility and fluctuation,
Distributed Energy Resources (DER) integration
and an almost unlimited number of other
advancements in real time.

Let me give you a few examples of how
adding AI to the SIMA Journey changes everything:

One of the powerful methodologies
of *the SIMA Journey*
to the sustainable future
is leveraging the power of renewable energy.
In Cambodia, this mostly means **solar energy**.
Integrating solar energy into the SIMA Smart Grid is absolutely critical to
reducing our carbon footprint,
promoting energy independence and
reducing pollution,
among other benefits.
What if we had highly accurate weather forecasts and cumulative weather data so we could predict with a great degree of accuracy the amount of solar energy generation on any given day at any time?
And, furthermore, *what if we could constantly update those predictions with real-time data and information?*

With AI infusion into the grid and with IoT sensors gathering weather data, we are **already able to do exactly that**.
We are able to integrate solar energy and other renewable energy sources into the grid
without massive fluctuations and volatility
that would disrupt or limit electric service.
AI infusion lets us get **the benefits of renewables** while **mitigating the less beneficial aspects.** *Simultaneously.*
Thank you, AI infusion.

Are your innovative ideas taking full advantage of the potential power of AI integration?

Another benefit of AI-infusion into the SIMA Smart Grid comes in terms of **extending the lifespan** of infrastructure.
Just like people *(just like me!)*, infrastructure gets older and weaker and at some point equipment must be replaced.
Traditionally, this has been done at **regular predetermined intervals**.
Sometimes this approach works perfectly… ***but not always.***
Sometimes equipment that is still viable and functioning well is replaced **before necessary**
because an arbitrary time limit has been reached.
Other times, equipment might fail and
infrastructure might lose functionality and
power lines might lose capacity
before the time limit is reached.
Or, while not completely failing,
a piece of infrastructure or grid architecture might become less efficient and effective **before its time limit fully expires**.
What if we could use smart sensors on the power lines and substations and infrastructure,
IoT devices like the DRC series, to gather and monitor the data

for anomalies and irregularities that would indicate that some part of the grid is rapidly **approaching the end of its lifespan**?
What if we could use that data to replace equipment proactively before it fails?
And on the other hand, what if we could use data to determine that equipment is **still functioning effectively** even though its predetermined "lifespan" has expired?
What if we could both *reduce unnecessary replacements and eliminate failures*, creating a more reliable grid with more feasible maintenance?
We can. ***At VP.Start, we do.***
Thank you, again, AI infusion.

Do your innovative solutions and products have lifespans?
How could AI capabilities extend those lifespans while reducing costly and embarrassing failures?

Another issue for the conventional grid is **managing energy flow** along the lateral lines, the transmission grid.
For various technical reasons,
electric flow can grow **beyond carrying capacity** in certain lines at certain times.
This can lead to bottlenecks, electricity "traffic jams", if you will.
Just as the SIMA Smart City Initiatives use IoT sensors to reduce traffic jams in the physical world,
AI infusion can help to **reroute electric flows to eliminate digital gridlock.**
And this can be done instantaneously,
so the *gridlock that was forecast* to happen,
never needs to actually take place.
This is **AI-based Advanced Power Flow Control** and
AI infusion into the SIMA Smart Grid makes this possible.
Thank you yet again, AI infusion.

Are you finding creative ways to implement AI advancements for better results in your innovations?

Another **Grid Enhancing Technology (GET)**,
based on integrating AI capabilities into the SIMA Smart Grid,
is **Dynamic Line Rating.**
In the conventional grid, transmission line capacity is determined by the temperature of the line,
but since it is not dynamic or interactive,
a **maximal temperature setting** must be assumed, even when this is not necessary or accurate.
When the temperature goes down, real line capacity increases,
but conventional grids have no mechanism to take that into account.
On the other hand, the SIMA Smart Grid has IoT devices attached to lines to determine **real-time transmission line temperatures** and other IoT sensors making temperature predictions based on advanced weather forecasting.
The accumulated data is fed into AI which constantly raises or lowers the capacity of each line based on **actual temperature conditions** so maximum efficiency can be achieved.
Thank you so much, AI infusion.

One more example of a powerful use of AI infusion in the grid
is in terms of **DERs (Distributed Energy Resources)**
such as *solar panels on a roof or EV chargers in the garage*
as well as local energy generation, for example, in remote areas.
AI brings all these diverse resources together in a **Virtual Power Plant**, similar to a digital twin of the entire electric generation and consumption big picture.
Using accumulated data, AI can help *predict spikes and troughs* in energy demand and as needed, withdraw energy from EV chargers and solar devices to meet peak demand and then return the power as demand

is decreased.
As a result, actual Power Plants can generate less frequently and more effectively.
Thank you, oh, thank you, AI Infusion.

Are you grateful to AI infusion for all its help in upgrading your solutions?
If you are not thankful, could it be because you are not using AI as effectively as possible?

These are only some examples of the power of AI Infusion in the SIMA Smart Grid.
Probably an entire book could be written on this topic alone.
But, suffice it to say, AI infusion is **mission critical** to making the **SIMA Smart Grid truly "intelligent."**

AI changes the grid from a network of inanimate pipes and wires and stations into a grid that is *automated, proactive and able to partner with us* to improve outcomes for utilities, consumers, nations and the environment.
A sustainable grid.
An intelligent grid.
An empowered grid.
We must say, Thank you, AI infusion. Thank you, indeed!

We are living in the era of AI.
AI is not going to go away.
You need to leverage AI effectively or it will leverage you.
Are you finding innovative and highly creative ways to employ AI capabilities in your solutions?
If not, you had better start. I suggest, *right away!*

Chapter 6

SIMA Amazing Innovations: Smart Cities for Smart Citizens

"There can no sustainable world without sustainable cities. And there can never be true SIMA Smart Cities without smart citizens." -CEO Phally

Cambodia is often thought of as an agricultural and rural society, living in villages and small towns. This is not completely incorrect but it is important to remember
That Cambodia also has **a long history of innovative urban development**.
Angkor, the ancient capital of Cambodia, was in its time, an amazing city of urban technology, innovative architecture, cutting edge irrigation and farming techniques, and highly creative city planning.
In fact, historians inform us that in that period, Angkor was the largest city in the world.
So Cambodia is not at all a newcomer to the urban development and modernization sector.

As we all know, wherever we live,
urban life is becoming *increasingly complicated and challenging*.
SIMA Smart Cities Initiatives bring **data-driven technology** to bear to solve some the problems of modern city life.

What are some of the biggest challenges that you face in your urban experience?
How much do these challenges hinder your productivity, growth and happiness?

Let's focus in on a few of the ways that the SIMA Smart Cities Initiatives

bring sustainability to city life and integrate IoT technology in creative ways for **better urban outcomes**.

First off,
SIMA Smart City technology is ready to revolutionize **waste management**.
If you live in Phnom Penh, you know that there is a long list of many wonderful aspects of the city.
But you would probably agree with me that waste management is not on that long list.
Timely waste management is an important part of healthy city life.
It contributes to greater safety and a higher quality of life.
VP.Start is already using and intends to further leverage
the power of data-driven IoT technologies to
maximize efficient garbage collection,
improve garbage collection routes and collection frequency,
reduce carbon emissions from waste collection inefficiencies,
improve waste separation and recycling and
facilitate more effective waste storage and post-collection waste management.

Imagine a waste management system where
you could *track the location of garbage trucks* in real-time,
request garbage pick-up in a timely fashion and
keep abreast of the latest updates to your *waste costs and collection fees*.
You could even *track your own waste output* to reduce excess waste generation.
No need to imagine this as the SIMA Smart City
in conjunction with the UCN turns these possibilities into realities.

A SIMA smart city MUST be a clean and comfortable city.

How important is it for you to live in a city with highly effective,

data-driven waste management?
Do you value living in a clean, comfortable, safe and healthy city environment?

In another area,
SIMA Smart city IoT sensors will tackle the challenges of **traffic management**.
As in many cities across the world and especially in Aisa,
Phnom Penh urban dwellers face frequent (daily) problems of *traffic jams and congestion*.
This *diminishes productivity* and reduces economic activity.
It also *reduces the quality of life experience* for commuters spending wasted hours in their cars.
VP.Start in the future
intends to harness the power of data-driven IoT technology to *reduce travel times, enhance safety and minimize the environmental damage of traffic.*
We will be installing IoT sensors that can instantly upgrade traffic signal operations and
communicate alternative routes through the AlienCheck platform.

Wouldn't you like to live in a city with efficient traffic flow patterns, constantly being updated in real-time to reflect real conditions, including accidents, road closings, emergency vehicle transit, flooding, other weather-related traffic issues and general congestion?

AlienCheck will inform and show you how to avoid congestion
so when you arrive at school or work, you are
refreshed rather than worn out,
excited rather than disappointed, and
full of energy rather than emotionally drained.

SIMA Smart cities MUST be easy to move around and commute in.
Yet another aspect,
The SIMA Smart city brings modern technology to bear on **street light management**.
Inefficient and unnecessary street lighting leads to wasted energy, unnecessary cost expenditures and greater pressure on energy generation.
Street lights wasting energy *when we don't need them* means
less energy available for the street lights *when we do need them*.
VP.Start intends to take advantage of the potential of data-driven solutions such as IoT sensors in street lights to monitor natural lighting levels as well as traffic volume to
reduce energy usage dramatically while improving public safety simultaneously and adapting to changing weather and natural lighting conditions instantly.

SIMA Smart Cities MUST be bright and illuminating.

How important is it to you to live in a city where energy is used where it needed,
And not wasted where it is not needed?
What if your local government was able to reduce taxes and Reallocate funds into more essential projects?
Yet still another area
covered in the SIMA Smart City Initiatives is **building management.**
IoT capabilities are brought to deal with a host of
residential and commercial building *quality of experience issues*
in a wide variety of commercial and business complexes, including but not exclusive to office buildings, schools, hospitals and other facilities, including airports.
VP.Start intends to provide data-driven solutions such as *digital twins of buildings and IoT sensor networks* to optimize health and safety features of building management.

SIMA Smart Cities MUST be safe places to work, play and live

How mission critical is it to you to have safe and secure places to live, work and spend time in your city?

The true SIMA Smart city is constantly seeking expanded areas to upgrade with IoT technology.
In the future, VP.Start also intends to look into deploying data-driven technology into areas such as weather forecasting and disaster mitigation,
EV charging stations and infrastructure,
environmental monitoring, smart healthcare,
smart agriculture and irrigation,
smart fisheries and forestry and smart crime prevention.

SIMA Smart Cities MUST be constantly improving, ameliorating themselves based on data.

So, what are the steps required to move to a Data-Driven IoT-infused SIMA Smart City?

The SIMA Smart City requires *a reliable source of electricity*.
The backbone of the SIMA Smart City is an effective implementation of the data-driven SIMA Smart Grid.
There is no second mission of the SIMA Journey, the SIMA Smart City, **without the first mission** of the SIMA Journey, namely,
the SIMA Smart Grid.
Without a reliable and data-driven grid,
it is impractical and, indeed, pointless to try to build a smart city.
On the other hand, when a powerful SIMA Smart Grid is truly implemented, SIMA Smart City implementation becomes feasible.
This is the first step.

But *this is not enough* to integrate the SIMA Smart City

into the overall SIMA Journey to sustainability.
The SIMA Smart City must be **connected to a powerful app** with sustainability at its core.
Namely, AlienCheck, the Universal Connectivity Network.
Various IoT sensors and other Smart City equipment are currently being connected to the UCN app that we call AlienCheck.
This will allow for instant monitoring, updating,
predictive maintenance of equipment, including IoT sensors and smart metering systems,
remote solutions to faults and anomalies in the system and remarkable transparency.

Finally, the SIMA Smart City cannot stand alone.
It must be part of **an overall energy strategy.**
Wise implementation of Smart City initiatives recognizes
that it is only *one part of a larger energy framework*
that includes such varied aspects as battery storage,
data centers, digital twin technology and a variety of other elements.
To make these initiatives work successfully,
the SIMA Smart City MUST be part of a bigger picture strategic energy plan.

What are the innovations and solutions that you bring to the table? How do they fit into the bigger picture of an overarching sustainability framework?

What is the methodology for SIMA Smart City implementation?

The opening stage is the period of pilot projects.
VP.Start has **already started several pilot projects**
in SIMA Smart Street Lighting in TaKhmau and Kampong Cham and is moving to rapidly expand these projects *both domestically and internationally.*
As the SIMA Smart Grid becomes viable in these and other areas,

we look to *rapidly scale up* these operations in conjunction with OEM smart manufacturers.
Based on the results of these projects and the data gathered,
we will *expand, optimize and intensify* these efforts.

SIMA Street Lighting is the logical first step in the SIMA Smart City Initiatives as it is the easiest area of the SIMA Smart City technologies to install and monitor.
In other countries where similar technologies have been implemented (such as Croatia and Singapore),
30-40% reduction in energy use and cost has been experienced.

As SIMA Street Lighting Management proves to be cost effective and energy efficient,
we will move into other initiatives in consultation with local governments, local and international investors, EDC branches and other stakeholders.

What is the SIMA Smart City Revolution?
As a key aspect of the 4th Industrial revolution,
we will be moving the SIMA Smart City forward in stages.
The first stage is **from Conventional City to Smart City.**
This is the stage that we have been outlining in this chapter
with massive improvements in efficiency, cost effectiveness and quality of outcomes across a wide variety of urban life situations as mentioned above.
But to be crystal clear, this is only the first stage.

During Stage 2 **(from Smart City to Dynamic Digital Smart City)**,
we will be moving away from physical sensors and equipment
that we can plug and play for rapid installation with the existing infrastructure.
We will be switching and upgrading to **digital monitoring**
of street lighting, waste management, traffic conditions and so on,

so that instead of installing and relying solely on hardware sensors,
we can **use digital software to upgrade** our cities instantly, remotely, constantly and effortlessly.
This will allow for rapid scaling up of Smart City technologies and expansion to new areas at high speed, as well.

In Stage 3 **(from Dynamic Digital Smart City to Data-Driven SIMA Smart City)**,
the process will be fully automated, driven by data,
including *synthetic data and digital twin technology*,
and taking full advantage of the power of *AI capabilities*.

SIMA Smart Cities are already becoming and will be:
More Dependable
Safer
Healthier
More Equitable
More Scalable
More Energy Independent
More Energy Efficient
More Renewable
And
More Sustainable

On top of all these advantages,
the SIMA Smart City technology that has been proven successful in Cambodia, will be very attractive on the global market,
where **many cities face a lot of the same problems**, to a greater or lesser extent.
This will allow VP.Start, the Sen Sok Valley and Cambodia to take on the role as **an innovative hub of technology** and a center of quality job creation.

We believe strongly in the power of "MADE IN CAMBODIA"
From ancient Angkor to a glorious future of Cambodian and worldwide cities!

What kind of cities do you want to live in?
We build today the cities that we will live in tomorrow?
What cities of the future do you want to see and experience?
What role are you willing to play to make those dreams come true?



Chapter 7
SIMA Amazing Innovation: Smart Homes for Smart Homeowners

"Just like there can be no smart cities without smart citizens,
there can be no smart homes and offices
without smart homeowners and smart office workers."
-CEO Phally

If you want to change the future, you must change the way electricity is generated and distributed.
If you want to change urban experiences, you must build data-driven smart cities.
But, **if you want to change** the world, you must build homes and office that are sustainable.
After all, homes and offices are the world that we live in, day to day.

Put a little differently,
The SIMA Smart Grid, the AI-infused data-driven dynamic digital SIMA Smart Grid impacts
the way power is managed, monitored and upgraded through data to ensure greater reliability, affordability, efficiency and sustainability.
This is the big picture of the sustainability system
that directly influences the way that everyone experiences and interacts with electric power.
The SIMA Smart City Initiatives narrow the focus a bit,
from the overarching national power grid to bringing the power of data into urban experiences,
for better waste management, traffic flow, weather forecasting,
street lighting and so on.
On the other hand, **the SIMA Home and Office Automation Initiatives** bring the power of big data to the family level, to the personal level, inside your workplace, inside your home.
In a way, data-driven technology and IoT advancements don't mean much to most people UNTIL
they start **making a difference in our daily lives.**
Renewables integration can seem like a distant topic
but more efficient appliances mean something to me personally.
BESS and IoT and AI Data Centers can seem like mysterious, esoteric concepts to the lay person
but a reduced electricity bill is very tangible, indeed.
Do your innovative solutions make a difference in people's daily lives?
Are you impacting the world with your ideas one home and one office at a time?

Home automation is not exactly a unique concept and the SIMA Journey is based on innovation. *Where is the innovation in a SIMA home?*
What makes a SIMA office distinctive?

If we were just talking about devices, gadgets and appliances,
office machines and factory equipment with smart switches and meters,
the SIMA Smart Home would be a good series of products, but nothing special, not particularly.
Many other companies also create and provide IoT home and office automation solutions.
Some are good and others are not as good but they follow a similar framework.

But let's remember that **true IoT must be a part of the comprehensive sustainability system**.
It must be anchored into that sustainability framework.
Otherwise, even if it is a great product, it is just a product, not an innovation.
Most companies are quite satisfied with quality home automation products.
But **VP.Start insists on innovation**.
They are never satisfied with technology without innovation.
NEVER.
Remember, *they do not sell a product, they tell a story.*
The story of a sustainable world.

Do you insist on innovation BEFORE technology?
Do you agree that technology without innovation is novelty that soon becomes obsolete?

Most IoT home and office automation products from various providers have online apps or services
to support the products to permit monitoring and managing the devices remotely.
Of course.
***But*…they do not have AlienCheck.**
AlienCheck is so **much more than just a remote control app.**

AlienCheck integrates your home automation devices with *AI capabilities*, *conversational chat features* and
connects you seamlessly to the *overall power management system*.

If you have a question about how your SIMA Smart home automation functions or how to use it more efficiently and effectively,
use the AlienCheck **AI chatbots** to get the information that you need.
You need to talk to a human customer service operator?
Take advantage of the **conversational chat features** to find out what you need to know.
You want to know how your home or office fits into the overall **power management system**?
You can check that instantly, as well.
And you don't need to be an electrical engineer or technical expert to get and fathom the information that you want.

No other IoT apps have this kind of universal connectivity.
No other IoT apps have this kind of innovation.
No other IoT apps can connect you to sustainability.

Are you ready to do something that no one else is doing?
If you choose to do so, it will be difficult, daunting and at times, quite discouraging.
You can be quite certain of that.
So, are you resilient enough and convinced of your own ideas enough to see it through?

Of course, SIMA Smart Home automation and home automation in general are not without challenges.
Potetntial SIMA Smart Home adopters often express concerns about:
1) Fragmentation of devices
2) Obsolescence and lack of support

3) Over reliance on Internet service and the power supply
4) Extreme upfront costs

What are the concerns and impediments that are slowing down adoption of your innovations?
Do you have solutions and strategies to overcome each of these impediments innovatively?

In terms of **device fragmentation**, there is a concern
that different devices will not be able to communicate effectively with each other since they were created by different IoT providers.
Fortunately, this need not be an issue
as we will see when we look at the AlienCheck app in more detail in a later chapter.
One quality that makes our IoT SIMA Home solutions powerfully effective is that these various heterogeneous solutions connect with the Universal Connectivity Network app seamlessly which allows interoperability and eliminates fragmentation.

A more serious concern is **obsolescence and lack of support**.
Both of these two related issues stem from a deeper reality.
They are real problems that IoT users often face.
To be completely honest, *IoT providers go bankrupt frequently*.
It is a risky sector for companies that are not diversified enough to handle shocks.
An IoT product that you buy from "Company A" may cease to be upgraded and *all customer service may be discontinued, including any remote monitoring apps,*
if and when "Company A" goes out of business.
Sad to say, there have been a lot of "Company A"s and
a lot of "Company A" *customers left without support, customer service, timely upgrades and functioning remote monitoring apps*.

With the SIMA Home initiatives,
this is not a concern because **VP.Start is not primarily an IoT provider** or IoT product seller.
The SIMA Home Initiatives are an important of the SIMA Journey but they are not the foundation.
As long as there is a need for sustainability,
VP.Start will be in existence and its services will be active, regularly updated and will provide all the support that customers may need.

Another legitimate impediment to wider IoT adoption is fear over the situation where **Internet service or power is down**,
leaving appliances and IoT-infused gadgets unable to function.
However, in the case of the innovative solutions of VP.Start,
such concerns are unnecessary because in the case of outages,
the IoT functions can be overridden to allow for normal non-IoT usage.
I might quickly add that while the **SIMA Smart Home products are able to adjust to outages** and power cuts,
the SIMA Smart Grid is working simultaneously
to *keep those outages and power cuts to the absolute barest minimum*.
In other words,
the SIMA Smart Grid is laying the foundation
for a more effective SIMA Smart Home and Office automation.
The true sustainability system is always working in harmony with each component benefiting the others.

The final concern,
the one that most of us can most relate to, is **cost**.
The plug-and-play smart switches and SIMA Smart Home Solutions are designed to keep costs down.
VP.Start is always actively seeking innovative ways to even further reduce costs.
And yet, perhaps, even more importantly,
thanks to the interoperability of the Universal Connectivity Network,

you are not locked into only purchasing IoT Home solutions from VP.Start.
If you find a better product at a better price from a different IoT vendor, you are able to buy it and use it with the AlienCheck app just as effectively, allowing you to do comparison shopping and make purchases wisely.

Every great idea and every new innovation has drawbacks and pitfalls to navigate.
What are the drawbacks and pitfalls to your ideas and a you ready to be a navigator?
Having looked at the potential disadvantages of SIMA Smart Home Automation,
now it is time to to take a close look at why SIMA Smart Home is so advantageous.

Many satisfied SIMA customers point to:
1) The convenience of remote appliance management
2) Enhanced home security
3) Automated routines
4) Accessibility for the disabled and the elderly

The most obvious advantage of home and office automation is **remote appliance management**.
This could mean turning on your air conditioner 5 minutes
before you arrive at work or at home to make sure that you enter a comfortable environment.
It could mean checking remotely to make sure that
you turned off the lights and the electric fan,
which is very helpful for frequently forgetful and absent minded people like me.
It could also mean turning on some lights when you are not at home to promote safety.

Connected to this last example,
home and office automation promotes **security and safety**.
You can get warnings via AlienCheck of activities that seem suspicious like smart camera monitoring and video recording of unauthorized potential intruders.
Emergency locks can be activated remotely and sirens can be initiated if needed, all through SIMA Home technology.

If there are certain patterns that you follow every night,
you can **automate these routines** to make sure that nothing is forgotten and to reduce wasted time. For example, a simple command such as "Good Night" could let the IoT devices know
to turn off the lights, lock the doors and activate the security system.
Reduced hassle,
reduced effort,
reduced risk of forgetting.

Finally,
SIMA Smart Home and Office automation can be especially **helpful for the elderly and the disabled**
as they are able to monitor and manage various devices all over the house without needing to physically go to each location.
For instance, an elderly person who is no longer physically able to go upstairs, can still turn on and off the lights upstairs as a safety precaution while sitting in their comfortable chair.
They can similarly listen to their favorite music,
turn the TV on or off, use their computer and so on, all remotely and by voice command.

And these advantages don't even include the biggest advantage of all.
Cost savings and reduced energy use.
More affordable.

More greenable.
More sustainable.
This is the power of innovation.

The future is sustainable.
The future is now.
The future starts at your home.
The SIMA Journey future.

Are you ready to take the big leap into the future with your amazing innovations?
VP.Start already had taken the leap and we will keep leaping further and further.
Are the risks involved in pursuing your ideas and dreams worth the trouble?



Chapter 8

SIMA Amazing Innovation: AlienCheck is NOT a Social Media App

"Social media has been described as more addictive than cigarettes and alcohol. It is so entrenched in the lives of young people that it is no longer possible to ignore it when talking about young people's mental health issues."
-Shirley Cramer, Chief Executive, Royal Society for Public Health

Let me ask you a question. Let's be brutally honest and completely frank. Do you spend more than one hour per day on social media? I know I do. We are not here to judge or criticize but we want you to have clear data, a clear picture of your habits.
OK, let's keep going. Do you spend two hours or more on social media on average every day?
Bear with me.
One last questions, do you on average spend more than 3 hours per day on social media?
If you are anything like the survey results below, many of you made it to the third level.

Recent surveys have shown that 69% of adults and 81% of teenagers are on social media every day.
On average, they spend a little over 2.5 hours on social media per day.

As you probably are well aware, there are only 24 hours in a day.
So, let's be clear.
If we are spending 2 or 3 hours or more on social media every day, we must be cutting back something else somewhere else.
What are you and I cutting back on?
Is it family time?
Study time?
Work time?
Exercise time?
Hobby time?
Sleep time?

Do you feel like you spend too much time online, especially on social media?
What motivates us to dedicate a significant amount of time to social media usage?
Are we getting a legitimate return on our investment of time into social media?

If not, why do we keep doing it anyway?
Please note that these questions are directed at the author as much as at the readers.

Are we saying this to discredit social media? No, of course not.
Social media is one of the key pillars of the 3rd Industrial Revolution,
the revolution of digitization, the online revolution.
We have moved increasingly from face-to-face communication to online communication.
Digital communication.
Please don't misunderstand the SIMA Journey perspective.
There is nothing inherently wrong with online communication and plenty of advantages.
It makes long-distance communication and remote work possible.
It facilitates international collaboration and meeting across borders and time zones..
We are able to attend tech conferences all over the world in real-time, due to online communication. Needless to say, during the Covid period, these online communication technologies were especially necessary and essential.

VP.Start recognizes and appreciates the contributions of the 3rd Industrial Revolution.
We never want to underestimate or belittle those who have gone before.
But, we are now in the 4th Industrial Revolution, the data-driven revolution, and VP.Start is very much vanguard company of the 4th Industrial Revolution.
The *4th Industrial Revolution of AI, nanotechnology, cloud computing, digital twins and other amazing innovations,*
all based on ***the power of Big Data***.
We at VP.Start are convinced that is time to move on from conventional social media and

to adopt a completely new paradigm: universal connectivity.
What are the problems that conventional social media exacerbates?
How many of these problems have you experienced personally?

I want you to think about something.
To state the obvious,
many of the **richest companies in the world** are social media companies such as Tencent (WeChat), Telegram, Instagram and Meta (Facebook).
To continue stating the obvious,
many of the **richest people in the world** are the CEOs of these companies.
And yet, if you think about it,
we can use WeChat, Telegram, Facebook and other social media apps for free.
So, how do they earn all that money?

If you ever have a chance to go to Las Vegas, you will see amazing, luxurious casinos,
Going up one after another, on some of the costliest real estate in the world.
Where do the casino companies get the money to keep building bigger and fancier casinos?
If you think about it, the answer is obvious.
They get the money from gamblers.
Get gamblers in your casino,
get them to stay as long as possible,
get them to come back as often as possible.
Does it work? Look at the Las Vegas hotels and you can see the answer.
They leverage gamblers every day and the results are hotel towers, gorgeous fountains and neon light displays.

So, how about social media companies?
It is simple, really. Their product is you.
They sell your information and data to advertisers and sellers.

So, **their business model** is also quite simple, too.
1) Get as many customers as possible on their app.
2) Get them to stay on the app as long as possible.
3) Get the users to do the same every day, year after year.
Whether users spend their time profitably and productively or waste their time, that is of no concern for the social media companies, as long as they stay on the app.
As a matter of fact, if users get addicted to social media, in some ways, that is even better,
at least, from the business model, profits and losses perspective.

But while social media companies make huge profits,
what impact does it have on the social media users,
especially those who use social media excessively and addictively?
Research has shown increased physical and mental problems
among people who use social media to excess.
It can take a toll on physical condition with loss of sleep, increased headaches, nausea and fatigue.
It can also cause mental damage, increasing stress, irritability, damaging personal relationships and leading to problems such as cyberbullying.

Is your business model focused on giving better experiences and outcomes for consumers
or just on extracting maximum profits?
How essential is ethical treatment of the customer, the end user, the client, to you?
We at VP.Start ADAMANTLY believe that if your journey is not based on ethical practices,
It is much better to have no journey at all.
We insist that AlienCheck should be profitable and powerful but, above all else, ethical.

Why is AlienCheck completely different from conventional social media apps?
VP.Start is not trying to create another social media app.
AlienCheck is proudly and loudly NOT a social media app.
If you are confused, let me say that again.
VP.Start is NOT trying to create ANOTHER social media app.
NOT.
NOT.
We are **not trying to compete** with Telegram and Instagram and Messenger and so on.
As we mentioned, those apps belong to the previous industrial revolution and gradually they will become obsolete.
We are moving strongly into the next industrial revolution with the UCN.

The business model of AlienCheck is **completely opposite** to that of conventional social media.
Social media wants to waste your time. AlienCheck wants to make you more productive.
Social media wants to get you addicted. AlienCheck wants you to accomplish tasks quickly and move on with your life.
Social media wants to sell you something. AlienCheck wants to keep you informed and empowered.
Social media thinks that you are a product and your data belongs to them. AlienCheck wants you to harness your own data so you can profit from it yourself.
Social media tries to make you enter their "filtered" world and forget about the real one.
AlienCheck connects you powerfully to the real world.

Finally, social media wants to harness you.
We want you to harness AlienCheck.
Surveys show that many social media users,

after spending a long time online,
leave feeling frustrated, disappointed, angry and sad about the time they have wasted.
And yet, in the overwhelming majority of cases,
these same users will go back and do the same thing tomorrow and the next day.
AlienCheck is ready to *break the cycle*.
When you finish using AlienCheck,
we want you to **feel satisfied, pleased, happy and to have a sense of achievement**.

In a short time, on one app, we want you to be amazed that
you were able to accomplish so many different necessary tasks.
In other words, AlienCheck made you efficient and effective.
That is what makes **AlienCheck part of a sustainable future** for our sustainable world.
Less wasted energy, time and money.
More gained productivity, cost savings and accomplishments.

What benefits accrue from using AlienCheck?

How many apps do you have on your phone?
More than 30?
More than 50?
Some recent research has found that in America,
on average, people have more than 70 apps on their phones.
Banking apps.
AI apps.
E-commerce apps.
Transportation apps.
Ticketing apps.
Social media apps.

I think the results for Cambodia would be very similar.

So, why **do we need another app**?
Isn't another app the one thing that we really don't need?
I don't know about you but I certainly don't want yet another app.
Do you want more apps or do you feel like you have too many already?
Isn't it time to free up some bandwidth and remove some apps?
Wouldn't you like to consolidate your apps and get the most out of them?

I think most of us would agree that adding yet another app does not sound like great way forward.
But, hold on just a second.
What if getting AlienCheck might allow you to delete many of your other apps?
Instead of needing 20 apps to cover 20 tasks, what if one app could cover all the tasks simultaneously?

The UCN is a super app, with many different features in one place.
You can handle internet banking on the UCN.
You can monitor IoT devices and connect to the Power Management System on the UCN.
You can handle e-commerce needs on the UCN.
You can access social media features on the UCN.
You can take advantage of AI capabilities on the UCN.

But this doesn't just mean that the UCN has a lot of different features thrown together randomly in one app.
AlienCheck is designed to make you more efficient and productive,

Do you need AI capabiliities for research?
Do you need to use your home and office automation more efficiently?

Do you need to contact your colleagues or classmates for a project?
Do you need to manage your banking and shopping?
Do you need to do all of these things efficiently, rapidly, productively and with a bare minimum of wasted time?
Do you need to do all of these tasks on one app?
How do you intend to make your life more sustainable, more productive and less dependant on online time, especially wasted online time?
Are you open to the idea of an app that seeks to connect everything in one place?
Are you excited to develop the more proactive, productive, best version of yourself?



Chapter 9

SIMA Amazing Innovation: Universal Connectivity Network

"We won't take distance for an excuse. We'll go the extra mile to connect everyone, everywhere, because we know that connection is everything."
-Micky Watkins, CEO of World Mobile Group

We have made the case that the SIMA Mission of AlienCheck, the UCN app is NOT a social media app.
We have **shown conclusively** some of the pitfalls of social media overuse,
shown conclusively that AlienCheck does not fall into those traps, and
shown conclusively that AlienCheck is not an idea from the 3rd Industrial Revolution.

By now, you should have a very clear idea of what AlienCheck is NOT.
But SIMA **Amazing Innovation is not what something is NOT, it is what something IS.**
So, what exactly is AlienCheck and why does it play an outsized role in the SIMA Journey,
namely the Journey to a sustainable future?

AlienCheck is the UCN.
Universal Connectivity Network.
Universal Connectivity.
This is a big claim, a bold claim, quite possible, an arrogant claim.
We want users and subscribers to use AlienCheck to accomplish the tasks you need to accomplish *in the minimum time with the maximum efficiency*.
Productivity.
Productive connectivity.

Do you need to be more productive and proactive?
Do you need to get better results faster?
Do you need an app that focuses on increasing your productivity?

What if,
instead of going online and spending 3 or 4 hours inefficiently and unwisely
and then, furthermore, feeling disappointed with all the wasted time,
what if, you could go online and accomplish many important tasks
and have the satisfaction of success?
With AlienCheck, this is not only possible, it is guaranteed!
AlienCheck's goal is to make you more productive.

Big talk.
Does AlienCheck walk the walk?
How does AlienCheck intend to help you to accomplish your goals
in the most productive way and in the shortest time frame possible?

It is because we have a UNIVERSAL connectivity network app.
UNIVERSAL. As already mentioned, this is a pretty daring claim.
How can we say that our app is universal?
What does that mean?

It means that
in one unified and overarching app,
you are able to accomplish a wide variety of tasks.
One of the problems that many people struggle with is having too many apps.
They have to search through a huge number of apps just to find the one
that they want.
They have switch from one app to another to a third or fourth app,
just to accomplish one complete task.
AlienCheck doesn't want you to waste your time switching between apps.
AlienCheck encompasses a wide variety of features and functions in

one app so you can save time and get results faster.
This makes it UNIVERSAL.

Do you have too many apps? Is this causing a "traffic jam" on your devices?
Would you like to reduce the number of apps you use
WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY improving your success rate and
increasing your productivity?

What if you could reduce the total number of apps on your phone
because you could achieve so many results with only AlienCheck?
You can.
That is the goal that we are seeking, the objective that we are pursuing.
That is **the result that we are achieving**.
One app instead of many.
Productive connectivity.

Let me elucidate.
AlienCheck brings you, for example, powerful AI capabilities.
Of course, you have many options for AI services.
Bu, thanks to AlienCheck, now,
you no longer need to go to a separate AI app.
You can meet your AI needs:
do research or
create documents and reports or
generate hyperrealistic images or
use AI in whatever way you need,
WITHOUT ever needing to leave AlienCheck.

In the same app, we have conversation and chat features.
You can communicate with your colleagues, classmates, professors,
friends and family inside the same app.
Communication **combined in the same app** as AI capabilities.

Think what that means.
You might need to carry on an important business meeting with your customer.
AlienCheck is a suitable platform to handle this meeting.
And then, in the course of the meeting,
the customer might need some research information, market trends or product data.
You are able to take advantage of the AI capabilities of AlienCheck to get that information in real-time
without ever leaving the app.
By the end of the meeting,
you might need to generate a contract to share with the customer or to generate a report on the results of the meeting.
These task can be accomplished **within the AlienCheck framework** as well.

What tasks could you accomplish more rapidly and effectively with an app that combined conversation and chat features with cutting edge AI capabilities?

But that is not enough to claim the moniker of "universal".
AlienCheck encompasses much, much more.
Internet Banking and E-commerce are also included in the same universal app.
Think about the increased productivity you can accrue
by reducing the number of apps while increasing the accomplishments.
Think about the possibilities.

Instead of **always** searching for a new app,
always downloading a new app,
always using up more of your device space and memory,
always changing back and forth from app to app,
you can **always** use a UNIVERSAL app for

PRODUCTIVE CONNECTIVITY.

But even while mentioning all these features and functions,
we have not mentioned **the core aspect of AlienCheck**.
The sustainability of the UCN.
AlienCheck is much more than just a variety of features thrown into one app.
If AlienCheck was just a collection of random app features converged into one app,
AlienCheck would run the risk of falling afoul of
Wireless Communcations pioneer, Martin Cooper's warning.
"Whenever you create a universal device that does all things for all people, it does not do any of those things well."

Let's be abudantly clear about this.
AlienCheck is not an app to do all things for all people.
It is **an app to facilitate sustainability**.
The UCN helps you achieve sustainable connectivity.
It connects you to all aspects of the sustainability system to make your life more sustainable.

Let me give you a picture what SIMA Journey sustainability means.
Let's say, for instance, that you are a student.
You need two or three hours a night to do your homework.
You also like to spend a few hours on social media.
In addition, you like watching videos, listening to music and playing games.
What's going to happen?
Because of all of these activities, you only sleep four hours a night.
You think that because you are young, that you will be ok,
but gradually, you find yourself sleepier and sleepier during the day.
This is a NOT sustainable circumstance!

So you make a decision to reduce some of your other activities,

(hopefully not your homework time, haha),
So that you can get an adequate amount of sleep.
Now you have a sustainable lifestyle.

In the same way, VP.Start works to make connectivity more sustainable.
More realistic.
More successful short term and long term.

Why do you need to be connected to the sustainability system?

For one simple example,
AlienCheck **connects you with the power management system**
transparently, keeping you updated and informed while protecting the grid data with cutting edge cybersecurity.

Furthermore,
AlienCheck **connects you to the SIMA Smart City initiatives** of VP.Start,
the projects to use IoT devices and sensors to improve
traffic management, waste management, street lighting and other aspects of urban life and to make a better situation for city dwellers.
For instance, you might face traffic jams daily
as you come to work or school and when you return home.
You can connect to the IoT-infused traffic management sensors through AlienCheck to find the most convenient and effective routes to avoid traffic problems and accidents.

Additionally,
AlienCheck **connects you to the home automation solutions**
of VP.Start's SIMA Smart Home initiatives
to make sure that you are using electricity in the most effective way possible with all of your appliances, gadgets and technology.
You can monitor and manage your bathroom, kitchen and other

appliances through AlienCheck
and the appliances can contact you via AlienCheck.
To make sure that you are **minimizing waste and reducing electric expenses**.
That is SUSTAINABLE, PRODUCTIVE, UNIVERSAL CONNECTIVITY!

AlienCheck wants to tell you something powerful.
Don't wait for tomorrow.
Let's have a more productive life today.
Let's have a more sustainable world today.
Let's have more universal connectivity today.
Remember that, **tomorrow never comes! There is only today. Only now!**

Let me mention one last thing.
We certianly need AlienCheck in Cambodia.
But people *around the world* have similar needs.
They also want greater connectivity in one app.
They also want to connect to the sustainability system.
They also want to be more productive and save more money.
That's why AlienCheck is exportable.
The "Alien" part of AlienCheck indicates that **this is an app for the whole world**,
For the universe, in fact.

How will you leverage all the time that you are able to gain by using the UCN and reducing your dependence of conventional social media?

Are you ready for a more productive tomorrow starting today?

Chapter 10

SIMA Amazing Innovation: SIMA Big Data is the Big Picture

"We are surrounded by data but starved for insights."
-Jay Baer, Customer Experience Expert

Of the 5 core missions of VP.Start,
this one is probably **the least understood** and the least mentioned.
Many people seem to think that Big Data is some mysterious concept, floating around in space.
They struggle to understand concepts like digital twin technology and AI Data centers,
and feel that data science is only for geniuses and masterminds.
Yet, actually, truth be told,
data is commonplace and has existed since the beginning of time,
long before humans ever walked on this planet.

How do you feel about the Big Data Revolution?
Are you excited about the prospects or does it make you feel a little uneasy?

Stated in the simplest terms, *data is information*.
Your hair color is data.
Your breakfast is data.
Every cell in your body is functioning on data.
Atoms that make up the physical universe combine and separate based on data.
The planets move according to data.
Data is everywhere, in everything,

every action, every word, every thought, every involuntary movement.
While for many observers,
SIMA Big Data seems daunting and unfathomable,
in many ways, it is the **most important of all the SIMA innovations.**
Grid modernization means very little
if we don't have a system to take advantage of the Big Data that we accumulate.
SIMA Smart City and SIMA Smart Home similarly use data to upgrade and inform.
Lacking this Big Data generating and applying power,
the SIMA Smart City and SIMA Smart Home Initiatives are largely pointless.
The *UCN, AlienCheck,* above all its other features must harness data, Big Data, or it has little reason for existence.

Without SIMA Big Data, the SIMA Journey falls apart.
With SIMA Big Data, the SIMA Journey moves forward towards the destination.
Big Data is that critical.

In terms of the SIMA Journey and the five key missions of VP.Start, when we talk about data, what exactly are we talking about?

Let's look briefly, mission by mission.
In terms of the *SIMA Smart Grid*, VP.Start accumulates data using ***the DRC series*** of IoT-infused gadgets to determine **the current state of the electric grid at any given moment**. Operators can monitor the grid conditions remotely with the RPM Grid in the control center or on the PLUM app for mobile monitoring.
Power flows are managed,
outages are quickly pinpointed and handled,
phase imbalances are coped with,

anomalies are noted and
switching and closing are performed on the lateral lines remotely, when necessary.
This is the Big Data accumulation stage for the SIMA Smart Grid.
By itself, this data acquisition is meaningful and helpful but it is just the beginning.

Why is it absolutely essential to know the current situation before we try to make improvements?

In a similar way, in the SIMA Smart City Initiatives,
IoT sensors like the ***SCD series*** are deployed in middle-sized urban areas of Cambodia such as *Kampong Cham and TaKhmao cities*.
These SCD sensors pick up data from street lights
to *prevent energy leakage,*
malfunctions and
short circuits in street lighting.
Furthermore, the SCD series can monitor individual light bulb capacity and lifespan and perform remote dimming or brightening as needed, to **facilitate energy savings and reduce maintenance costs**.
This Big Data is collected by the IoT sensors and sent to the AlienCheck app.
Similar sensors for
SIMA Smart Waste Bins,
SIMA Smart Parking,
SIMA Traffic Control and Safety and
SIMA Air Quality Monitors
are under development currently.
This will create **an ever expanding amount of Big Data.**

How can data that you acquire help your business
to facilitate energy saving and reduce maintenance costs?
How important would that reduction and savings be to you and your innovation?

In terms of the SIMA Smart Home and Office Initiatives,
the **VH series** of smart switches **monitors power, voltage, current and energy consumption**
for each connected appliance or gadget.
This Big Data is once again transmitted to the AlienCheck app
where it can be easily accessed by consumers.

Would you like to live a more data-driven and smarter home and office life?

At this point,
we have already seen that the SIMA Smart Grid,
the SIMA Smart City and
the SIMA Smart Home
are all gathering data constantly and transmitting that data to the RPM Grid, the PLUM app, and especially, to the UCN of AlienCheck.

This is powerful **Big Data acquisition**.
This acquisition involves *gathering data,*
verifying the accuracy of the data,
cleansing the data,
storing the data,
keeping the data cybersecure and
organizing the data in the data repositories
so that data can be found and retrieved when needed.

Is this the entire SIMA Big Data Initiative? No, not at all, not yet.
After all, acquiring data is not the hardest part.
Using the data in the right way, effectively, is the real challenge.
If we use data ineffectively or worse still, we accumulate data but never

use it all, data is completely worthless.
We are gathering digital trash and expending a lot of money and technological effort to gather that digital trash.

The SIMA Big Data initiative really starts when we start to use the data that has been acquired.
We turn "garbage" data into "pure gold" data. How does VP.Start do that?

Let's look at the missions of VP.Start one more time,
but this time in the context of **data simulation, not data acquisition.**
Data simulation is the point at which we start *trying to make sense of the data*.

Are you collecting an accumulating pure gold data or garbage data?
Are you getting full benefit from the data that you spend so much time and effort to acquire?

In the case of the SIMA Smart Grid,
this means that we start creating digital scenarios and testing them based on the data.
For example:
When do we expect peaks and troughs in electric usage?
Well, let's try out a million scenarios and see which ones are supported by the data.
What weather situations are most likely to cause outages?
Let's test millions of weather scenarios against the data.
What time of day are energy consumers most likely to increase energy use?
We may have a guess or prediction about this based on our experience but now we can use the data to disprove or support our theories and suppositions.
Do you make business decisions based on guesses, assumptions and theories or do you test your ideas against actual data?
Are you a wild guesser or a data simulator?
Simulation is not just academic theorizing,
because we move these simulation results into data application where we bring these **insights into practice**, to bear on various problems.
We determine how to react to real-time weather updates based on the simulations.
We prepare for peak electric demand based on the scenarios that we have tested.
We make decisions on energy allocation and renewables integration and battery energy storage or retrieval based on the results of our simulated experiments.

After you apply data to a situation,
how do you follow up to see if that result met your expectations?
Never be satisfieed with "almost good enough." Data does not allow that!

This is not the end, of course.
Each application of data creates new data to be collected and analyzed.
Was our application highly accurate? Or was it flawed?
Did some bias enter into our data acquisition or simulation?
With the new data gathered from the applications,
we restart the process of simulation again and again.
Constantly getting better results.
Getting closer to perfection but never getting there. Never satisfied.

As VP.Start uses the SCD series of street light sensors,
the same pattern is followed.
How do weather patterns impact the quality of street lighting?
How should we respond to the data on weather issues?
How many anomalies and malfunctions do we record on average per month?

How can we reduce those problems, based on the data?
How accurate are our lifespan predicitions?
How can we use data to make them more accurate?
Simulate endless scenarios with data,
apply these simulated solutions to the real-world,
start over again with the newly gathered data.

As you can imagine, the SIMA Smart Home follows exactly the same pattern of data collection, data simulation, and data application which generates new data to be collected. **The Big Data Cycle.**

How can you leverage the Big Data Cycle for your benefit instead of it leveraging you?

As VP.Start gathers more and more data about the Smart Grid and as it becomes more accurate,
we are gradually creating **a digital representation, a replica** of the SIMA Smart Grid in its entirety.
This is called a digital twin.
Digital twins allow us to test things that would not be safe or convenient to test in the real world. *VP.Start can deal with outages in the digital twin so you don't have to deal with outages in the real world.*
VP.Start can practice responding to catastrophic weather events without you having to suffer them in the real world.
VP.Start can test very radical, dangerous and expensive theories in the digital twin without any added cost or discomfort to the customers.

As this collected Big Data continues to grow exponentially through the endless cycle of Big Data, managing such massive amounts of Big Data in a timely fashion becomes humanly difficult or impossible.
This is the point at which VP.Start introduces **AI-infusion** to the overall Big Data framework.

Automation to handle what has become too big for manual management.
Cloud Computing means that as handling the data becomes impossible for limited servers and local computer capacity,
that volume of Big Data can be handled by computers outside of VP.Start, while still maintaining the strictest cybersecurity.

Are you willing to give up control when Big Data becomes too big for human, manual management?
How do you make sure that in the automation process, the highest level of cybersecurity is consistently maintained?

Ultimately, *this Big Data acquisition, simulation and application is integrated directly into AlienCheck* meaning that you have access to your data while making sure that others do not have that access.

When this system of Big Data, the Big Data cycle, is really functioning fully, **the SIMA Big Data Initiative will be lifting and upgrading and empowering** all the other missions of the SIMA Journey.
The SIMA Journey will expand, extend, deepen and accelerate.

But most importantly for most of the readers,
you will have access to **more** reliable and affordable energy,
more cost-efficient and less wasteful home appliance and office machinery,
more liveable and healthier cities,
more productivity and accessibility via the UCN
and **better** lives thanks to the power of SIMA Big Data.
SIMA Big Data is the final missing piece in **creating a more sustainable world.**
More savings.
Less waste.

More efficiency.
Less energy loss.
MORE DATA.

Are you ready to use data to make better decisions,
to test your assumptions and
to accelerate your journey?
Now is the time to join the data revolution!



Chapter 11

SIMA Amazing Innovation: The Greatest Innovation is an Innovative Voice

"Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice."
-Steve Jobs

In many ways, the most powerful and meaningful innovation that you can have is an innovative voice.
In the Ideology section of this book,
we talked about developing a powerful voice.
Yes, this is indispensable to the growth of VP.Start.
But, to be honest,
there are people who have **powerful voices,**
but nothing to say.
In other words, they have powerful speaking techniques
but they do not have an innovative voice.
That is not acceptable for VP.Start.
You can get people's attention with a powerful voice
but **you grow with an innovative one**.
Grow your business.
Grow your ideas.
Grow you dreams.
Grow yourself.

For a public speaker to become an world-class communicator,
you must develop the ability to speak innovatively.
After all, if you tell the world that you have creativity and innovative solutions that can **break new ground and change the world**
but at the same time,

your **speaking style is very conventional and traditional**,
who is going to believe you?

Innovators have innovative voices. They speak innovatively.
Do you? Be brutally honest with yourself
When you say that you are an innovator with innovative ideas,
does your voice make them believe you or doubt you?

To put it more simply, *be yourself*.
Express yourself, not according to the patterns and precedents of others,
according to the standards of conventional speech making or
the formulae that others have used before, time and again.
This will merely guarantee that your speech will be ordinary and less than compelling.
How could it be otherwise?
How can you surprise and captivate and amaze people with the ordinary?
On the other hand, how can you fail to blow people away
when you bring the winds of change to every speech?

This means more than just avoiding the traditional practices of mediocre speakers.
The much greater challenge is to **avoid becoming an imitator of yourself,**
a clone or digital twin of yourself, if you will.
After all, at some point, you will make a great and innovative speech.
A speech that captivates the audience and meets all of your goals.
You will surprise others and maybe even yourself.
But, that **success is a danger**.
At that moment, it is tempting to think that
you have created a powerful template for all your speeches going forward.
"If it is not broken, don't fix it."
Just *keep following the same pattern and giving the same speech.*

But, unfortunately, no one likes to listen to an imitator,
even if they are imitating themselves,
trying to recapture the glory of his their previous successes.
Imitators are boring, to audiences,
but especially to the imitators themselves.
A true innovator will quickly grow tired of repeating past speeches or reviving past speaking styles,
no matter how successful they were in the past.
And what happens to the audience
when the speaker starts to feel bored and less than enthusiastic?
I think we have all seen this movie before.
A bored speaker makes for a bored audience.
A bored audience makes for an even more bored speaker.
This is not the cycle that we want!

One of the best ways to judge your effectiveness as a speaker is to ask yourself a question:
Do your speeches make you excited or bored?
If they make you bored, is that because they are repetitive?
If they make you excited, how does the audience react?

According to public speaking guru, Bill McGowan,
in his book on public speaking, ***Pitch Perfect***,
"In public speaking, it is easy to think that since everyone else does something a certain way,
this is the only acceptable way of doing things.
For example, most people start a speech with an introduction.
They thank the audience for coming.
They express admiration for the organization that invited them to speak.
My belief is the opposite:
if you see everyone do something,

you definitely don't want to do that.
It's time to do the opposite and make yourself distinctive."
Phally could not agree more with this powerful statement.
Be distinctive.
Be unusual.
Be controversial.
Be shocking.
Be off the wall.
Be sensitive.
Be risky.
Be anything but never, never, never be ordinary.

Your "voice" is much more than your sound.
Let me give you an example.
Phally has long hair, one of his trademarks.
Many first time visitors to VP.Start notice this immediately.
This is simply not conventional among CEOs in Cambodia.
Furthermore, Phally wears clothes at times that are,
to put it mildly, unique,
because he chooses too.
It is not so much that he wants to use his appearance
to shock or surprise others.
He is **authentic** and true to himself.
He *wears what he wants,*
looks how he wants,
says what he wants, and
does what he wants.
This is his voice, too.
In fact, often **appearance is the first "voice" that we hear**.

Is authenticity the safe approach?
Certainly not.
Does it open Phally up to some heartaches, criticism and mocking?
Yes, at times.
But the way of a tech CEO and an innovative founder is
not the safe way
or the easy way
or the ordinary way.
Phally would never consider choosing any other way than being true to himself.
Perhaps, at the end of the day,
that is the ultimate **difference between**
a great speaker and a truly innovative world-class communicator,
the difference *between a powerful voice and an innovative voice* that cannot be ignored.
Radical, *uncompromising authenticity*.

Does your voice in all its forms (sound, appearance, mannerism, attitude, and the like) serve your innovative ideas and make them more powerful?

One frustration that comes with the territory of seeking
to be an innovative world-class communicator
is the constant feeling of *not being as persuasive as needed*.
Being subpar.
Being inadequate, insufficient.
The further **you push yourself towards perfection**,
it seems, the more distant that goal seems to become.
At times, this can be a heavy weight that CEO Phally tries to bear.
He would personally deem that it is almost impossible to give a speech (or sing a song, paint a painting, perform a dance and so on and so on) without feeling that there was at least some part of the speech that could

have been better.
The more seriously you take the results and
the more deeply you feel the burden of your mission and your vision,
the more likely you are to be devastated by the slightest imperfection.

Phally has had to work hard to train himself
to be data-driven and results-driven as opposed to emotion-driven.
A world-class communicator doesn't go solely on how he or she feels about her speech.
To do so, would be a recipe for endless torture and frustration.

Are you seeking innovative perfection without becoming a perfectionist?

We need to ask ourselves,
what were the goals of this speech?
What did we want the audience to do after the speech?
What did we want them to feel, believe and remember and take home with them?
And how well did we reach these goals?
This moves the results **from the realm of emotional speculation to that of data-driven results**.
To be brutally honest, this is still a work in progress for Phally and
he still occasionally gets disturbed or discouraged
by his own dissatisfaction with his speaking abilities.
But increasingly, he is moving in the direction of looking at the results.
Every true world-class communicator must move in that direction or
risk getting blown off course completely
by every negative thought that happens to pop into their creative heads.

Phally has found that one of the best ways
to determine the success or failure of a speech is

to allow questions after the speech.
Are there many questions?
Are they surface questions or penetrating questions?
Are they perfunctory questions or are they asked with ardor and passion, with a genuine desire to know and to grow?
A great speech,
especially a great tech speech,
should **not only answer a number of questions**
but it should raise even more.
If people walk away from a speech feeling that
they completely understand the subject,
how could that have been an innovative speech?
On the other hand completely,
if the audience walks away consumed by
burning questions and
a powerful itch to know more,
the results have borne out clearly that
this speech achieved the goals intended.

When you raise your innovative voice, does it lead to questions?
Do people want to know more about your ideas and solutions?
If they don't, why do you think they are not motivated to ask questions?

Phally often says that **he doesn't want to reach the level of a native speaker of English** because there are many native speakers of English who are very underwhelming speakers.
He has a loftier goal, one that is harder to express,
but that is absolutely real.
He wants to reach the level of the greatest innovative communicators,

whether in English or Khmer.
Actually, language is not that important at that point.
He sees the final stage of this process as **the ability to speak impromptu**.

In other words, if you give people a topic and time to prepare,
most people can come up with a reasonably well-crafted speech.
Give them time to research the topic and
discuss communication strategies with advisors and consultants and
even a mediocre speaker will come up with something
that while not compelling or mesmerizing, is at least adequate.

But what if they are given an unexpected topic,
suddenly,
without any preparation or time to consult with others?
Better still, or harder still, what if this is a topic that in outside of their area of expertise,
outside of their comfort zone?
What if they are required to *begin speaking on the spot*,
off the cuff,
off the top of their heads and
give an answer that will satisfy **both the experts and non-experts**
who may be residing in the audience?
Does it seem borderline impossible?
A monumental, herculean challenge?

Once again, ***"If it is not impossible, it is not worth doing."***
This is the goal towards which Phally is always striving.
Innovative, impromptu speaking.
When you speak without preparation,
you have no choice but to be yourself.
You have no time to become anyone else.

You can **only share what it already inside of you**.
Phally would not say that he has already achieved this status or
that he will ever fully achieve it.
This ability remains somewhat **beyond the grasp**
of even the most excellent orators to ever walk our planet.
It is perhaps **the loftiest goal.**
Certainly, you might say that this may amount to trying to
"reach the unreachable star"
but I am willing to suggest that most of the greatest accomplishments
that have been achieved in history and in speaking,
were **achieved by those who dared to raise their voice and tried to do the impossible**,
those who felt the bitter sting of self-dissatisfaction,
those who could never quite *reach the impossible standard* that they set for themselves and yet, raised their voice and
kept on raising it and
refused to be silent until the world was theirs!

When you are given an unplanned opportunity to share your ideas and innovations,
Are you always ready and excited to share what you have inside?
Do you embrace the opportunity and make your case powerfully?

Phally would surely tell each and every one of you that
you have a powerful and compelling voice.
You have your own unique content that
you need to share with the world
with all the passion that you feel for this vision.
You can become a powerful speaker in your language or
in whatever other languages you may choose to employ.
You can become an empathetic and powerful active listener

who understands the needs,
wishes,
hopes and
fears of your listeners.
You can boldly dive outside your comfort zone,
take on the most unexpected and challenging
questions and topics with panache,
speak creatively and disruptively and
reach or surpass whatever standard you set
for yourself.

Why?
Because you are you,
you are unique,
you are your authentic self.
Nothing more is required.
So, where is your voice? The world is waiting. We need to hear from you.

Be bold, be yourself, be brave, be indomitable, be authentic.
Be world-class!



Chapter 12
SIMA Amazing Innovation: The Future of the SIMA Journey

"The future is an unknown, but a somewhat predictable unknown.
To look to the future, we must first look back upon the past.
That is where the seeds of the future were planted." -Albert Einstein

Congratulations, dear readers!
You have made it to the end of our book.
But this **not the end of our journey**.
A book must eventually finish.
A journey does not.
The SIMA Journey never ends.
You and I will end our journey someday
but the next generation will keep the journey going forward.

As Professor Albert said,
the future is unknown,
but **not completely unknown**.
The SIMA Journey gives us a framework
to have some certainty about the future
even though we don't have any absolute promises or guarantees.

As by now you surely know,
the SIMA Journey starts with our ***Story***.
But let's be very clear about something.
***Story* is not** the same thing as *History*.
History is what has already happened in the past.
Things that cannot be changed.

Things that cannot be upgraded or updated
because they are already past.
Story includes *the past but also the present and the future*.
We use the data of **the past**
and the experiences of **the present**
to extrapolate about **the future**.
If our ***Story*** was only about the past,
there would be little point in revisiting it.
After all, as the song says,
"The good old days weren't always good and tomorrow
isn't as bad as it seems."
In this regard,
our ***Story*** is very similar to data science in all its three main components.
The past part of our Story is similar to **data acquisition**.
We gather data from the past and use it to predict the future.
The present part of our Story are **the simulations**
where we try out various ideas, theories, strategies and approaches,
some successful and some definitely not.
The future part of our Story is similar to **data application**,
where we take the lessons, the "seeds" of the past and
"plant" them in the real world.
Of course, **the future quickly becomes the past** and
we restart the process over and over again.

What lessons are you deriving from your past experiences and current simulations?

How are you integrating these actionable insights into your innovative operations?

For VP.Start,
the past includes both **successes** and *failures*.
Of course!

New contracts and new markets.

Failed attempts to gain investment.

Amazing conferences.

Missed opportunities.

Powerful stakeholders
and supporters.

Ungrateful team members
who steal our ideas and
try to destroy the our creations.

New innovations.

Implementation delays.

New OEM partners.

Challenges in intellectual property
transfers and Maintaining
high standards of quality.

Expanded funding support and grants
from international organizations.

Obstacles to compliance
with regulatory frameworks.

Burgeoning recognition and
new connections
across the ASEAN region.

Slower growth than
we would hope for at times.

Based on these past results,
we are constantly making changes and trying out new, outside the box strategies.
New ways of marketing.
More innovative speaking and pitching.
More effective storytelling.

New ways to access international markets.

Will these plans ALL succeed?

I can safely answer….

NO!

As time goes by and
as these **plans of the future** turn into
the **successes or failures of the past**,
we are gathering more *actionable intelligence*
to keep the SIMA Journey going forward.

Are you gaining *actionable intelligence* from your successes without becoming *overconfident*?

Are you gaining *actionable intelligence* from your failures without becoming *discouraged*?

The next step in the VP.Start future is our **SIMA Ideology.**
Ideology is the next step in your future as well.
Ideology moves our journey from the raw data of the past to **data analysis**.
The ***S*tory** tells us what happened.

The **Ideology** is how we interpret those events and

what lessons we draw from them.

Please remember this.

Data is valuable or worthless depending on the quality of analysis.

Sadly,
many companies are *accumulating data* in the same way
that they *collect garbage*.
Data is gathered and stored
but that data is never analyzed
or, at best, is analyzed improperly.
That data is *wasting space,*

energy,

effort and

money.

Not exactly very sustainable.

We, on the other hand, use our **Ideology** to move into the future.

The **SIMA Ideology** rests on ***Innovation through Technology***.
So, what new ideas will come to VP.Start in the future
as we *create, build, refine and visualize* the sustainability system?

That is hard to determine at this point.

But one thing is absolutely certain.

*Ideas will come **first**.*
*Innovative ideas will come **first**.*
And then, our amazing team will create the technology
that turns these ideas into reality.
Innovation through Technology.

As we move into new markets like India and the Philippines and Indonesia and others,

we will face **new obstacles** or
old obstacles in new formats.

Creative technology will be required to navigate past these challenges.

We will keep our eyes on the Big Picture.

Overarching sustainability for the world.

We will not allow VP.Start to be derailed from the track.

We will not excessively focus on details and components instead of the overall vision.

We refuse to become a manufacturing company or an engineering factory.

We will insist on being idea-driven and data-driven.

It is reasonable to assume that in the future
there will be *increasing temptations* and pressures
to **move away from the Big Picture** vision.

Pressures to move into trendy sectors like EV adoption,
renewable integration,
AI Data Centers implementation and the like.
But our **idea-driven**,
not product-driven approach,
our **data-driven**,
not profit-driven philosophy
will protect us from getting off the track.

How are you adapting your ideology to changing circumstances
while simultaneously
protecting your core values and vision?

In the future,
we will continue to rely on our three-pronged approach to **powerful thinking**:
namely,
logical thinking,
creative thinking and
positive thinking
in order to keep moving forward.
One issue for us as we face the future unafraid
is to make sure that all team members are
acting creatively and positively, not just logically.
To be honest, this can be challenging at times.
Especially since we recognize that the CEO will not be with us forever,
we must all learn to stand in our own creativity and positivity.
Otherwise,
we risk becoming a conventional, ordinary company
with products to sell instead of ideas to tell.

Are you employing threefold powerful thinking?
Are you logical? Are you creative? Are you positive?
What areas of powerful thinking are your strengths?
Which areas do you need to improve?
How are you proactively reducing the risk of you losing your innovative edge?

We are already moving actively towards **decentralization**,
especially in terms of our voice.
We intend to get more people involved with *pitching*,
planning,
decision making,
training,
speaking,
publicizing.
In the Friday weekly, SIMA Journey Workshop,
this is already taking place as more and more team members are
getting chances to raise their voices.
As we decentralization *expands and accelerates*,
traditional departments and hierarchies will become less important,
perhaps even obsolete.
as indeed they have already started to become.

Do your innovations promote decentralization?
Or can they only succeed with your direct and active involvement?
If your innovations depend excessively on you and
on your top-down leadership,
they will leave the scene as soon as you do
At the end of the day,
VP.Start's ultimate success or failure in the **future**
will depend on our ability to develop a world-class corporate voice

today and on our ability to learn to be ourselves **now**.

The same is true for all of you.

So, where will our voice and our authenticity take us?

That will depend deeply on our **Methodology**.

If **Ideology** is similar to data analysis,

Methodology moves us forward into data model building and data model evaluation.

Feeding the data into the system,
checking the results,
increasing the accuracy,
redoing the process.

SIMA Methodology has been a continuous process of *adaptation and growth*.

It will be in the future as well.

For VP.Start.

For you, too.

Let me give a very concrete example.

We started our grid modernization and SIMA Smart Grid solutions with the **DRC-001**, a solution specifically designed for **a very detailed problem**.

The DRC-001 was tasked with modernizing existing infrastructure of the grid,

particularly focused on the *Auto Circuit Reclosers*
associated with ADVC Cabinets
produced by Schneider Electric.

This was a big step forward in SIMA Smart Grid implementation.

The DRC-001 is an excellent solution for a *very specific aspect of grid architecture* but we soon found that there were other problems that needed our attention also.

For example, we needed **DRC capabilities to monitor and manage**

Load Break Switches (LBS) and

we needed to eliminate costly and wasteful manual inspection trips for these LBSs.

So…**the DRC-002 was born**.

Not all ADVC Cabinets are produced by Schneider.

We needed a new solution for those produced by Cooper Electronics…

So we **created the DRC-003**.

Do you see the pattern?

With each new step forward, *new problems and new needs appeared*.

A new variation, a new iteration of the DRC technology was required.

We have kept on *adapting and*

upgrading and

revising the DRC into new versions to meet new challenges.

Currently there are 12 distinct DRC hardware options.

Some designed to interface with various manufacturers or various pieces of grid infrastructure.

Some designed purely for data gathering purposes.

Still others designed specifically for energy metering, including remote measurement, billing and consumption auditing.

New challenges keep leading us to *create new solutions*.

New solutions that **create new, additional, unexpected challenges**.

The cycle continues.

That is the core essence of the **SIMA Methodology.**

Moving forward,

these various remote control features are being combined into one overarching **DRC universal controller**.

This, too, is a key aspect of VP.Start methodology.

Creating new and varied innovative solutions.

Yes.
Combining these different ideas into one overarching framework.
Yes.
The future belongs not so much to those who have infinite, random, innovative ideas
but to those who can bring those ideas together into **one synergistic architecture**.
Also, in the near future,
the SIMA Methodology will move the DRC **from hardware to software**.
YES.
Instant remote installation anywhere in the world.

So while we may not exactly know the parameters and details of the future, we have a *flexible and agile methodology* ready to move in whatever direction necessary.
Solving new problems as they arise.
Creating an overarching framework to integrate those solutions into a Big Picture vision.
Moving those solutions from tangible products to digitized software solutions.

Do your innovations solve new problems as they arise?
Are you creating an overarching framework to combine all your ideas into one Big Picture?
Are you moving away from physical, tangible solutions to digital, remotely accessible ones?

The way of innovation is endless.
After all, that is the meaning of innovation.
IN+NOV+ATION
"IN" means something "within" an existing object or practice

"NOV" means "make new", "renew" or "alter"
"ATION" means "a process" or "an action"
So "INNOVATION" means ***the process or the action of making something new or altering an existing practice.***

Making something new is continual and unstoppable.
We at VP.Start are constantly innovating.
But that **doesn't mean chaos.**
We are constantly
altering the SIMA Methodology and
improving the SIMA Ideology
to create even *better SIMA Amazing Innovations*
that always fit with **the original SIMA Journey**
that started when our CEO was born.
Old.
New.
Always changing.
Always headed to an unchanging goal.
We are arrogant enough.
We are arrogant enough to change.
We are arrogant enough to change the world.
We are arrogant enough to change the world into a more sustainable one.
We are arrogant enough to change the world into a more sustainable one TODAY.

So the final question is simple:
How arrogant are you?





> Often, the ***hardest part*** of a **journey** is not the ***beginning,*** but rather persevering as times and conditions get tough. ***A strong belief system is key to continuing the journey.***













“Tend to yourself
As you become tend to others.”



VP.Start is an **"Innovation Through Technology"** tech company established in Cambodia.

The abbreviation **"VP"**means **"Very Powerful."** Therefore, **VP.Start** represents a **"Very Powerful Start"**

VP.Start represents **innovation-driven thinking, creativity-driven ideas, transforming ideas into reality, and the momentum to think outside the box.**
Every research and development initiative must be **unique, creative, meaningful, and impactful to people and society.**

As Phally has stated:
"Technology without innovation is like a toy for kids."



ABOUT THE WRITER

Geoff Dean
Writer of The SIMA Journey

"Every meaningful journey begins with an idea—and every great idea begins with the courage to dare to be yourself."

Geoff Dean is the writer of The SIMA Journey, a book dedicated to the innovative, idea-driven vision, and forward-thinking spirit of VP.Start.

Through his engagement with VP.Start's journey, he adopted the belief that innovation is not simply about creating new technology, but about transforming ideas into sustainable solutions for our people, our region and our planet.

Geoff explores a journey where creativity, logic, sustainability, and positivity come together. The story invites readers to look beyond what technology is today—to envision what we can create when ideas are unlocked, unleashed, and unimpeded.

The SIMA Journey is therefore not just a story about VP.Start's technology, but the story of the innovator that you were born to be and the amazing innovations that you were born to create.

Our SIMA journeys continue with every idea we dare to imagine, every innovation we dare to create, and every time we dare to unlock ourselves.