

MEDAL OF COMMENDATION

Theresa Phua Chay Lin

Managing Director, Group Head Human Resource – Relationship Management
DBS Bank Ltd

Nominated by the DBS Staff Union

Theresa Phua Chay Lin strongly advocates good labour-management relations. She is committed to building strong industrial relations between DBS and DBS Staff Union (DBSSU). She and her team have consistently fostered collaborative partnerships with DBSSU to improve the welfare and career progression of the workforce. Together with her team, Sister Theresa engaged the union in discussions regularly to share the bank's people agenda and exchange views and feedback on various employee initiatives and activities.

During the onset of COVID-19 in 2020, Sister Theresa decisively led her HR team and other stakeholders to safeguard the well-being of the employees. These include effective orchestration and implementation of measures such as work-from-home (WFH) arrangements, introducing transport allowance to support staff required to return to the workplace, and protecting the vulnerable group of employees by allowing them to work from home. This was done with close collaboration with DBSSU and with timely feedback shared by the union on the employees' well-being and concerns. The bank also worked with NTUC LearningHub to curate courses for the employees to upskill and reskill at home. As the bank prepared its workforce for the future of work in a post-pandemic world, Sister Theresa led the charge to ensure that employees could thrive in the new normal.

Together with her team, they successfully implemented progressive workplace practices such as hybrid work across the bank, 100 per cent WFH for six months for employees with a newborn or a newly adopted child, or those needing to provide care for family members recovering from critical illness or injury. A job sharing programme was also launched and to date, over 100 employees have benefitted from the programme.

There was also a reduction in banks' branch arrivals since the pandemic. That prompted a need to evolve its branch service roles where higher-order skills were required. From the onset, Sister Theresa engaged the union to reskill the existing branch service staff and successfully transitioned over 100 employees into adjacent or new roles since 2020. Throughout the transformation journey, DBS' senior management and Sister Theresa held regular and intense discussions with the union to ensure a smooth transition for the employees.

Recognising the diversity of the workforce, Sister Theresa worked closely with her team and various business and support units to understand employees' needs and concerns. She has championed progressive workplace practices and co-created solutions with stakeholders to create an inclusive and fulfilling workplace for all employees.

Sister Theresa supported the designing and implementing the various learning roadmaps for wealth management, institutional banking relationship managers and customer service officers. The employees were upskilled and arranged for regular training to improve the knowledge, skillsets and technical knowledge required for customer service.