FORGING A CAREER ON YOUTUBE

YouTube celebrity twins, Janice and Sonia Lee, give us an exclusive insight into their lives as YouTube musicians

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expounds on the importance of keeping relevant to ensure growth

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May the Force Be With You!

I have always loved watching Star Wars, especially the original trilogy which premiered in the 70s. I have learned numerous lessons from watching Star Wars. I was always enamored by Han Solo and his gang-busting ways of solving problems. But Han Solo also reminded me that we need to take charge and not be a victim to circumstances. Han says in Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope, “There’s no mystical energy field that controls my destiny.” I think the same would apply to your career. Many of us make excuses about how we are stuck in a horrible situation or with a hopeless boss. But if we take Han Solo’s philosophy to heart, we can “fix” situations we are stuck in. In fact, we have no reason to believe that we have been genetically created inferior or less talented than others.

On top of Han Solo, there is much wisdom to be garnered from the wise Yoda. One of Yoda’s most famous quotes is “Do or do not... there is no try!” This again reinforces what Han Solo states. Yoda encourages people to believe in themselves and their talents. Go beyond just “trying” to “doing.” There should be no doubt or hesitation. Yoda urges us not to doubt our abilities, talent, skills or gifts but to go about believing and executing. Again, my takeaway from this is that we should never allow our careers to be sidetracked by our doubt or disbelief.

More interesting for me was how Star Wars taught me numerous lessons on how companies should be run. My biggest lesson is that companies are run by fear, who don’t allow people to be at their best, are bound to fail. The Rebels had the right people in place, and were working in a culture of optimism and hope whilst Darth Vader led the Empire in fear. Just count the number of Admirals Darth Vader killed off in his career. The next few Admirals performed worst. Why? Fear cripples. They were so afraid of Vader none of them could focus on their jobs.

Alex Knapp echoes my sentiments by writing, “Ultimately, the Galactic Empire failed as an enduring organisation because of incredibly flawed leadership at the very top. By building an organisational culture based on fear, lack of independence, and an unwillingness to adapt to changing circumstances, the Emperor set the stage for his own inevitable failure.”

I could go on and on about how much I have learnt from Star Wars but Johan Merican, our new columnist for “Movie Wisdom,” shares some great insights on leadership and career development from Star Wars. Also, in this issue is a myStarjob exclusive by Lily Cheah on Korean YouTube wonder-girls Jayesslee and how they developed into celebrities. You will again have fun whilst learning important lessons with our Top 10 column and don’t forget to access the videos for all the articles at www.leaderonomics.tv and join the discussions at facebook.com/leaderonomics.

Have fun in this issue. We sure had fun pulling it together. And we hope this issue will inspire you to take charge of your career and continue to grow into the person you were meant to be.

May the Force Be With You!

Warm regards,
Roshan Thiran
Editor, myStarjob
FROM AIR STEWARD TO CEO
SALIM USES SETBACKS AS STEPPING STONES TO SUCCESS

By ANGIE NG
angie@thestar.com.my

D ESPITE having to give up his studies and ambition to be an accountant due to financial constraints, Datuk Mohamad Salim Fateh Din made good in his life after six years working as a flight attendant. The opportunity to serve as a Malaysia Airlines air steward was an experience Salim would cherish for the rest of his life.

He believes that the challenges that came with the job - the ups and downs, and the wide job scope and big responsibilities - had enriched and groomed him to step into bigger shoes as a businessman after he decided to call it a day in 1985.

His first job came about rather “unplanned” as he was looking around for something to do after he “dropped out” of a London accounting school due to poverty.

“My own accord, I decided to halt my studies and flew back to Malaysia. I came across an advertisement looking for cabin crew staff to join the national airlines and managed to clinch the job after three rounds of interviews,” Salim shares with myStarjob.

He says the first year into his job was quite tough given the high service standards, long hours and heavy responsibilities as a cabin crew staff. “It was rather stressful,” Salim says of those days.

“Af ter the tough first year, the job somehow became lighter, and it was easier to cope with the stress. I got well acquainted with the job scope and was promoted to the rank of senior crew,” Salim adds.

He has gained some unique values and lessons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first job. Top on the list is the virtue of punctuality. As he put it in a nutshell: “The sons from his first

need to try our level best to help resolve those issues and complaints,” Salim says.

The experiences dealing with passengers has helped to build up his patience and ability to communicate with people of all ranks and character.

There were also many opportunities that came with the job; one of which was the opportunity to visit new places and learn about new cultures, and the chance to meet people of all walks of life, including business people.

Some of these encounters blossomed into business opportunities for Salim which prompted him to make his exit from the airline to venture into his own business.

STRIKING OUT

The lessons he had learned from his cabin crew days came in handy in his new endeavours as a businessman. “Most importantly, I remained truthful to myself in facing challenges in life and to take things in my stride,” he says.

Salim says he is thankful to the Good Samaritans for helping and providing him with the opportunity to strike out in his own business.

“Opportunity only comes once. When it knocks at your door, grab it!” he advises.

He was initially involved in customising and building petrol stations for leading oil companies such as Shell, Esso, BP and Caltex.

Salim says the deadline for the projects was usually very tight and the stations had to be completed within three months. These multinational oil companies also observed very strict safety and environment compliance standards.

The knowledge came in most useful for Salim when he ventured into property and construction projects under his outfit, Gapurna Sdn Bhd. He now focuses on integrated and sustainable properties and townships that adopt green development concepts.

Gapurna’s hallmark projects include Pi Sentral Garden City and 348 Sentral at KL Sentral.

Salim says both developments are geared towards the highest standards of Green Building Index as well as Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED).

The 55-year-old Salim is the current chairman of British American Tobacco, and a non-executive chairman of retail group, GCHRetail (M) Sdn Bhd. He is also a commission member of Malaysia Communications and Multimedia Commission, and chairman of Malaysia-Pakistan Business Council.

Salim is grooming his son, Imran Salim to take over the family’s business while he devotes more of his time to do charity. A philanthropist at heart, Salim has stayed devoted at helping the needy and the underprivileged for decades now.

He has adopted five homes for needy and special children, sponsored countless charity establishments, and is also a long-serving member of the Board of Trustees of Yayasan Pendidikan Cheras.

To Salim, it is important to ensure balance in one’s life and what better way than extending a helping hand to those in need.
A Leader Is Born.

Or Is It?

Are leaders born or made? Dr. K. Anders Ericsson’s 30-year research proves that only 5% of leadership is genetic.

It takes much more to become a great leader.

95% of leadership is learnt through deliberate leadership development. At Leaderonomics, we have mastered the science of developing world-class leaders through our custom-made action-learning and acceleration programmes.

Be A Leader.

We can help your organisation develop leaders. Write in to: people@leaderonomics.com or call 6012.343.7716

www.leaderonomics.com
By ROSHAN THIRAN
roshan.thiran@leaderonomics.com

HESE past few decades have witnessed numerous companies at the top of their industry get dispatched by unknown comers from nowhere. Motorola, the ruler of cellular telephones, missed the shift to digital and was displaced by Nokia, a Finnish company producing snow-tires and rubber boots a decade before they conquered cellular wireless. IBM, king of the computing age, completely missed the PC revolution and was overtaken by Microsoft, Dell and a host of small start-ups. At the same time, innovative companies were replaced by others who just copied them. Xerox invented the photocopiers but Canon took it to a whole new level with the colour copier. Ford and GM had automobile leadership for years until the Japanese upstarts came in with their high value economic cars and wiped them out. Why did all these companies get deluded?

WHY DO ORGANISATIONS FALL?
Companies that close themselves to the world and focus internally may miss the boat when change occurs. Organisations that stop looking outside and don’t see changes that are happening around them soon lose their way. It’s the same with us personally. When we are so busy with our work, our kids, our schedules and meet-ups, we sometimes miss important changes that are taking place around us. And these changes have a direct impact on our careers. I recall a friend’s mother working as a secretary in the 1970s who was great on the typewriters. She could really type words fast. But when computers debuted in the 80s, she was made redundant and replaced by a savior computer user, who couldn’t type as fast as her. But she was so focused on improving her ability to type fast, she completely missed the bigger picture—that typing fast on a typewriter would not be as important as learning to use the computer. Companies face the same dilemma. When they are so busy with their internal operations and processes, they lose sight of the world and are soon replaced by new companies. Just think of the products and services you use today. How many of these products are from companies that existed 60 years ago? We fly on AirAsia, buy furniture from IKEA, buy our computers from Dell, drink coffee at Starbucks, search for information via Google and get leadership training from Leaderonomics!

Having a company byline that includes “established 1850” is almost a liability today. Reputation counts for nothing anymore. Shell, has a home base in the UK and has a reputation as a producer of high quality petrol. Yet, in their UK home market, a supermarket, is the biggest petrol retailer.

SO, HOW DO THESE COMPANIES LOSE THEIR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS?
One reason may be “social proof”, a theory developed by psychologist Robert Cialdini. The larger a crowd of people at the scene of an accident, the more likely no one will help the victims. If everyone is passive, everyone thinks that there is no emergency. Cialdini’s theory claims, “If a lot of people are doing the same thing, they must know something we don’t.” Companies foolishly adopt this “follow-the-leader” attitude. Wang Laboratories, who established themselves as a major computer force in the 80s, decided to follow industry leader IBM and forgo the PC market. Today they do not exist. Another reason, assert business gurus Charan and Uemem, is that “a number of studies show that people are less likely to make optimal decisions after prolonged periods of success. Enron, Lucent, WorldCom—all had reached the mountaintop before they ran into trouble. Someone should have told them that most mountaineering accidents happen on the way down.”

Gary Hamel adds, “The seeds of failure are usually sown at the heights of greatness.” Once a company becomes an industry leader, defensive thinking seeps in and no one challenges the status quo. Many become insular and miss changes taking place, becoming irrelevant to their customers. Great leaders are forward looking and don’t bask in past glories or get caught up with internal issues. Bill Gates constantly says, “Microsoft is always two years away from failure.” Gates understands the need to be engaged with the world, its trends and market changes. Jim Collins, author of Good to Great, writes, “The key sign—the litmus test—is whether you begin to explain away the brutal facts rather than to confront the brutal facts head-on.” Great leaders force themselves to see from the outside, recognize the brutal facts facing them and make the necessary changes.

SO WHAT LESSONS CAN WE DRAW FOR OUR CAREERS AND LIVES?
Firstly, change happens all the time. It is not something to be paranoid about. What we need to be vigilant about is to always be observing what is happening from the outside. And it’s not just about changes happening in your industry but changes everywhere, as well. Book retailers never quite understood how Amazon.com suddenly appeared and wiped them out as they were not tracking the internet revolution.

Secondly, we need to be wary when we start becoming so internally focused and consumed by tasks and to-do lists. Great leaders learn to reflect and take time off to notice the “little things” that are walking into their lives. There are small little signs everywhere telling us about the next wave that will hit our careers and lives. Are we seeing those little signs? Finally, watch out when you become defensive and reactionary. This is the starting point of your fall from the mountaintop. Great leaders that stay at the top for long periods are usually ones who have humbled themselves to believe that learning and growth never ends.

So, what do we need to do? We can start by taking short little breaks to take ourselves from the “busy-ness” of our lives to “observe the world”. Just spending 30 minutes a day to open our eyes by taking some time to be still and mindful of the changes that are taking place, can significantly enhance your career. There are many little “changes” walking into your industry and workplace and if you are too busy working hard to improve your “typing skills” inside your organisation, the “changes” may just consume you and make you an irrelevant dinosaur.

Open your eyes. Why do organisations fall? Companies that close themselves to the world and focus internally may miss the boat when change occurs. Organisations that stop looking outside and don’t see changes that are happening around them soon lose their way. It’s the same with us personally.

OPEN YOUR EYES
KEEPING RELEVANT KEY TO CAREER GROWTH

The INTEL STORY

INTEL is a great example of a company reinventing itself through “opening their eyes”. Andrew Grove writes in “Only the Paranoid Survive” about how Intel faced competition from Korea and Japan, which turned its memory chips into cheap commodities. Intel quickly decided to exit the memory business entirely and became a maker of microprocessors. Grove came to this insight when he looked outside Intel and asked himself, “If I get kicked out and the board brought in a new CEO, what would the new CEO do?” The answer was clear: Focus on our strengths – high tech, and get out. Why did all these companies get deluded?

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TOP 10 WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS LEVELS AT WORK

1. PLAN AHEAD!
Always ensure that you manage your time and have sufficient time for all your tasks. When facing a pressing deadline, a quick trick is for you to come to the office 30 minutes earlier, come back from lunch 15 minutes earlier, and leave for home 30 minutes later. This automatically adds 1 hour and 15 minutes to your work day!

2. SOOTHE YOUR SENSES WITH MUSIC
It has been scientifically proven that listening to calming music has a positive effect on every aspect of your being, e.g. emotional, mental, spiritual. Classical music, especially Bach and Mozart, or any “lite” radio station, can be very relaxing. Just keep the volume down or use a headset.

3. CALL A FRIEND
Sometimes, all we need is a listening ear. Seek out the help of a good friend or close loved one when you need to de-stress. Often, just getting something off your chest will help you calm down and keep things in perspective. And ultimately, the right perspectives help keep your stress levels in check!

4. RECOGNISE HOW OFTEN THINGS GO RIGHT
As humans, we naturally tend to focus on the negative when things go wrong, but don’t give the same acknowledgement when things actually go our way. We need to recognise that things usually go right far more often than we realise. By keeping this mind set at work, your stress levels are guaranteed to decrease.

5. DON’T PROCRASTINATE!
Imagine how less stressful your work life would be if you were constantly on top of all your tasks, instead of leaving it all until the last minute. Not only would this reduce stress, but it could even create free time for you. If you recognise that you are honestly pacing yourself and working as hard as you can but can’t seem to complete all your tasks, talk to your boss about lightening your load.

6. GIVE YOUR EYES AND MIND A BREAK
After long hours of staring at the computer screen or dealing with paperwork, your eyes and mind could use a break with photos, artwork, or a plant. At regular intervals, remember to also stretch your eyes by focusing on a distant object. This creates some well needed visual relief.

7. DECORATE YOUR WORK SPACE WITH ENCOURAGING ITEMS
Keep a family photo, inspirational quotes, or a reminder of your next vacation somewhere visible. Motivational thoughts perk you up and are great for reviving up your spirits.

8. KEEP YOUR DESK CLUTTER FREE
The source of many types of stress comes from a feeling of being out of control or being overwhelmed, and clutter causes distractions which add to stress. When you can’t find that report you need, your stress level can skyrocket. By having an organised desk, you get a sense that there is some order in all the chaos.

9. TAKE A BREAK!
Too much work should never be an excuse to not take a break! Humans were created with limits, and reaching those limits causes stress. Give yourself the time, especially when you are stressed, to relax, even for 5 minutes. Run to the bathroom, make a hot drink, go for a quick walk, then get back to more productive work.

10. STRETCH!
For many of us, our work days are literally spent with long periods of sitting at a desk or being stuck in a restricted work area. This lack of movement builds up tension in your muscles and can aggravate a stressful situation. Stretching is the best way of releasing any tension that has accumulated. Lift your legs up and stretch them for 30 seconds or simply just reach for the sky.

To view the full video, visit www.leaderonomics.tv/top10
WIN RM10K
A DAY IN THE LIFE
COMPETITION IS BACK!

INTRODUCING
THE DAY IN THE LIFE
VIDEO COMPETITION

A Day in the Life Video Competition is designed to do just that and you can be a part of it. It’s your chance to be a mini documentary filmmaker and writer! All you need is to put your creative juices together and create an exciting and educational video about A Day in the Life of a working person and do a short write-up on that occupation. The careers can range from a businessman, engineer, celebrity singer, rubber tapper, accountant or any other careers out there. To join the competition, just shoot a 3 to 5 minute video that shows what a person does in the course of a day in their job. The video can be created using any form of equipment including mobile phones. You can work on the video alone or with friends (up to 3 persons in a team). Together with the video, write a short 800 word article about the occupation and person and send your entry to media@leaderonomics.com.

The competition period is 15 August, 2012 until 15 January, 2013. The Grand Prize will be a cash prize of RM10,000 with goodies, RM5,000 cash for Second Prize and 3 x RM1,000 cash prizes for 3 third place winners. Last year’s winner was Clement Chiang with his video entry “A Day in the Life of a Number Plate Maker”. A Day in the Life competition is organised by Leaderonomics in partnership with TalentCorp.

DID YOU KNOW
Women, Kids & Careers
Snapshot: Europe

6 million women who are between ages 25 to 49 are being forced to stay at home or take a part time job due to the lack of sufficient childcare. Women generally graduate with better grades and make up over half of all graduates at 58.9%. Within Europe on average, women make up more than half of the working population whereby in Sweden and Denmark over 70% and Germany below 60%. The Gross Domestic Product of a country increases when more women work. The rise was calculated at 21% in Italy. According to a Europe-wide study, children who come from a background of working parents have fewer problems at school as they usually get better grades especially in languages and in science.

Women generally graduate with better grades and make up over half of all graduates at 58.9%.
'NO STRANGERS TO THE CAMERA
Perhaps in a "news connection",
or maybe after 30 videos on YouTube, you’ve become a "superfan.
Good working climbers - they uproot and pull down these
hillsides recording at home and posted to their YouTube.
And you, too, have become a "familiar face" for the
YouTubers you follow.
Perhaps you’ve become a "knight in shining armor"
for all the viewers to whom you’re a "loyal friend".
Perhaps you’ve become a "virtual friend" for
all the viewers who are now a "virtual part of your life".
Perhaps you’ve become a "virtual friend" for
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LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM YODA

By Benjamin Lichtenwalner

perhaps the most iconic mentoring leader on the silver screen, Yoda is an excellent example of great leadership. Not only is Yoda humble in character and speech, hehypthesizes what a great servant leader in the modern workplace would look like.

1. you are not the hero, but your padawan may be

Yes, Yoda is cool. However, he’s not the popular hero of the series. Instead, he is the driving force behind the story. In Star Wars: Episode II – Attack of the Clones, Yoda and Obi-Wan Kenobi. Similarly, great leaders focus on building the future. They build their experience, knowledge and wisdom into others. It brings comfort to the best leaders to see their padawan (mentees) succeed.

2. you may be misunderstood


3. if you’re not careful, your organisation may produce a darth vader

Yoda expresses concern about young Anakin Skywalker. Sure enough, the worst fears come true and Anakin becomes the evil Darth Vader. Great leaders have a great deal of accountability when mentoring and raising the future generations of their organisation. Use care when choosing, mentoring and promoting.

4. you live in the muck

Yoda lived on the Dagobah System when Luke Skywalker finds him. This swamp world is full of mud, muck, grime and filth. The home of Yoda is a tiny mud hut, Luke Skywalker’s home, great leaders do not live in an ivory tower. To the contrary, they invest a lot of time in the thick of things. In serving their stakeholders, great leaders are not afraid to get their hands dirty.

5. your work is never done

Yoda was more than 900 years old when he met his last student (Luke). In fact, even after he died, Yoda continued to coach and mentor the younger Skywalker. Great leaders understand that work is never done. Work-life alignment is important, but the work is unending.

6. sometimes, you have to kick evil’s butt yourself

Ancient by human terms, but still spirited and full of Force, Yoda knows when he must pick up the light saber and do battle himself. Great leaders focus on building others to extend the culture of leadership and the positive influence of their organisation. However, when necessary, leaders who serve are not afraid to join in the hand-to-hand combat of their organisation.

7. it’s up to you

Like Yoda, great leaders understand the future is up to them. If Yoda had not gone into exile on Dagobah, patiently waiting for the right opportunity, all could have been lost. Yoda was the last hope for the people against the Dark Force. He had to train Luke to conquer the Emperor and Darth Vader. Similarly, it’s up to you, as a great leader, to conquer the toxic leadership that so many organisations are fraught with today.

Ben Lichtenwalner is the founder of ModernServantLeader.com, where he promotes Servant Leadership Awareness, Adoption and Action.

Power Jobs at Power Giant

These are the Hot Jobs that we have uncovered for you this week. In our special column on hot ‘power’ jobs, to apply for any of these roles, email recruitment@malakoff.com.my or send your postal application to Malakoff offices.

Malakoff, a premier global power and water company, has numerous new projects at hand. With this expansion of growth comes the diversified range of activities, Malakoff is looking for highly talented individuals to take up the challenge and work towards the continued expansion of the business.

Malakoff is also noted as a company that constantly develops the skills and expertise of their employees. Malakoff invests deeply in talents that join their organisation, and offers above market benefits.

EXEC: DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

A special entry level management training programme for fresh graduates with a degree in Accounting/Finance or Law/HR. This programme exposes candidates to the range of Malakoff’s businesses and subsidiaries with structured training modules in functional, technical and on-the-job, leadership skills, demonstrating positivity, effective communication and result orientation.

SR. EXECUTIVE/ MANAGER, LEGAL

This role supports the Head of Legal and the legal team in structuring, drafting and negotiating legal documentation (including commercial agreements) and having with external lawyers to ensure legal documentation is of high quality and accurate. This role also enables you to advise management on all legal matters, ensuring compliance with all applicable commercial, statutory and other legal requirements. If you have a degree in Law or equivalent with at least 3-5 years of working experience in handling corporate legal matters and are a team player with high integrity, this may be the role for you.

PROCUREMENT MANAGER

This is a team leadership role for the Procurement and warehouse teams, supporting the Operations & Maintenance activities of the power plants in Ipoh, Klang, Penang, Johor. You will control the procurement of materials and services obtaining competitive commercial terms, whilst executing, supervising and monitoring the purchase and warehouse activities, policy & procedures. You will play a leading role, by example and encouragement, in promoting a high integrity environment when dealing with internal & external parties and solve recurring and outstanding problems. If you possess a Diploma in Engineering or equivalent from an accredited university with a minimum of 5 years of relevant working experience and can work independently, this would be a great role for you. Knowledge in MRP or SAP or qualifications in Supply Chain/Logistics would be an added advantage.

FINANCIAL MODELER

This role requires you to assist with the preparations of all financial models and projections whilst working closely with the project team and legal department in reviewing project information and financing documents. You will provide interpretation of modeling results, make new and challenge existing business assumptions and reflect these in financial models. If you possess a Bachelor’s Degree in Finance or Accounting or equivalent with 2 years of relevant working experience, with excellent organisational, communications, interpersonal and analytical skills with advanced proficiency in Microsoft Excel, you will love this role.

Application closing date: 14 September, 2012.

By Shyvonne Lee

shyvonne.lee@leaderonomics.com

Malakoff is a Premier Global Power and Water Company with a long-standing record for excellence and integrity. The company is committed to the continued progress and prosperity of Malaysia and operates in five countries, namely Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, Oman and the Philippines.
By JOHAN MAHMOOD

WHILE many turn to books by business leaders such as Jack Welch, I would contend there are insights on leadership to be gained from Star Wars. Yes, you can learn a ton about leadership watching Star Wars movies. Maybe it’s high time to throw away those thick, boring leadership books and go watch movies. Having spent hours on this exhaustive research, allow me to share some of the insights in “using the force” for leadership. It starts by recognising that Jedi are an advanced organisation, particularly in the space of leadership development and leadership selection.

JEDI LEVERAGE ON EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

In line with current thinking on leadership development in the HR fraternity, Jedi are very much on the ratio of 70:20:10 for experiential learning, mentorship and formal training. The emphasis on experiential learning is epitomised by Yoda’s wise words: “Do or do not, there is no try.” It is reinforced by the Jedi Council, being the highest body in the Jedi organisation, taking the responsibility for identifying developmental missions for young Jedi padawans (high potential trainees). Such as in Episode 1, Phantom Menace when the Jedi Council sends young Obi-Wan Kenobi on a diplomatic mission to Naboo, with Jedi Master Qui Gon. Development of high potential leaders was conducted by providing a diversity of experiential learning opportunities, whether diplomatic, combat or exploration missions. However, to support the young Jedi through difficult and stretched experiential learnings, the Jedi institutionalised mentorships. Successful mentorship was made a key pre-requisite for career advancement. A Jedi Knight would not be able to become a Jedi Master until his padawan or or successful graduate to become a Jedi Knight. The Star Wars saga reflects many close mentor-member relationships, such as between Obi-Wan Kenobi and Luke Skywalker. This was the case for both the good guys and the dark side. As Yoda explains to the Sith (bad guys), “Always two there are, no more, no less, a master and an apprentice.” The Jedi also conducted formal training, especially by mentors for members, whether in the ways of the force, lightsaber training and diplomacy. Such training was typically linked to the mission at hand and thus, provided a strong linkage to planning training to coincide with relevant experiential learning missions. Training is nevertheless important as shown in Empire Strikes Back when Luke Skywalker rushed to save his friends and faced Darth Vader prematurely before he had completed his training with Yoda and suffered the consequences. Successful leadership development therefore requires a holistic and coordinated combination of experiential learning, mentorship and training.

LEADERSHIP SELECTION

In the course of the Star Wars movies, leaders are not only developed but are ultimately chosen. In the area of leadership selection, Star Wars offers 4 lessons, namely in succession planning, open sourcing, assessment of potential, and restoration of potential. Interestingly, it is the Dark Side that is pretty structured in succession planning. They even have motivational recruitment pitches, such as when Darth Vader invites Luke Skywalker to be his understudy, “Join me and together we will rule the galaxy.” Sith leaders identify their heir apparent, for example, earlier on Chancellor Palpatine had identified Count Dooku. However, identified successors cannot rest on their laurels and are subject to contest, as is the case when Anakin Skywalker displaces (kills) Count Dooku thus replacing him as the identified successor. The idea of competition to be successor helps ensure the fittest emerge. Beyond that, to optimise on leadership selection, a key part is to adopt open sourcing, i.e. being open to recruit beyond one’s organisation. This approach also helps uncover hidden gems. In Star Wars, Han Solo is a good example, being introduced as a mercenary and rogue, he is recruited in and eventually emerges as a key leader for the Rebel Alliance. In line with the practice of some leading global organisations like Shell, a talent is not solely assessed on actual past performance but also on future potential. In the Phantom Menace, a young Anakin Skywalker is brought before the Jedi Council and they conclude “the force is strong with this one”, as an indicator of his future potential strength. Where emerging talents are judged to not have the potential to emerge as Jedi leaders, there are career transition mechanisms to transfer such talents for service in the agricultural, medical or exploration corps. At the end of the day, developing and managing high potential talents and selecting leaders is not easy and cannot be expected to be a smooth journey. The six Star Wars films taken as a whole can be viewed as the story of the fall of Anakin Skywalker / Darth Vader. It is the story of a very high potential talent (the force is strong with this one), who makes a mistake (is seduced by the Dark Side) and becomes a leader. Such training was typified by Anakin Skywalker’s militaristic mentorship with Jedi Master Qui Gon. Development of high potential leaders was conducted by providing a diversity of experiential learning opportunities, whether diplomatic, combat or exploration missions.

APPLYING INSIGHTS

There are clearly insights on leadership from Star Wars. However, I am very confident that no one reading this will write an office memo to their bosses to implement initiatives based on the experience of Star Wars. Unfortunately, there is no shortage of those who would recommend adopting something directly from the Star Wars playbook for their respective companies. But is Star Wars any more alien than say a large global multinational when compared to your respective company? By all means learn from the best, and gain insights from the experience of others or from fiction. The key is how to distil the substance of such insights and apply it in a way relevant and applicable to your organisational context. How? Well, begin by searching within yourself and be guided by the force.

Johan Merican is CEO of TalentCorp. He hopes TalentCorp can be as successful as the Jedi Council in developing and growing talent in Malaysia. To send feedback to Johan on his article, email mystarjob@leaderonomics.com.

By EVA CHRISTODOULOU

It takes much strength and courage to exit a known situation and dive into the unknown. However, only those that are courageous enough to risk a bit are the ones that succeed in life. Whether it is about reallocating, whether it is about leaving a well-paying job to start something on your own, or whether it is changing a career path mid-career, these all require a substantial level of risk to be taken, and they are all decisions accompanied by much anxiety. Sometimes in life it is worth diving into the unknown and risking to lose a bit perhaps in the short term, in order to gain something much bigger and rewarding in the longer term. All the big leaders of the world that succeeded went against the current, against society’s expectations, and they managed to achieve something groundbreaking, something that changed the world’s viewpoint and fundamentals. Just make sure that you plan your moves carefully and calculate all potential development, and go ahead with what you always wanted to do, or what you are thinking might be a brilliant idea. If not, you will always keep wondering what could have happened if you had actually taken that leap.

Eva has learnt to leap many times in her life and has reaped the rewards of her risk taking. She hopes to see many more “leapers” in Malaysia.
By Lily Cheah
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Susan Boyle stepped onto the stage of Britain’s Got Talent in a pretty but dull coloured dress that did nothing for her image. Her hair was rather dishevelled in colour and shape, and she struggled to articulate herself, then swung her hips defiantly, insisting “and that’s just one side of me!”

Here was a lady who could easily blend into a crowd, but aspired to be like multi-award winning singer Elaine Paige. Really? But Boyle went on to prove everyone wrong, putting to shame people’s common tendency to judge a person’s ability by her or his appearance.

But, does that mean that image doesn’t matter and “it’s what’s on the inside that count?”

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Well done to Boyle for wooing the crowd over, but her case demonstrated a point. First impressions are indeed powerful, and they can only be made once. Image is the general impression that we give to the public, and the image we project in the first 20-30 seconds will be etched into people’s minds. It forms the default perception of us, unless a subsequent compelling impression can replace it. Boyle’s case is a resounding success story. Her rendition of “I Dreamed a Dream” was so flawless that it managed to vanquish all negative notions the public formed of her in the first moments; the audience was simply in awe.

PERSONAL BRANDING

The aim is this: our image should project our values, attributes and abilities from the get go, and this requires care and attention. It’s not about being pedantic, but strategic. According to research at Emory University in Atlanta, image can make or break careers. That promotion is about being pedantic, but strategic.

However, in the working world we don’t always have the luxury of time (nor mercy) to start off on the wrong footing, then rely on something to “save and redeem” us later. A meeting with a prospective client could only last 10 minutes. Every moment should be used to project an image of credibility and to build trust. Job seekers may have great things to say in an interview, but they must also say it well. When a recruiter has to choose between two people with the same skillset, but one projects a more polished image than the other, the choice is easy.

There is also an unconscious relief in observing an internal-external harmony. Susan Boyle wasn’t left to her “own devices” after her appearance on Britain’s Got Talent. After wowing the world with her voice, she received an image makeover. Interestingly enough, the public embraced her new appearance, one that is as polished as her voice.

At the end of the day, it is about believing that you have something great to say, then positioning your image to effectively communicate to the target audience. It’s not about creating an artificial image, but bearing in mind that people’s perception of you has crucial connections as to how much they would believe in what you say. We say “don’t judge a book by its cover”, but the cover does determine whether we bother opening the book or not in the first place!

■ Lily Cheah and the Image Matters team will be exploring all image related matters, including body language, dressing and grooming, in the hope of helping you be more effective in your interactions with others.
BE WISE, THINK TWICE
CONSIDERATIONS IN POST-SPM STUDIES

By LOUIS YAP JUN HAO
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The easiest way to start this article would be by introducing myself. So that I shall do! My name is Louis Yap, and I was born and bred in Petaling Jaya. I took the Foundation in Arts course at HELP University College, and pursued Psychology at the same institution. Although I studied in Sekolah Sri Cempaka from preschool to Form Five, I can assure you that my family is not as well off as you might imagine. Growing up among peers who seemed to be fed with golden cornflakes (pun intended), it seemed as if being rich was what got you everything, and that education was the key to getting rich. My paradigm has since changed; education is important, no matter what you do.

My dad had chosen an IT course at the Asian Pacific Institute of Information Technology (APIIT) for me. Having already respected his wishes when it came to choosing my stream in Form Four, it was time I made my own decision. Instead of starting college in January like most of my peers, I chose to take three months off to weigh up my options. I took up a part-time job, and it was a very worthwhile experience; it taught me responsibility, accountability, and most importantly, people skills. I met all kinds of people – from typical, nonchalant locals to the most eccentric foreigners – and adapted to each one differently. In retrospect, those interpersonal skills served me well when I finally began college, for I met a myriad of personalities. My interests ranged from event management and mass communications to Psychology, which had recently caught my attention. I also remember attending the FACON education fair in Putra World Trade Centre, where I collected brochures from various universities regarding their pre-university programmes. The one that finally caught my attention was the Foundation in Arts course at HELP University College. After speaking to their counsellor and much thought, I decided that it was the most suitable course for me. The foundation course seemed just right, as marks were allocated for assignments and presentations, which meant that non-academic skills were taken seriously as well. The pros included the acquisition of crucial work ethics, team coordination skills, and the ability to speak in public with confidence. The cons were that you had to take all your work seriously, and procrastination was Public Enemy Number one. After all, even if you do really well during your examinations, a strong final grade cannot be achieved without a similar performance in one's assignments. The main reason I settled on Foundation in Arts at HELP was the variety of subjects offered. From the usual business subjects like Economics and Accounts and Marketing, to subjects such as Public Relations and Computer Programming, it was comforting to know that I could try out these subjects as electives, as I did not know what I wanted to do just yet.

What I liked best about my programme was how easy it was to meet people. It really surprised me how everyone was so easy going, and easy to get along with. The Foundation programme also organised interesting activities – as a student in this course, it is compulsory to attend a fun Leadership Camp! I would tell those considering this course to think it through carefully. If you are more familiar with the secondary school system, this will take some getting used to. Another thing to consider is its international reputation – as a local course, it is not as internationally recognised as A-Levels or the International Baccalaureate programme. So if you plan on furthering your studies overseas after your pre-university, those two would be more appropriate. Another pre-university option would be Monash University Foundation Year, which equates to automatic entry should you decide to enter Monash University.

Another thing I would tell SPM-leavers or soon-to-be SPM-takers, is to keep in touch with your friends, and more importantly, value the time you have left with them, as you will be parting ways very soon, and time and distance takes their toll on any relationship. With that, I bid you adieu, and hope my writing has benefited you in some way or another.

Louis Yap Jun Hao pursued Psychology at HELP University College and is currently working at The Star as a graduate trainee.

By TERRY SMALL

IT’s never too early to save your brain! Many neuroscientists believe that age-related damage in your brain begins the day you are born. So when you start worrying about loss of brainpower with age? Right now! Think about it. If your brain goes...what’s left? You have a lot depending upon and invested in your mental performance and your memories. If you haven’t been, it’s time to start! Brain disease, such as Alzheimer’s, doesn’t begin the day it is diagnosed. It starts much, much earlier. Research seems to point a finger at free radical damage: damage which starts early with small, undetectable hits on brain cells. Your brain is very faddy, which makes it vulnerable to free radical attack. Such attacks can lead to neurological death and faulty brain circuity.

Antioxidants can help. Lots of research shows that animals fed anti-oxidants are healthier, mentally sharper and live longer. One study showed that pregnant mice fed antioxidants gave birth to offspring that aged more slowly. Sounds good to me!

So, what are the best brain-saving fruits and vegetables? Number one is its virtual powerhouse of antioxidants for your brain the better it will perform. Your brain is very fatty tissue; it is a virtual powerhouse of antioxidants for your brain! It’s cheap. It tastes good. It’s in every supermarket. And it’s probably not part of your daily diet (add it fast!). What is it?

PRUNES

One single prune has an antioxidant capacity (ORAC) of 5770. Double #2 on the list! In our house, we now have a container of prunes (beside the fruit bowl) in plain view. One a day. What could be easier? Remember: the earlier you care for your brain the better it will perform at any age.

By Terry Small is a brain researcher who believes that everyone is a genius.

IS YOUR BRAIN DYING?

By Terry Small is a brain researcher who believes that everyone is a genius.
DEAR SONIA,

Life isn’t fair. Learning to accept this is the first step towards true happiness. Fortune cookie advice aside, don’t get hung up with you a victim complex, get over it and get on with life!”

Academic qualifications naturally affect entry level hence starting pay. However, even if you may start off at a lower level, there are many career paths where your progress will not be impeded by not having a degree. You need to be more preoccupied with starting salaries but focus on how far a career can progress and grow. A simplistic example is how a toll booth operator earns more than a bricklayer starting but over time, the bricklayer will progress and accumulate skills for construction and will probably overtake the toll booth operator in having more income over time. Do look out for opportunities for lifelong learning and there are also areas for professional certification which do not require a degree, such as in ICT or accounting. This provides another avenue to leapfrog those with a degree. I have met a good number of people who have climbed the corporate ladder without a degree. Maintain your big ambitions but be willing to invest the time and effort in building your career.

JOHAN

DEAR SONIA,

The unfortunate truth in this part of the world that we live in is that many traditional employers still find security in certificates and scroll. That said, it is not the end of your career. Many people are doing great even without a degree, and some without even completing high school. Yes, you may have to take a slightly different path than most graduates, but it’s no cut-and-dried as long as you are willing to work hard. I believe there are two key options you can consider. But more important than the options you have, is a fundamental question you should answer first. “What am I good at?” As simple as a question it may sound, it sometimes can be one of the hardest questions to answer!

Having asked that question myself, here are a few questions that can aid you in discovering your gifts:

1) What do I think I am good at?
2) What do my friends think I am good at?
3) What have I done previously and often received praises for?
4) What do my friends often come to me for help for?

JoHAN

You may or may not have won awards for this strength of yours, but it’s what’s unique to you. And working in your areas of strengths can be very advantageous to you.

Once you have discovered that, there are many options for you, but I would like to share more on two of them.

1) Don’t give up on climbing the career ladder, that’s your dream.

If you know your strengths and where you are heading, try to get a foot into a company that you can potentially stay and work your way up. Whatever position you may be hired into, you will work really hard and show that you are a class above the rest of your peers. Get noticed – for good things, of course. Once you are noticed, it will make it easier for you to ask for promotions and transfers into areas of your preference. If you find that your boss is holding back your career growth due to lack of paper qualification, then you know, this is not the right company. Sometimes, the boss may not be right for you. Alternatively, you can work and save up enough to complete the degree.

2) Be your own boss!

Entrepreneurship is no longer a stranger to degree-less people like Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Henry Royce, James Cameron, Milton Hershey, and so many more! Remember also, as your friends have already considered you to be a class above the rest, it is OK to start small before you hit your big break! Don’t make the mistake of wanting to hit jackpot the minute you start. There are many precious lessons to learn along the way that can be pivotal to your success!

All the best!

Elisa
Coming up in next Saturday’s issue . . .

Learn what a career in sports actually entails, through our special feature on Malaysia’s Olympic heroes.

Also next week

See what Alliance Bank offers its high-potential employees in “Company & Talent”

Is it possible to find balance between work and life? Read more in our “Work-Life Balance” column by inspiring book author Zaid Mohamad

Get advice and tips on how to write a resume in “How To”