

EOQ Press Release

Mr. Carlos Ribas and Mr. Ajay Naik, winners of the 2020 EOQ European Quality Leader Award

The European Organization for Quality (EOQ) celebrated on **September 8th, 2021**, the **winners of the European Quality Leader Award 2020**.

The European Quality Leader (EQL) Award is granted annually by EOQ. EOQ 'Quality Leaders' are individuals who have succeeded in guiding their organizations to success for the different stakeholders through their leadership and through the change and quality improvement processes, in the broadest sense, which they have implemented directly through their teams.

The EQL Award winners for 2020 are:

Mr. Carlos Ribas from Portugal - he was selected one of the winners of EQL 2020 award because of his outstanding accomplishments in the field of business' improvement and his leadership achievements in outstanding productivity increase, attraction of Research & Development to Portugal, impacting Innovation



Projects, radical change of product portfolio.

With an engineer degree of ISEP – Instituto Superior de Engenharia do Porto (Superior Institute for Engineering in Porto), he developed his knowledge and practical experience by getting the Master in leadership at Carnegie Mellon University Tepper School of Business -Carnegie Bosch Institute (Pittsburgh, USA), working at the beginning of his professional career as Technical-Commercial Engineer at Hoechst Portuguesa, S.A., continuing on different management functions and finally as General Manager at Yazaki Saltano de Portugal, in the field of automotive industry. Starting 2003 he entered Bosch Car Multimedia Portugal, currently being Technical Plant Manager and Bosch Representative in Portugal.

His main professional achievements are covering a broad range of areas like outstanding productivity increase (improving the productivity significantly over the years) or the attraction of Research & Development to Portugal, in particular in Bosch facilities located in Braga, Ovar and Aveiro, what quickly became a priority.

His work and efforts, together with his team, have been crowned by great accomplishments like for example Customer Awards (e.g. in 2019: JLR Quality Award), Innovation Awards (in 2019: CES Innovation Award), or EFQM Awards (e.g. in 2017: EFQM Excellence Award – in Harnessing Creativity & Innovation).

By his excellent management and leadership skills, he may count numerous outstanding professional achievements, but the best one is the growth of the company in terms of finance, human resources, technology, infrastructure, customer satisfaction, like for example the sales volume almost tripled in the last years from 433 million euros in 2014 to 1331 million Euros in 2019.

His strong values and the principal of leading by example and being a role model enabled to change the "old habit" attitudes at Bosch Braga into a positive mindset living and promoting motivation, passion, resilience and courage. He is motivated in his vision and work by Robert Bosch's vision: "We should all strive to improve on the status quo: none of us should ever be satisfied with what has been achieved but should always endeavour to do better."

Mr. Ajay Naik from Sweden - he was selected one of the winners of EQL 2020 award because of his outstanding accomplishments in transforming his organization, SKF - Gothenburg plant, to become among the top 3 performing factory in many operational and financial parameters by his consequent and committed leadership along with highly committed workforce and team.

With his Mechanical Engineering background at Cusrow Wadia Institute of Technology, Pune-India, he started his working experience at SKF in India (Swedish bearing and seal manufacturing company), going through several functions and responsibilities, currently being the Managing Director & Country Manager of SKF Sverige AB.

He started working in SKF in India in 1988 and in 2017 he was selected to lead the biggest factory of SKF – the Gothenburg plant. When he took over this role, the company ran into to some challenges and he was asked to turn around the factory. Through his decisive leadership he succeeded to create a synergy with his team, towards a common goal, by a 3-year plan to be best in class. A very inclusive and concrete plan was set-up, with clear measurable objectives, covering various aspects like cost structure, productivity and efficiency, Kaizen improvements, engaging employees – communication / recognitions, reduction in customer complaints, safety or accident improvement, energy reduction and many others. After the 3 years, the factory attained its objectives by the implemented actions on communication (internal and external), employee engagement, knowledge, and competency shift, SKF production system journey, setting up strong business development function, financial transparency. The collaboration with unions and every member in the management is key to the success and people remained at key focus in this entire journey.

Currently, under the excellent leadership of Mr. Ajay Naik, SKF - Gothenburg plant is driving a LEAN – GREEN – DIGITAL agenda, promote electric/hybrid vehicle, sustainability is the high focus area, aiming to make their operation carbon neutral by 2025 and many, many other accomplishments, positioning by that SKF - Gothenburg plant to be the most preferred choice of the customers and with the ambition to help customers achieve their objectives.



EOQ President Torolf Paulshus awarded Mr. Carlos Ribas and Mr. Ajay Naik the 2020 European Quality Leader trophy and diploma during the online awarding session of September 8th, 2021.

The European Quality Leader Award recognizes outstanding individuals who devote their time, energy and knowledge by sharing their beliefs for the benefit of the European Society. The European Organization for Quality (EOQ) includes more than 70,000 members and 500,000 companies within its member and partner organizations in Europe and worldwide. EOQ is an interdisciplinary European organization that strives to promote effective improvement in the sphere of quality management as the coordinating body and catalyst of its Member Organizations, with the goal of improving European society by promoting quality in its broadest sense.

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