PLAY TO WIN

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What advice can we take from football coaching?
Get insight into Jose Mourinho’s leadership style Pages 4-5
Aliuk Lee Chong Wei and Pandelela Rinong Pamg have extremely different personalities. But as I was interviewing Chong Wei and Pandelela on “The Leaderonomics Show”, I saw a distinct similarity between the pair. Yes, both were winners at the London Olympics but there was also a character trait they both shared. They hated to lose and loved to win.

Throughout my discussion with Chong Wei, he continually referenced his desire to win. In fact, he started the discussion by lamenting the fact that he was extremely upset to lose the Olympic final to Lin Dan by 2 points. He hates to lose. He went on to tell me how even in training, he would not be pleased if he was losing by a few points in a “fun” match and would somehow muster his whole being to ensure he won. Deep inside Chong Wei is a strong desire to win. Even as a youngster, when he had better players ahead of him, his burning desire was to beat them.

Pandelela had similar stories. She told me that as a young girl she liked to “show-off” to her friends. Diving gave her a platform to show-off. But as she got into the sport, her competitive spirit took over. She wanted to keep winning. She trained so hard because she hated losing and wanted to win badly.

There is a saying by Confucius “The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential... these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence.”

Both Chong Wei and Pandelela clearly had the desire to win ingrained in them. But it was more than that. Margaret Thatcher, former UK Prime Minister notes that, “The desire to win is born in most of us. The will to win is a matter of training.” She is spot on.

Most of us have the desire to win in our lives and in our careers. But do we have the “will to win”? The will to win will enable us to conquer the tough challenges that are thrown our way. Chong Wei and Pandelela had to overcome numerous hurdles including extremely gruelling training sessions. Do you have the will to win? Do you play to win? This issue has an exclusive feature on Chong Wei and Pandelela on pages 8 and 9. George Kohlrieser joins our growing list of global columnists in this week’s “Consulting Corner” where he teaches us how to play to win when we deal with conflicts.

We also bring you our other great columns which give you insights on how you can keep winning and growing. Remember, your career success begins with your inner desire and will to win.

To watch my full interview with Chong Wei and Pandelela and other great videos, check out youtube.com/leaderonomicsmedia.

Warmly Yours
Roshan Thiran
Editor, myStarjob & CEO, Leaderonomics

Read what our career nomers Johan and Bani, advise Johari, who is wondering how to make the most of his recently acquired MBA

Learn how to apply hostage negotiation tactics from George Kohlrieser, in order to avoid being trapped by your job

Zaid Mohamad reflects on what it takes to strike a balance between family and career

Eva Christodoulou reviews the development opportunities Alliance Bank offers to its people

Eva Christodoulou looks at how our Olympic heroes push their limits day in day out to reach new heights in sports. Find out what it takes to lead a career in sports

Learn how to apply hostage negotiation tactics from George Kohlrieser, in order to avoid being trapped by your job

Know more about this career guide and where to find it at

myStarjob, Saturday 15 September 2012

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A DAY IN THE LIFE

CARE TO DARE!
By ANGIE NG
angie@thestar.com.my

First job as a reconditioned car supplier when he was just a junior college student in England has unleashed the entrepreneurial spirit in Datuk Michael Tio and offered him invaluable insight on what it takes to build up a successful business.

The chief executive officer and managing director of PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd was still studying in Macclesfield College in England back in 1986 when he was “employed” by his used car dealer father in Klang to source and ship recond cars from the UK to Malaysia for him.

Recalling how his first job came about, Tio says his father decided to send him to pursue his studies in England so that the junior Tio could source for used luxury cars to be shipped back to him.

He started out with one to two cars a month. “It was quite a struggle in the beginning. I had to scan through magazines and newspapers to look for used cars. I’m pretty sure I was one of the most well travelled Malaysian students in England back then, having been to many nooks and corners to source for used cars,” Tio shares with myStarjob.

He had to travel a few hundred miles just to view and test a car. Once a car was verified road-worthy and paid for, Tio had to drive some 500 km from Manchester to the place where they did container stuffing in London to ship it back to Malaysia.

And then it was hopping on the train for his trip back to Manchester. Because of the time difference, phone calls to his father were usually made in the wee mornings of around 3am to 4am, and then it was off to lectures.

“My homework was piling up higher by the day, and it was quite a task having to juggle my studies and my job at the same time,” Tio concedes.

There was once when he was too tired and dozed off during one of his trips. By the time he came around, he was right behind a big trailer and was thankful that nothing untoward happened to him on that fateful moment.

Since then, he would bring along at least a college mate to keep him company but he had to fork out £50 to pay for them for each round trip. Tio’s first car was a Mercedes-Benz 230E which he bought from an old couple. It was quite a hilarious experience because the car was an automatic version which he knew next to nothing about. “They invited me to their house for tea to find out why I wanted to buy the car. I told them it was for my father. Finally when I got into the car, I wound down the window and asked them: Excuse me, how do you drive this car? We all had a good laugh!” Tio recalls with amusement.

PROFOUND LESSONS

After his experience with his first car for which he pocketed a profit of some RM5,000, the path was smoother for him and he started growing his part-time job into a business. By the 10th year into his recond car business, Tio was exporting 20 to 30 cars a month which raked in some RM50,000 a month.

Before he was entrusted with supplying recond cars by his father, Tio was juggling with a few part time jobs to earn his keep. He helped out the couple whom he was staying with during his first year in England with their grocery business; baby sat for a Filipino couple; worked in a Korean restaurant and a Chinese takeaway shop in the weekends; and served drinks in a pub.

For all his hard work, Tio was making enough money within his first year in England to pay for his studies and was also able to return the £600 his mother gave him for his expenses.

Despite having to juggle multiple jobs at the same time, Tio breezed through his studies - Diploma in Business Studies, Degree in Accounting, and Masters in Multinational Accounting and Financial Management - within six years after he arrived in England.

He stayed back in Wembley for another four years to run his used car business. After his wedding in 1995, his parents asked Tio to return home to take over the running of the family’s logistics business, PKT Logistics.

He poured his heart and soul to the company’s business and restructured the company. Under his reign, PKT Logistics grew by leaps and bounds; its revenue climbed from RM3mil in 1995 to RM370mil last year.

“Our target for this year is RM600mil, and the next goal post is to clock in RM1bil by 2015,” he shares of his company’s plans.

Tio believes his education has helped hone his business skills. “To be a successful businessman you need a fair understanding of accounting and finance,” he says.

And what is his leadership style? Be approachable, show leadership by example, and be respectful of others. “It is very important to walk the talk and make sure you follow through your plans and directions to turn them into reality. When your people see it happen, they will believe in you and align their mindset towards your idea and direction,” he says.

UNCONVENTIONAL CEO

Today, the self-professed “Facebook fulltime” CEO is every bit the modern chief executive who openly embraces social media. Instead of worrying that staff will abuse their access to social media and shirk their duties, Tio makes it mandatory for every staff “to Facebook” while on their job. Irrespective of their position whether they are senior management or lower ranking staff such as security guards and drivers, every staff has their own FB account and password to log in to the company’s communication channel.

“PKT Logistics is a Facebook-compulsory company and our Facebook page is the single communication platform for all of us. I told my staff I can only be contacted through Facebook. They have to private message me and attach their files here.

“It has proven to be very effective so far; our turnaround time for information is 30 seconds. When you make Facebook interesting, people will read and embrace the information,” Tio shares his enthusiasm.

And what is the most challenging issue he faces at the helm of his company? “The most challenging issue is to get my people motivated to work for me. I believe the modern CEO should focus on motivation, give direction, and be very clear where he wants the company to go.

“I share with the staff on the past, the present and what lies ahead. I use Facebook to motivate them to move in the same direction. When you are at the top, those at the bottom may not understand your perspective, so it is important to keep engaging with them.

“I believe if I treat my staff well, they will not cheat or mismanage the business. Likewise, I want my managers to treat their lower staff well. In turn, they will take care of our business,” he says. According to Tio, young people should be prepared to face hardship when starting out in their career before enjoying the fruit of their labour.

Quoting the Malay proverb of “Susah susah dahulu, senang senang kemudian,” Tio believes that without hard work, one’s success will not be long lasting, “as the secret to long-lasting success is a strong foundation.”

“Do not be impatient as there is no such thing as instant success. Put in the right effort and keep working at it. Your time to reap the reward will come,” are his words of wisdom.

To watch our interview with Datuk Michael Tio, visit leaderonomics.my/myfirstjob.

FACEBOOK FRIENDLY CEO

TRUST AND NETWORKING WAY TO BUILD EMPLOYEE LOYALTY AND COMPANY’S SUCCESS

Datuk Michael Tio, a green proponent, proudly unveils his pineapple farm.
by Roshan Thiran
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SUCCESS in your career is akin to success in sports. When you think of successful careers in football, one name comes to mind – José Mário dos Santos Félix Mourinho. Mourinho has built four high performance teams in the past few years. The moment he takes over the team, they quickly gel, start to perform and win trophies. How does Mourinho do it?

When Mourinho was asked what the secret to his success was, he humbly responded: “I pray a lot. I believe in God. I try to be a good man so he can have a bit of time to give me a hand when I need it.”

Mourinho may pray a lot but so do other coaches. Mourinho is probably the only coach who has a PhD, having earned it from Lisbon’s Technical University. But praying or having a PhD does not explain how he seamlessly succeeds.

Dr. Mourinho, with his trademark Armani suit, is paradoxical. Many hate him. Women seem to love him. His former arch-rivals Sir Alex Ferguson moaned his departure. And in a recent AOS survey, Mourinho topped a poll of celebrities that most office workers would want as their boss. He won the poll convincingly beating Richard Branson, Barack Obama, Oprah Winfrey, Jamie Oliver and others.

So how did Mourinho have such an incredible career?

LEADING FROM THE MIND'S EYE - THE POWER OF FOCUS

Mourinho wanted to be a professional football player like his father Felix. But he was so untalented that it ended in embarrassing failure when he was not even allowed on to the field. Mourinho quit football and went to business school. But after just a day, he quit and enrolled in a sports science course, deciding to become the world’s greatest coach instead. And since that day he has kept his mind’s eye focused on being the best coach in the world.

At Porto, Chelsea, Inter Milan and now at Real Madrid, Mourinho’s mind’s eye keeps him focused on winning. Even in defeat, he refuses to take the role of loser. Every team he has managed quickly bounces back from losses because their leader has his mind’s eye fixed on nothing but success. “It’s no fluke that after a defeat, Inter gets straight back on its feet. That’s all thanks to Mourinho”, claims Diego Milito, Inter Milan star.

In fact, winning is so engrained as Mourinho expresses, “I love players who love to win. They not only win in 90 minutes, but every day, every training session, in every moment of their lives.” The entire team’s mind’s eye is focused on winning.

On his first day at work, he sends each player this letter. “From here each practice, each game, each minute of your social life must centre on the aim of being champions. First-day and is not lifted till the goal is achieved. We are similarly focused on winning in our careers.”

CYCLE OF BONDING

Mourinho creates bonds with every single player in his team and personally knows each of them. Mourinho is known for his great “rapport” with his players. He knows each player intimately and knows which button to press for each player. Some say Mourinho is avuncular and caring, others that he is an intimidating tyrant. Neither is true — he simply works out how to use differing training methods for each player. “His training sessions are spectacular,” says Christiano Ronaldo. “They have great intensity but we don’t feel tired because we are extremely motivated.”

Every team Mourinho coaches, bonds like a family. Mourinho adds, “You must create a positive atmosphere and make everyone feel part of the group. In this club, if you go to the barrier, the man at the door feels part of the group and success. The people who work in the kitchen feel part of this family. And I’m one of them.”

After each game, Mourinho congratulates and hugs each player. Few managers have this kind of close rapport and bond with their players. Do we have similar bonds with our colleagues in the workplace?

TRUST

Research shows that teams perform best when their leader is a secure base. Mourinho was a coach, friend and secure base to all his players wherever he went. Even with personal issues, he was highly visible and accessible to all players.

The day Mourinho bid farewell to his Chelsea players, there were tears everywhere. He knew them all including their wives and kids and mentioned each one during his 3 hour farewell. He hugged and spoke to each one individually. Most would lay their lives for Mourinho on the pitch as Terry, Lampard, Essien and Drogba demonstrated by playing long spells through pain and injections.

Inter’s Milito adds, “There is no coach like him when it comes to sticking his neck out and defending everyone, that way reducing the tension within the team when things aren’t going well.” Mourinho is the players’ secure base. Frank Lampard attests of Mourinho, “I love him as a man and as a manager.”

LOVES CONFLICT

All high performance teams are faced with conflict. According to our columnist George Kohlrieser, high performance teams “put the fish on the table”. By putting the “smelly fish” or conflict on the table, there is opportunity for everyone to see these issues and work to their resolution.

Mourinho does similarly by constantly delivering feedback and performance assessments to each player. Some players may not like having the “fish on the table”. Joe Cole, once received some stinging feedback but took it under his chin and started performing.

COMMUNICATES TO ALL

When Mourinho went to Italy, he said, “I studied Italian five hours a day for many months to ensure I could communicate with the players, media and fans.” It is said that Mourinho speaks 17 languages. He uses the power of dialogue and language to build common understanding of the clear goals he has set for his team.

Ferguson is right. Money does not guarantee success. I showed that last season when my Porto team beat Manchester United. It’s all about leadership.

— Jose Mourinho

WIN LIKE

MOURINHO

LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE “SPECIAL” ONE
Roshan Thiran is CEO of Rui Faria, Mourinho’s trusted assistant. Every top coach says they work hard and they prepare better than anyone else, but they can’t make what Mourinho does. Everything he does is better. He works harder than anyone else. He knows everything about every player and every game. Mourinho knows every single player’s strengths and weaknesses. He knows how to leverage their strengths fully as a team and minimize their weaknesses. And every single player knows each other’s strengths and this team self-awareness is the difference between Mourinho and other top coaches.

CREATING HIGH ENERGY LEADERS
“Players don’t win you trophies, teams win trophies, squads win trophies,” rants Mourinho daily. But Mourinho does much more than build teams. He builds leaders in each team he manages. At Chelsea more than half his first team became captains of their national teams. Leadership is needed in every part of your team. You cannot be a giant in every area of your career. If you are outstanding as a salesman, you won’t be outstanding as a leader. Leadership is needed in every part of your team. Leadership is needed in every part of your team.

Mourinho accelerated his career by being an authentic leader. He worked hard, was self-aware and had thorough forensic preparation for each match and a unique relationship with his players. You can do likewise. What are you doing to build your career?

FINAL THOUGHTS
Mourinho was termed insane for making all 3 substitutions in a negative into a positive. If a team is 3-0 down at half time and the manager starts screaming about all the mistakes made, it doesn’t help. Instead he’ll focus on things they are doing right, and then tell them how they can turn the game around.” Mourinho is very specific about what is required to win and influences his players to build a mental image of what is needed. Mourinho spends a significant amount of time preparing each player differently for games. He influences and prepares big stars to train and conform to his team patterns. They treat them all as equals. According to sport psychologist Andy Barton, “He is a bit special in his approach to every game. Every player is very well prepared. They know their job. He is also very good at dealing with big-name players. He gets their respect. And it is mutual.”

“Man-management is about adjusting your style to suit the player,” says Tottenham’s Harry Redknapp. Mourinho prepares better than anyone else in the world. Do you prepare yourself for your career and its challenges? Are you constantly learning new ways to influence your career to success?

MOURINHO himself displayed great personal self-awareness when he quit football to focus on coaching. As a young boy, he gave up playing football as he was “useless” at it and resolved to be the “world’s best coach.”

This “quitting” is termed the Hedgehog Principle by Collins. It is simply about being very clear on what drives you and what you can be genuinely great at, and then relentlessly focus on that. How many of us persist with things we know deep down, are not going to lead us to success? How many organisations persist on doing things the same way? Insanity is doing the same thing but expecting different results. Once, Mourinho was termed insane for making all 3 substitutions in the first half of a game he was losing. Mourinho was just addressing the brutal reality of a situation. Mourinho learnt quickly that there is no relationship whatsoever between functional expertise and managerial ability. Mourinho was useless as a football player but outstanding as a coach. A lesson to be learnt from this is that if you are outstanding as a salesman, you may not make a great manager and likewise. Do you really know your strengths and weaknesses? To have a great career, you need to know what you love, and do what you love. Do you understand where your passions lie and what your strengths are? Leverage them! Do you prepare yourself for your career and its challenges? Are you constantly learning new ways to influence your career to success? If you want your career to be as successful as Mourinho, make efforts to prepare for success.
By JOHAN MAHMOOD MERICAN
mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

A S we celebrate Malaysia Day, it is timely to reflect on what it is that makes Malaysia what it is. When attempting to answer what defines Malaysia – typically, the first thing that comes to mind (besides our love for food) is Malaysia’s diversity. You could say our racial diversity is Malaysia’s X-factor – it is at the root of our identity; it is what makes Malaysia special, its source of strength but at the same time, potentially its Achilles’ heel.

To better appreciate diversity as Malaysia’s X-factor, I would like to draw upon the wisdom offered by the X-Men. This is because from my extensive research (a.k.a google), the phrase X-factor itself draws from the X-Men graphic novels. The mutants (the likes of Wolverine, Cyclops, Storm) are called X-Men because they possess an X-gene or X-factor (which normal humans lack), which allows them to naturally develop superhuman abilities.

**STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY**

The philosophy of X-Men is in line with Aristotle’s idea of the whole being greater than the sum of its individual parts. There is a synergy or something extra that comes about by forming a team of extraordinary individuals. In X-Men, Professor Xavier assembles together a team of mutant superheroes and by pooling their different powers (such as Wolverine’s strength, Cyclops’ beams and Storm’s power over weather) are then able to overcome the greatest of adversities. As Professor Xaviere in says, “Violence and destruction always seem to come so easily to even the best among us. But together, we found a better way.”

It is not dissimilar in real life. Team sports are about assembling a group with different and complementary talents. At a corporate level, studies have shown that diversity of employees supports high performance. Beyond diversity of ethnicity, a study by McKinsey advocates for gender diversity, as companies with more than 30% women in decision making positions with lower women representation. Professor Xavier may not have seen the study but key members of his team include Storm, Jean Grey and Kitty Pryde.

As Malaysia transforms towards a knowledge intensive economy, innovation and exchange of ideas will drive progress. Diversity supports a richness of perspectives, whether that diversity is reflected in terms of race, gender or age (generation X & Y). Further, our multicultural and multilingual capabilities provide a comparative advantage for businesses, such as in shared services to establish regional centres here in Malaysia.

**CHALLENGES OF DIVERSITY**

Whilst diversity offers advantages, it also presents challenges. Differences breed distrust. In the first X-Men film, Senator Robert Kelly is driven by fear of mutants and advocates for all mutants to be required to publicly reveal their identities and mutant powers. In the second film, William Stryker takes distrust of mutants to another level by attempting to kill all mutants. At the same time, there is Magneto, the powerful nemesis and old friend to Professor Xavier, who instead aspires to get rid of humans in order to safeguard mutants. Whilst coming from different directions, both Stryker and Magneto are taking the same position of removing diversity to achieve homogeneity and remove the source of conflict to safeguard their position.

Beyond conflict between groups, diversity within a group also creates challenges to manage. Even within the X-Men team, there are often conflicts between the strong personalities such as Wolverine and Storm. The inability to manage diverse talents itself offsets the potential gains of diversity. It is often suggested that football teams like Real Madrid are not achieving the full potential of their star galacticos because the individuals assert themselves as prima donnas unable to effectively collaborate as a team. Hence, just as diversity can be good, it can also be an Achilles’ heel, whether at a corporate level or at a country level, if different individual talents are unable to work together and complement each other's strengths.

**MANAGING DIVERSITY**

Given the potential tensions, in order to reap the advantages, diversity needs to be managed. A key lesson from X-Men is uniting a diverse team through purpose. In the first X-Men film, there is the following exchange;

**Wolverine: Magneto’s right: there is a war coming. Are you sure you’re on the right side?**

**Storm: At least I’ve chosen a side.**

Here, we have Storm affirming her choice to work as part of the X-Men, based on Professor Xavier’s vision to mediate a peaceful co-existence between human and mutants. Being part of an effective team requires alignment.

Differing viewpoints from diversity could result in team members moving in potentially opposing directions. Hence, the efforts of a collection of top talent (and mutants) need to be channelled in the same direction. To safeguard a positive team dynamic, it may prove better to be without those who cannot align themselves to the collective mission than to have extra but disruptive team members.

In the second X-Men film, Pyro was not able to align himself with the ideals of the X-Men and therefore left the team. If differences are a source of distrust, then a team needs to invest in better understanding each other and in this respect the X-Mansion school provided a conducive environment for mutants to hone their abilities and interact with each other.

Especially with star talents in a team, managing diversity needs strong leadership, as demonstrated by Professor Xavier, particularly in understanding his team members (aided by telepathic abilities) and in providing a clear and consistent vision of peace, despite it seeming unattainable with no shortage of humans and mutants bent on war.

**WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS…**

At the end of the X-Men film, the two protagonists meet;

**Magneto: [pointing to his head] Are you sneaking around in here, Charles?**

**Professor Xavier: I’m looking for hope.**

Beyond recognising the advantage, challenge and need to manage adversity, there is perhaps one last lesson to draw from X-Men. As we celebrate Malaysia Day, like Professor Xavier, we must keep our hope and faith in the future. Like the X-Men, we Malaysians are special and despite the odds we must do what we can for a better Malaysia.

■ Johan is the CEO of TalentCorp. He wishes for all to celebrate Malaysia Day full of hope and work towards a better future, like the X-Men.

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**WHAT DO MALAYSIANS HAVE IN COMMON WITH PROFESSOR XAVIER’S TEAM?**

Malaysia's X-factor

**X** stands for diversity.

**F**actor = the greatest of adversities. As Professor Xavier says, “Violence and destruction always seem to come so easily to even the best among us. But together, we found a better way.”

It is not dissimilar in real life. Team sports are about assembling a group with different and complementary talents. At a corporate level, studies have shown that diversity of employees supports high performance. Beyond diversity of ethnicity, a study by McKinsey advocates for gender diversity, as companies with more than 30% women in decision making positions with lower women representation. Professor Xavier may not have seen the study but key members of his team include Storm, Jean Grey and Kitty Pryde.

As Malaysia transforms towards a knowledge intensive economy, innovation and exchange of ideas will drive progress. Diversity supports a richness of perspectives, whether that diversity is reflected in terms of race, gender or age (generation X & Y). Further, our multicultural and multilingual capabilities provide a comparative advantage for businesses, such as in shared services to establish regional centres here in Malaysia.

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■ Johan is the CEO of TalentCorp. He wishes for all to celebrate Malaysia Day full of hope and work towards a better future, like the X-Men.
I WOULD not have believed it if I did not see it with my own eyes. Thanks to social network- ing sites, I was recently able to witness one of the most realistic and heartfelt conversations between a mother and her young daughter.

“Mummy, can you just come home early today so that we can spend some time together? I guess you can stay late if you have to.” This was written by the daughter to her mother’s Facebook wall.

This short but deep plea for her time is indeed very telling. The mother has been extremely busy because her work project was coming to an end, and the deadline was staring in her face. Postponing it was beyond her control, otherwise all her hard work thus far would amount to nothing.

Naturally, her daughter, not her job, needed her more at that specific time in their lives. Working hard is important, but our own flesh and blood are our utmost priority. We must be able to find creative ways to balance the two. It is not that difficult. Just take a little time to spend together while making them understand that no matter what, they are still on top of our list.

Yet we would understand if we are pulled off in the wrong direction once in a while.

Could there be much more linkages between family and work? I strongly believe so. Quite often children misbehave and underperform because this is the surest way to get their parents’ attention. Even if it means some scolding and punishing, it is still better than nothing. It also works as a way to “get back” at the parents; hit them where it hurts the most – poor academic achievement and low discipline.

As such, during the talk, I spent more than half of the time on ways to quickly rebuild their relationships rather than on latest techniques of studying more effectively. If relationships are poor, there is little motivation for the young children to do better, let alone ace their examinations. The good news is, it is never too late. We just have to invest more time in the relationships, do more things together and forgive one another. Put the past behind and look at a new beginning. Hug a little longer and say the loving words a little bit more.

More often than not, these are just what the children need to undo the little motivation for the young children to do better, let alone ace their examinations. The good news is, it is never too late. We just have to invest more time in the relationships, do more things together and forgive one another. Put the past behind and look at a new beginning. Hug a little longer and say the loving words a little bit more.

So, no matter how young or old you are, get busy and search your local community for volun-teering opportunities – the more challenging a task the bigger the advantag-es, but even very simple tasks can teach you a ton of new skills, put you through new experiences, open up new doors, and improve you all around. Better get cracking!

Eva hopes that many more Malaysians see the value of volunteering – for the benefit of their community but also their own.
David also consistently inspires us that we can achieve the impossible—be the best in the world.

What is it, though, that differentiates the Pandelela, the Chong Wei, and the Nicol of this land to be where they are today—to hold a world ranking worthy of many praises and much respect, and to achieve such immense expertise, talent, and capability? It is certainly the opportunity to train with the best of the best and to be pushed by the best players; some of which they would agree to this day; and the determination to stick to a plan is something well ingrained in both of them.

“For me, it’s about training fitness, ensuring you’re at your peak or playing against a junior player? it’s about what you do,” adds Lee. “The determination to stick to a plan is something you learn very early, after spending time with your families, or your coaches.”

The recent Olympic Games in London certainly strengthened our hopes of one day becoming a sports star. ANY of us dream of becoming a sports star. And even though the two are significantly different in many ways, starting from the sport they indulge in to their age, to their experience and experiences, many themes seem to be common to both.

“For me, the feeling of winning— when you’re just one of the few who can win something very valuable that can keep your going” says Pandelela. “Many of these role models. But it is so much more than just surviving by being the best or getting a medal. It’s about consistency, it’s about a drive to take the word ‘best’ and make it ‘bestest’.”

When she was 8, Pandelela’s coach pulled her out of a crowd just because she had the right ‘body type’ for aquatic sports. It was only after starting that she developed a passion for the sport, and it is only through that passion and her determination that she reached where she is today. Similarly, Lee started out playing table badminton, and it was because of his dad’s passion for badminton, and his encouragement and support that he came to love the sport and become today Datuk Lee. And, according to the coach, determination is something that truly requires focus, training, especially for the big games is something that truly requires focus, determination and support. And even if they don’t win medals, it’s all about hard work and stress and how much they nitpicky they would do to make it great through hard work. This is why they push hard to get their techniques down to a high level of precision,.jarred, and concentration and mental.

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“For me, it’s about training fitness, ensuring you’re at your peak or playing against a junior player? it’s about what you do,” adds Lee. “The determination to stick to a plan is something you learn very early, after spending time with your families, or your coaches.”

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WRITING A RESUME

By LIM MAY LEE
maylee@mystarjob.com

It’s very important to remember that your resume will be your potential employer’s first impression of you. Just like how you need to be well groomed for a meeting, your resume also needs to be “well-groomed,” so to speak. If you’ve been missing out on important job and career opportunities even though you’ve met the required qualifications, it could be due to a fatal error somewhere in that resume of yours. Here’s a quick checklist your resume should pass through before being submitted for a job application.

Your cover letter tells readers relevant information that your resume doesn’t cover, like why you want the job and how you think you’d be able to contribute to the company’s progress. Your resume has the bare bones of your accomplishments – your cover letter is what tells potential employers a bit of who you are and your possible fit in the company. It’s what convinces HR to read through your resume and possibly contact you, so do check thoroughly for typos, etc - which brings us to the next item on the checklist:

EDITING AND PROOFREADING

Your resume doesn’t need flowery language and bombastic words; what it DOES need is correct grammar and spelling. Go through every word you’ve written with a fine-tooth comb, and if your English isn’t fantastic, get a friend to go through it for you. Fonts should be standardized Times New Roman, Calibri or Arial; do make sure you use similar formatting all through the document. After all, if you cannot be bothered to make sure your own resume is perfect, how can an employer believe that you would do your job well?

Avoid using “I” too much. Replace sentences like “I was involved in the implementation of XYZ program” with “involved in the implementation of XYZ program” to keep things snappy. If you feel that your resume is starting to sound a little dreary, kicking off sentences with action verbs like “managed,” “led,” and “participated” will give your resume an instant shot of dynamism!

PROOF

Don’t flood your resume with useless information like “Dog lover,” unless you’re applying for a position that deals with animals. Keep your resume succinct; the beagleurized HR exec tasked with reading through all the resumes will thank you for it. Now that you’ve read this, check through your resume and you should be good to go! Good luck!

By TERRY SMALL

YES you read it right - RANCID! This scientific message got my attention big time, you must eat anti-oxidants, it is one of the best things you can do for your brain! Anti-oxidants keep you smart, happy, and save your brain from aging!

Free radicals are everywhere - in the air, the water, the food. Free radicals are your brain’s enemy. Fat is the favorite breeding ground for free radicals. Your brain just happens to be the fattest organ in your body. Your brain absorbs a lot of oxygen. Oxygen and fat react to generate free radicals. This process is called oxidation. In short, oxidised fat is rancid. Guess what? A rancid brain doesn’t work very well.

Good news. Anti-oxidants fight off free radicals and keep your brain sharp at any age. The evidence is overwhelming: fruits and vegetables are full of anti-oxidants that are good for your brain. Yet most people don’t eat enough of the right ones. Here are the top 20 best brain saving fruits and vegetables (their anti-oxidant capacities appear after each):

- What did you notice? They are all deeply coloured. Richly coloured foods are great for your brain. What are you waiting for? Start eating!
- Terry Small believes you are a genius and hopes his brain articles will help you reach your potential. To interact with Terry, email terry@leaderonomics.com, or terry@terrysmall.com.
Do you ever feel trapped, powerless, or helpless? If so, you are almost certainly a “psychological hostage.” We can be “held hostage” by people, by situations and even by our own emotions. We might be unhappy in a job because we are in an on-going struggle with a boss. We might be afraid to confront a colleague, friend, spouse or neighbour over a difficult problem. In each case, we are acting like a hostage, feeling as though someone is holding a gun to our heads.

The good news is that we can take back our personal power and the ability to act by using the same tactics that real-life hostage negotiators use. I have been a hostage negotiator for more than 30 years and have been taken hostage four times. More than 95% of real hostage incidents are successfully resolved by using the correct techniques. That is why I believe we all have the power to avoid living like “psychological hostages.” Let’s take a look at some of the rules hostage negotiators follow.

There are nine steps to resolving a conflict:

1. **Put the “fish on the table.”**
   Once the fish – the issue – is put on the table we must go through the sometimes messy process of cleaning it for a great dinner at the end. If we ignore it, it will fester, become toxic, and rot under the table!

2. **Bond, even with an “enemy.”**
   We do not need to like someone to bond with them. We create the bond so both sides can work towards a common goal.

3. **Understand the role of loss and pain in generating conflict.**
   Our whole lives are built on a “cycle of bonding.” We make attachments and form bonds, but the bonds break. When this happens we need to grieve, and if we do not grieve the broken bonds remain. Broken bonds and loss play an important role in generating conflict.

4. **Never think like a hostage.**
   Focus on what you want to achieve, not on the negatives. We always have a choice, even if only over how we feel.

5. **Use the power of dialogue and negotiation.**
   Talk. Engage the other party or parties in a dialogue and look for options to solve problems.

6. **Make concessions to build cooperation.**
   The aim is a win-win outcome for both sides through cooperation around a common goal. Concessions activate the bonding process and build trust and confidence.

7. **Be a “secure base.”**
   When we become a secure base for someone we create the foundation for trust and confidence. The other party can lower or even stop defensive behaviour.

8. **Separate the person from the problem.**
   The moment we make the other person the problem, we become a “hostage” to them. With a strong enough common goal, the conflict can be resolved even with the most difficult persons.

9. **Master your mind’s eye and focus on a positive goal.**
   In a conflict situation, we can change our mental state from negative to positive by focusing on where we want to go rather than on barriers or problems.

These steps are the principles of successful hostage-negotiation. We can use them in any conflict in our daily lives, at work and at home. When we face a conflict, the steps provide a framework that allows us to find a mutually acceptable solution. The option to live with a hostage-free state of mind is one we can take right now. We never need to feel like hostages again, taking back our personal power to choose how we act and live our lives.

Dr. George Kohlrieser is Professor of Leadership at IMD in Switzerland but loves Malaysia. He has helped numerous leaders and organisations move from a state of being taken “hostage” metaphorically to a new state of growth and possibilities. To engage Dr. Kohlrieser for your organisation, email people@leaderonomics.com for more information on special programmes.
By EVA CHRISTODOULOU
eva.christodoulou@leaderonomics.com

In this day and age, employees are looking for more than a monthly salary and benefits when shopping around for the right companies to work for. Many young people look for career growth, personal development and a fun workplace. At Alliance Bank, they have taken this mantra to heart and have invested deeply into human capital development.

They do it in many ways but whilst many organisations have great entry level programmes, Alliance takes it a step further. They develop leaders at all levels in their organisation. One way they do it is by picking a group of mid-level managers and put them into a high level talent development programme which forces these managers to go through “hell and back”. The goal of the programme is to push these future leaders out of their comfort zone, enabling them to move forward at an accelerated pace.

“As an organisation we need to move forward. Moving forward is not business as usual—we need to do many things, including employee development. The ‘voice’ of our employees is very important to us and we do listen to our people,” echoes Raymond Leung, the bank’s group chief operating officer.

Alliance Bank’s unique “Managerial Development Programme” (MDP) was developed for 26 hand-picked middle management leaders who were then pushed and stretched for more than six months. During that time, participants still had full daily duties within the bank but were thrown additional challenges including live projects, special mentoring relationships and field trips to “accelerate their growth”. This tailor-made programme focused on soft skills and leadership development, and as Steve Miller, Head of Alliance Bank SME (Business Banking), put it, “We came up with a challenging programme that would stretch our people and develop them, that would teach them more about themselves and what they can do. We wanted to get them involved into something that would also immediately improve the organisation, so we gave them really serious projects to undertake that would have a positive impact on Alliance Bank and grow these individuals.”

“It was a very fruitful six months,” quips Reena Kaur Sachdev, from Consumer Banking, who was one of the participants. Sachdev adds, “The programme was tough but we endured. We had an option not to participate but I am glad that I opted to stick out these tough months as I have grown as a leader.”

Another participant, Ong Tiong Kuan from Group Business Banking, added: “This was my first leadership course at such intensity and learning. It included very good live experiences and case studies that were very relevant to me as a sales leader.”

The participants also commented on the active engagement of the top management with this programme, their commitment and the meaningful mentoring they received. “The sharing of internal and external leaders, and the good quality training gave us much confidence and new perspectives,” says Ong.

All the participants conclude that “it was a very challenging 6-month period, having to manage both work and the programme, but we would definitely recommend it - it was worth taking,” participants conclude.

“”

“Alliance Bank’s benevolence to its employees comes of course, with many expectations and much optimism for the future of the organisation. The organisation expects these participants to practice what they have learnt, pass knowledge to their team, and improve the processes and practices of the organisation. They are expected to carry on and champion the newly drafted values of the company and be the first to promote and hold these values to heart. Their hope is that these new leaders can make a difference within the organisation and be the catalyst for change, but also that their example will be role modelled by others. Alliance leaders also believe that their offering of programmes such as the MDP, will propel these leaders to career and personal growth and will also be a great point of attracting many more dynamic individuals to the organisation. Miller aptly adds, “This is not the only human capital development programme we run. For each level we have different things that happen: for fresh graduates, middle and top management. Our special accelerated training programmes are what makes Alliance Bank a truly special bank.”
We at Leaderonomics and myStarjob believe that deep within us is an abundance of talent, aspiration and untapped potential. We believe that everyone counts and everyone can make a difference in this land. And our hope for this nation is to see everyone truly fulfill their purpose and potential and become the great person they were meant to be. So we urge each Malaysian to unite hands to take our country forward.


That is our wish for Malaysia. Happy Malaysia Day.

Roshan Thiran
CEO Leaderonomics & Editor myStarjob
I can’t guarantee straight A’s but I’ll lead by example.

Every skill has its use. Whatever little we have, there’s always a way to make a difference. Visit dogoodvolunteer.com for all kinds of volunteering opportunities.

Help is needed with teaching, coaching, language translation and more. Choose a project – or two – and do some good wherever you are.
There is a tremendous diversity of job and career options in Malaysia. The good news is that only you can figure out where you want to be in the future and how you get there. The motion of working for a pay cheque does not stop dreaming! Do your research, narrow down career options and importantly, speak to people working in those areas.

First and foremost, what I suggest you do is to think through what motivates and drives you, and why and what made you pursue an MBA and where do you think it will lead you. You are more likely to succeed and go far in your career if you are self motivated and committed to what you are doing rather than going through the motion of working for a pay check. Another factor to consider is your personal attributes, character and values, albeit what makes the person you are and what would be the kind of job, industry and work culture you are suitable for. In this respect, you may seek advice from your loved ones, trusted friends or parents who know you more intimately in terms of your personal attributes which may lead you to deciding what kind of job you may be suitable for.

As jobs become more difficult to come by or more competitive to secure, you may have to balance between what you desire to do and what is available. Hence, you need to focus your attention and target jobs which will most likely retain you and make you stay longer, for you to acquire a skills-set and allow you to perform at your highest level possible and keep you competitive in the job market.

From my experience, there have been many cases I observed, of graduates job-hopping within a short span of time in search of a job and company that has a work culture and value system which are consistent with their own. Looking for the right job and the right company may be a trial and error pursuit as you may not know in advance what you are in for; however, you can mitigate this by knowing the person you are from trusted sources and doing some research and sourcing around the type of work you desire to do and industry or company you wish to work for. Employers more often than not do not look positively at candidates with career records displaying short stays at different companies as this may exhibit lack of adaptability and insufficient time given to learning and contributing. As the old proverb goes, “A rolling stone gathers no moss”. My last word of advice, do not set yourself up for frustration and disappointment. I say that because not many amongst us get to land a job of their dreams unless they are fortunate enough to inherit a family business, and even that as the case may be, it may not be the job of one’s dream as it may not be what you aspire to do. Example: do the children of Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Jeff Immelt desire to take over from their illustrious fathers or do they pursue their own aspirations?

Your question and cluelessness may add to suspicions by many that MBAs don’t teach anything useful. Do yourself justice, make use of some of the analytical tools learnt from your MBA, undertake a personal SWOT analysis and develop a career strategic plan. Choosing a career if you are self motivated and committed to what you are doing rather than going through the motion of working for a pay check. Another factor to consider is your personal attributes, character and values, albeit what makes the person you are and what would be the kind of job, industry and work culture you are suitable for. In this respect, you may seek advice from your loved ones, trusted friends or parents who know you more intimately in terms of your personal attributes which may lead you to deciding what kind of job you may be suitable for.

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

The War for Talent:
Find out where the largest gaps are in terms of talent and the implications involved.

Also next week

What is a day like in the life of a drama teacher? Discover the satisfaction it can bring.

Be reminded of the areas you should keep away from by all means when talking to your boss.

See how arrogance in business can in fact work to the detriment of further development in Consulting Corner.

Find out the benefits of balancing your personal life and your career in Work Life Balance.