SEtyOur GOaLS WELl A ND WATCH YOUR CAReER SCALE To GREAter HEIGHTs

CARReR RESOlUTIoNS FOr 2013

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A HUMBLE BEGINNING
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EVERY year we make New Year resolutions (well some of us do!). According to Wikipedia, “a New Year resolution is a commitment that a person makes to one or more personal goals, projects, or the reforming of a habit.” A new year means a new beginning with new goals and new dreams.

In fact, making resolutions is rooted in history. The ancient Babylonians made promises to their gods at the start of each year that they would return borrowed objects and pay their debts. The Romans began each year by making promises to their god Janus, for whom the month of January is named. During the Medieval era, knights used to take the “peacock vow” at the end of the Christmas season each year to reaffirm their commitment to chivalry. During the Protestant revolution, watchnight services were instituted by Christians where they prepared for the year ahead by praying and making resolutions.

So, making New Year resolutions is something that is rooted in history and tradition. However, most of our New Year’s resolutions often focus on personal goals. We resolve to eat less, exercise more, improve finances, improve self, make new friends, spending more time with family or cutting down on TV. Personal goals are important; however, career goals are equally important. According to research, only one of the top 10 most popular New Year’s resolutions is job-related.

However, regardless of whether your goals are personal in nature or career-related, in the busy months that follow, many of these goals are forgotten and never achieved. A 2007 study by Richard Wiseman from the University of Bristol showed that 88% of those who set New Year resolutions fail, despite the fact that 52% of the study’s participants were confident of success at the beginning.

So how do you ensure you succeed in achieving the resolutions you set out early in the year? Apparently, the best way to do so is to break down the goals into weekly or monthly sub-goals and to make these goals public. Making these goals public by telling your friends and family about them creates personal accountability, which helps you desire to achieve the goals. It is also helpful to receive peer support for your goals.

There are many possible career goals that you can explore for yourself for 2013. This issue of the career guide jumps into career years. You do not need to do anything else. It is just a matter of staying focused.

As this year starts, we hope our career guide will continue to inspire you to this year to keep learning with ideas and resources to grow your career. Keep leveraging our amazing videos and other resources which can be accessed online at www.leaderonomics.com.

It’s 2013, and with the New Year comes a revitalised spirit, gusto and determination to put your plans to action and make your dreams happen. With the evolution of career searches over the last few years, it is good to take stock of what will make the biggest impact in landing a job in this year.

As you plan your career path, remember that the most important step you can take is to define your goals and determine what you want to achieve. Your career needs to satisfy you in more ways than just a pay cheque. This helps you to apply for jobs that are aligned with your overall career goals. Defining your brand as a job seeker also helps you to figure out your best selling points and the most valuable skills you have to offer an employer.

Remember, if you don’t set them as goals, you will not achieve them. So write them out and work hard to get them accomplished. You might just surprise yourself.

Warm regards,
Roshan Thiiran
Editor, myStarjob.com & CEO, Leaderonomics
Eddie Soong wants to give back to the community in his own special way

BY ANGEI NG
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Working in a fish and chips shop may not be the ideal way of spending one's summer holiday but Eddie Soong, who is UEM Group's head of group strategy and corporate performance, found it good enough to proclaim it as his "first job".

It was during the interim period after he sat for his A-Levels and before he entered university in England that he signed up to work in a fish and chips outlet in central London. Within the short span of 2½ months, he was a waiter, cashier, cook and stock keeper, all rolled into one, and what he learned there taught him about the need to plan ahead, the advantage of job rotation and the importance of good customer service and teamwork.

He shares, "I shall never forget the day when I was told that I would be helping out on inventory control. I was so excited! I guess that was my first foray into the art of demand forecasting, an important part of business planning which subsequently featured a great deal in the middle part of my career."

Soong chose to work in the fish and chips shop as he believed that being a small outfit, it was a good place to learn new things and responsibilities, "as all the staff had to do multi-tasking; which in other words means doing everything."

"Although it was just a temporary job, I learned quite a lot about the need to provide unforgettable customer experience and that it can only be achieved through great teamwork. Everyone has to do their part in making the customer experience whole-some.

"Ultimately, the way the customers were treated and what they experienced will determine whether a business will succeed or not," he shares with mystarjob.com. "When customers feel appreciated and you are humil-

To view this video, visit www.

WELL-LEARNED VALUES FROM SUMMER JOBS

myfirstjob.com

A repeat customer in the making. In today's day and age, some form of recurrent business is always handy."

He also learned about the impor-
tance of good communication skills, reaching out to people, humility, and learning from mistakes — knowledge which came in handy in his subsequent careers.

"All these values are rather universally applicable and practical, and I found myself tapping into them every now and then," he discloses. The graduate in accounting and finance from The University of Lancaster and masters degree in business administration (finance) from the University of Stirling, also regards his almost three-year stint at an account-
cy/audit trainee at the accounting firm, Robson Rhodes in England, as another "first job" that he appreciates. That is despite the fact that for most part of the first three weeks that he was there, Soong's responsibility was to do photocopying.

"I can't even begin to be menial, getting the photocopying task done was only one of the objectives. The ultimate objectives were to teach trainees like me about respect for their supervisors as well as to learn at what you do. Patience is an important virtue to possess so that one does not simply rush into things. At the same time, one should not sit on things either. The world of opportu-
nities does not wait. Hence it is impor-
tant to strike a balance. Admittedly this is easier said than done!"

After the "orientation" period was over, where the company had invested in an extensive programme of early training, Soong was happy to be assigned auditing and business diagnostic jobs and had a number of enduring moments there also. With that exposure, he acquired a solid background in the fields of financial management, budgeting and internal controls.

"I can still remember fondly the need to burn the midnight oil for days on end on many occasions! What kept us going and still able to smile day-in and day-out, was certainly not only the coffee, but more importantly the camaraderie of the team," he recalls with a broad grin. Soong is thankful for the three-year bursary he received from the university to pursue his first degree and for the scholarship from the UK Government to do his masters degree.

Following Robson Rhodes, Soong moved to Knoll Padgham and Grande as an audit supervisor. Having lived in England for 10 years (six years as a student), he decided to move closer to home and took up a job offer in Hong Kong.

He joined the global management consultancy practice of Coopers & Lybrand Management Consultants where he stayed on for five years. Soong was attached to the finance, economics and market research group, where he rose to the position of senior consultant.

In 1993, he moved to MVA Consultancy in Hong Kong, one of the leading international transport planning, traffic engineering and research consultancy practices. He took the lead in two of its core service lines — privately funded transport infra-
structure development and market research.

Soong spent 18 years in MVA and his exemplary performance there saw him appointed as a board direc-
tor when he was still in his mid-30s. As MVA board director, his functional responsibility was for the company's Asia-wide financial management and corporate governance. Soong also advised on the market poten-
tial and economic aspects of many major transport infrastructure-related investments in the region, including those for financial institutions, national corporations, private inves-
tors, governments and international aid agencies.

In October 2009, he was appointed as managing director responsible for MVAS Asia operations.

As managing director, he oversaw MAVAs consultancy practice in Asia that covered Hong Kong, Singapore, Shenzhen, Beijing, Bangkok, Mumbai, New Delhi, and Ho Chi Minh City.

Soong has also been extensively involved in a variety of consulting and research assignments in the business, market and social research arena for both the public and private sectors in Hong Kong and Singapore. He has extensive exposures in the areas of business strategy formulation, market analysis, business operation diagnos-
tics, financial appraisal, customer service prioritisation, market/business/ opinion surveys and social research.

He also has extensive experience on cruise market strategy and develop-
ment in Asia, having provided consult-
tancy advice on many strategic assign-
ments for the public and private sector in the two major cruise hubs in the Asia-Pacific region, namely, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Good to be home

Having been overseas for 34 years, Soong decided to return home to do his bit for nation building. "This is to make a small contribution back to my home country in my own little way," he remarks.

Soong, who hails from Gopeng in Perak, explains, "I owe a great deal of my foundation to my school teachers during my secondary education in my small hometown of Gopeng. They are an eternity for the efforts and dedication they had devoted in seeing us through our secondary education. I would like to take my hat off to them. To Sirs with love, thank you!"

His move back is also to strengthen family ties; his father is already 91 years old and his mother will soon be 84 years of age.

A get-together with Malaysia's trade commissioner in Hong Kong, Edison Chong, paved the way for Soong to go ahead with his "home coming" plan. He learned about TalentCorp's Returning Expert Programme and the benefits the Government is offering to attract Malaysian professionals back from overseas.

In July this year, he joined the UEM Group to head up its strategic man-
agement function.

Soong attributes his penchant to be part of the national building process as an inherent value that is close to his heart after being away for so long. "It is a good and healthy way to go back to society and what better way than to work in a government-linked company which is a 16,000-employee firm, responsible for property, engineering and construction and asset facility management conglomer-
ate," he says.

Tapping into his wealth of experi-
ences and ingrained values from his early careers, Soong advises young Malaysians to cultivate integrity, persistence, passion and systematic thinking.

"We live in a complex world today. In order to see the woods out of the trees, we need to work through the layers, peeling off one layer at a time. The days spent on business diagnostic had shown that the time spent to systematically analyse a situation will ultimately pay dividend, no mat-
ter how daunting the situation may seem at the outset," are his words of wisdom.

It is also important to have an aspiration — a sincere desire to achieve something. “There is no necessity to scale right to the top from the word go. It is important to recognise the constraints and be pragmatic in over-
coming them.”

Soong says as today's world moves at an ever increasing pace, "there is a need to stay focussed and be positive to get things done."
Leaders are not born. We believe everyone has the potential to become great leaders. We at Leaderonomics believe that people are the heart of an organisation’s success. Ensuring your top talent’s continuous development ensures a solid leadership pipeline for your organisation.

Leaderonomics’ signature Talent Accelerator Programmes (TAP) aims to work with organisations to create ecosystems that accelerate the development of talents into leaders that would bring your organisation into the next century. The Leaderonomics TAP does this in 4 steps: Identify, Design, Execute and Assess.

Identify your Top Talent
Organisations hire the best and brightest, but how do we ensure they are your game changers? Through a series of selection and qualifying criteria, we will help you identify key talent that will help you take your organisation to the next level.

Design the Programme
We carefully design a dynamic Talent Acceleration Programme that will incorporate a continuous competency-enhancing cycle for talent acceleration. This includes masterfully crafting LEARNING EXPERIENCES that builds on your talents’ CHARACTER and COMPETENCIES. With enhanced competencies, we drive your talent to CREATE VALUE for the organisation through live projects from your organisation.

Execute, Execute, Execute!
No programme is successful without world class execution. Putting the programme into motion with exciting key elements such as experiential learning sessions, projects, field trips, case studies and more create a dynamic learning environment to accelerate your talent. Key stakeholder involvement such as mentors, project sponsors and industry leaders ensure your talent learn from the best.

Assessing for Development
Pre-programme, on-site and post-programme assessments are crucial information-gathering processes that create a robust Talent Acceleration Programme. Talent Managers conduct continuous assessment throughout the programme to ascertain the development progress of each talent and final assessment reports are provided to the organisation as a valuable insight into each talent and alignment for future organisation development.

Leaders bring success to an organisation. When opportunity comes, are your talents prepared to take on leadership roles to take your organisation to the next level?

Be A Leader.

To find out more about the Leaderonomics Talent Acceleration Programmes, please visit our website or write to people@leaderonomics.com.
THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN BUSINESS

YOUR PURPOSE WILL MATTER FOR 21ST CENTURY EMPLOYEES

By ROSHAN THIRAN
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AST year, I conducted several Succession Planning review sessions at various companies and a common theme was the loss of their younger talents. Backfilling these vacated roles became extremely challenging, causing operational and growth issues. As I poked for answers, the usual cry of money, culture and leadership issues were cited.

Diving deeper, it almost always led to the issue of employee engagement and commitment. At Leaderonomics, we actually have the opposite problem. We seem to be constantly attracting talent from all over the world. In fact, many offer to work for free. Which poses the question – how is it that a start-up social enterprise beats multinationals in the war for talent?

I think the answer lies in the purpose of an organisation.

At the Leaderonomics Talent Management Conference, Vishen Lakhiani of Mindvalley showcased a job quadrant that highlighted four aspects of a committed employee – money, learning, fun and purpose. He argues that each element is critical for engagement and retention. Most of us can clearly see why paying top dollar, growing an employee and having an exciting workplace drives engagement and retention. But what is purpose all about?

If doctors were asked what the central purpose of their profession is, they would answer, “To save lives.” If scientists were asked the same question, they would respond, “To make new discoveries” or “To better the world.”

Ask teachers and they would respond, “To educate the next generation.” But what happens when the same question is asked of business people? Peter Drucker said, “The purpose of business is to create a customer.”

A prominent CEO told me it’s the pursuit of profit. And others will say it’s about maximising shareholder value. Unlike other professions, business leaders simply do not have an overarching social purpose of why they do what they do. Why do you think many employees are no longer satisfied with business as it is today? The obvious answer – the singular pursuit of profit. There is a saying that “you need health to live, but you don’t live to be healthy”. Profits, like health, are necessary to ensure your business is sustained but it must have an encompassing social purpose.

Businesses today are fixated with the endless pursuit of money, power, profit, results, and possessions. This causes stress and burnout as most people are looking to achieve something that is in alignment with their hearts, passion and purpose. Many decide to leave but others stay on and grudgingly comply with their work but are not truly committed.

Whether your company has 25 or 100,000 employees, commitment matters. Committed employees have higher performance and will give up lives and limbs to ensure your company’s success. So, how do you build such commitment?

SIMPLE – HAVE A NOBOLER PURPOSE THAN LIFE AND CONSUMING

I was amazed at the highly committed employees at Johnson & Johnson (J&J) all around the world. J&J, the World’s MostRespected Company, has a purpose statement prioritising employee’s responsibilities. The Credo challenges employees to put the needs and well-being of the people they serve first. The lowest priority in the credo is shareholder value. Fathers, mothers, doctors and patients come before shareholders and profit although profit is important.

A credo or corporate vision is meaningless unless the words are taken off the wall and put into action. In 1982, McNeil Consumer, a subsidiary of J&J, was confronted with a crisis when seven people on Chicago’s West Side died mysteriously caused by an extra-strength Tylenol capsule laced with cyanide.

J&J concluded these deaths were due to external tampering of Tylenol and not a manufacturing defect. Instead of trying to protect their profitability, they decided to recall all 31 million bottles of Tylenol at their cost demonstrating the safety of people came first. This costly decision was made based on their Credo, which instructed them to place the community’s interest ahead of its shareholders. Tylenol later went on to reclaim its spot back as No.1 J&J employees periodically go through tough times but always find renewed energy that spurs them on because they know that their work is purposeful and helps make the world a better place.

Great organisational vision enables you to build long-term employee commitment. Your company stops becoming only a means to earn a salary but a means to fulfil their legacy. Recently after the numerous camps we had for kids during the school holidays, I asked one of our youth leaders what keeps him so passionate about the work we do. Being a start-up, work is hard and torturous. Yet, his response amazed me – “We are going to transform the nation via Leaderonomics. I want to be part of this and am going to work tirelessly until we achieve our vision.”

The moment “social” part of the equation ceases to exist, employees lose their commitment to the cause. While there are still 840 million people malnourished and 2.6 billion people have no access to basic sanitation, the world’s 200 richest people more than doubled their net worth in the last four years. If your company is helping to make the rich richer or the poor poorer, most Gen-X, Gen-Y and the Millenniums do not want to be associated with your company.

What structures do you need to create in your workplace so that work has special meaning and connection? Offering a purpose driven workplace does not mean compromising profit and results.

Successful companies of the future will ensure their mission and purpose relate to our human concerns and considerations and will always capture the commitment of the best talent in the planet thereby ensuring its success. And it’s not a choice between profit or purpose – it’s both. It’s going to be a brave new “purpose-driven” business world.

Roshan Thiran is CEO of Leaderonomics, a social enterprise passionate about transforming the nation starting with our youths. For great leadership programmes for your employees in 2013, contact people@leaderonomics.com or call +60 123456789 for details.
EMOTIONS
We as humans have emotions. Your boss may be in a bad mood after attending a long meeting or may be in a good mood, where at times he/she can be more open to contributions than others. So, when you have noticed any mistakes from your boss, find a moment when your boss is in a good mood and not too busy.

TOP 10 WAYS TO CORRECT YOUR BOSS WHEN HE MAKES A MISTAKE

1. BE KIND
Correct your boss kindly whenever he/she makes a mistake. Say, “I am sorry but I think you have mistaken ... (the mistake)” and at the end of your sentence, always remember to say thank you boss.

2. ASKING FOR PERMISSION
To avoid miscommunication with your boss, you could ask permission from your boss to provide your own opinion. For example, “is it alright if I share an opinion from my point of view with you the next time, as it may be helpful for us too?”

3. HAVING A SOLUTION
Whenever you notice a mistake, make sure you have a solution for it. When you inform your boss of the mistake, the positive side, which is the solution, will outweigh the negative side of his/her mistake. This helps to cover up the negative side of the conversation.

4. KEEP IT PRIVATE
When there is a major or minor mistake by your boss, always inform him/her privately so that it remains between the two of you. That way you avoid unnecessary offense and/or embarrassment for your boss.

5. BE HUMBLE
Never ever use the tone that sounds like “I told you so” to your boss; instead, be humble and inform him/her politely. Speaking inappropriately will damage the relationship between you and your boss. As he/she is still your boss, it is right for you to be respectful.

6. MAKING SURE
It is important for you to be sure there really is a mistake made by your boss. Always double check before you consider it a mistake. If you are uncertain of the mistakes, ask your boss to clarify them in a polite manner with a little smile on your face when you consult him/her; this will help clear any potential misunderstanding.

7. INDIRECTLY
Inform your boss about his/her mistakes indirectly, especially when it may just be a minor mistake like a spelling error or an incorrect name list in his/her email. You could correct them indirectly by saying “Sorry, but I was just wondering if we are using the American English spelling or the British English spelling in this email?” or “Who are we sending this email to?”

8. SLIPPING IN PAPERS
When you are in a conference meeting with your boss it may be inappropriate to inform your boss directly. You could write a note on a small piece of paper and pass it to your boss to inform him/her about an issue he/she is unaware of.

9. GIVING COMPLIMENTS
Beginning with a compliment is a good way to start a difficult conversation before reviewing his/her mistakes.

10. TO VIEW THIS VIDEO, VISIT WWW.LEADERONOMICS.TV/TOP10
THE RESULTS FOR MALAYSIA (CATEGORISED RESPONSES) ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- **36% - Highly Engaged** – This category scored high in all three areas.
- **22% - Unsupported** – This category includes employees that are traditionally engaged, however, lack enablement and/or energy.
- **25% - Disengaged** – This category includes those employees that scored low on all three elements of engagement.

High engagement here in Malaysia stands at 36%, which is below the regional average of 39% in the Asia-Pacific and slightly above the global average of 35%.

WHY ARE THESE FIGURES QUITE ALARMING?

Because when employees were asked to comment on the statement “I am likely to leave my employer within the next two years”, of those that were found to be highly engaged, 83% said that they totally disagree, 30% totally agree, and 26% neutral. Of those in the unsupported category, only 25% totally disagreed, 35% totally agreed and 40% were neutral.

Below, you can see the difference in attraction/retention drivers by various age groups:

### Retention drivers by age group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Career Development</th>
<th>Mentoring</th>
<th>Organisational Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 30 years</td>
<td>Base pay/ salary</td>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>Opportunities to learn new skills</td>
<td>Job security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>Base pay/ salary</td>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>Opportunity to learn new skills</td>
<td>Job security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>Base pay/ salary</td>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>Opportunity to learn new skills</td>
<td>Job security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+50 years</td>
<td>Base pay/ salary</td>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>Opportunity to learn new skills</td>
<td>Job security</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key drivers of sustainable engagement, Malaysia

**Key Drivers**

1. **Stress/ worklife balance**
2. **Image**
3. **Opportunities to learn new skills**
4. **Opportunities to improve my work location**
5. **Benefits**

In addition, the top drivers for attraction and retention seem to vary:

### Attractions

- **Base pay/ salary**
- **Job security**
- **Opportunities to learn new skills**
- **Opportunities to improve my work location**
- **Opportunities to advance in my career**

### Retention

- **Stress, balance and workload**
- **Performance management**
- **Image**
- **Benefits**
- **Opportunity to improve my work location**
- **Trust/confidence in senior leadership**

BY EVA CHRISTODOULOU

By eva.christodoulou@leaderonomics.com

2012 global survey conducted by Towers Watson looked at employee engagement in the workplace, and the reasons that affect it. The study looked at 29 countries throughout the world, and covered Malaysia as well.

In Malaysia, the results were drawn by engaging 1,000 employees from various industries and companies, comprising large and mid-sized organisations. The survey concluded that in Malaysia, sustainably engaged employees saw mobility as the only way to achieve career advancement, and that the employment deal was not made clear to employees.

The study measured three elements critical to sustaining engagement over a long period. Namely, traditional engagement - employees’ willingness to expend discretionary effort on their job. Enablement – the availability of tools, resources and support to the employees to do their job effectively, which are mainly provided through direct line supervisors. Energy – being in a work environment that actively supports personal well-being.

Pay and benefits

Of course, pay and benefits are still crucial in attraction, engagement and retention of employees. Thus, due attention needs to be given to the issue. The study found that only 44% found the organisation did a good job in explaining the pay programmes to the employees and 47% found that the organisation did a good job in explain the benefit programmes to the employees. This demonstrates is a failure of organisations to communicate effectively on the pay schemes to their employees, ending in much confusion and distrust. This is coupled with a rising concern for retirement in Malaysia – higher than the regional figures demonstrate. Here, 67% note that retirement security has become a more important issue for them as individuals over the last three years. While 82% are willing to pay a larger amount from their pay cheques every month to ensure that they have a guaranteed retirement benefit when they retire.

**Opportunities to learn and advance**

Forty-seven per cent of employees report that the ability to advance in their careers have improved compared to 30% globally. However, 51% feel that they have to switch to another organisation to advance to a higher level job, whereas a striking 83% are willing to relocate in order to achieve this. Thirty-eight per cent of employees believe that they are likely to leave their employer within the next two years, whereas only 29% stated that this is unlikely to occur. A disappointment 45% of those that responded believed that their organisation did not have a good job in explaining how they can advance their career, and 44% noted that their organisation provided them career planning tools and resources that are helpful.

**Role of managers**

The study found that the role of managers is considered crucial for employee development. Sixty-one per cent found their performance reviews as a push to improve, 58% felt that their performance reviews were accurately evaluated, and only 47% found that their manager makes fair decisions about how their performance linked to pay decisions. The study also found that there were three key drivers which lead employees to think of their managers as effective: clear communication, coaching, and listening.

So where do these results leave us? The study has highlighted some key areas that need urgent improvement here in Malaysia.

**Low levels of sustainable engagement need to be tackled**

If we follow the study’s findings, the three elements that contribute to sustainable engagement are traditionally engaged, enablement and energy. Companies need to find a way to boost these areas in order to ensure their employees are truly engaged to their work. This can be done by providing them the right resources, guidance, as well as flexibility and trust in order to keep them interested and inspired to the organisation. Key drivers for engagement seem to be stress/work-life balance, performance management, and the image of the organisation. Thus, to boost sustainable engagement, employers need to reconsider ways of improving these areas for their employees.

**Managers need to be effective in people management**

Companies do not enable managers to do their job well; if they are overloaded, they cannot practise all aspects of their role appropriately. A manager should execute tasks, develop people, deliver deals and energise change. If they bypass any of these roles, they are not as effective as they should be. Above all, though, managers have to be effective and trustworthy. Therefore, there is much that can be done by the organisation but also individual managers as well, in order to change the management style and provide the support necessary to their employees.

**Career advancement needs to be provided within organisations**

With so many Malaysians feeling that in order to achieve a higher position one needs to change companies, or even relocate, it is no wonder that so many young Malaysians jump from one job to the next. It is crucial for an organisation to have a career path within the organisation itself and to communicate this with its employees – as well as give them the resources and the guidance necessary to move on.

**The employment deal needs to be made crystal clear to employees**

Misconceptions about pay, benefits and the process of compensation lead to much distrust and anxiety. There are many ways to tackle these – designing smart benefits plans and bonus plans, communicating clearly in a statement total cash/rewards benefits, and designing an equitable and clear segmentation approach and strategy that varies by level in order to satisfy the needs of various employees. For example, fresh graduates would prefer more compensation in cash and less in benefits, but an older employee may prefer more benefits instead.

Employee engagement is very important for each company in order to sustain a good brood of workers who will bring much productivity to the organisation. Based on the readings above, it is time for companies in Malaysia to sit up and focus on improving nearer in employee engagement that require attention. It is never too late to start, and this beginning of the New Year seems to be the perfect time to implement the necessary changes.
CAREREOLUTIONS FOR 2013
A FRESH START FOR THE NEW YEAR


give an emphasis. In situations like these, emotional situations when rationale is not enough, you make a vow to “gear up” your career with an aim to meet interesting people. Even signing up on LinkedIn is a great way to meet exciting and influential professionals. Attend conferences which are a great avenue to network en masse.


do not procrastinate

1. **do not procrastinate**

Keep yourself abreast with the current events in your field. Networking should be done earlier. Being associated with a broader and diverse network enables you to get a desired job easily. Networking is a significant aspect of your career. Your resume need not comprise your details, education, tasks and accomplishments. Pen down the tangible achievements in your career. Your resume need not be too long and detailed. Adopt the “short and straight to the point” method when you explain yourself. Most importantly, always remember to update your resume with your recent achievements.

2. **build a strong network**

Networking eliminates all the fear and anxiety, making you step higher in your career and bringing you fortunes. We expect our network members to be on the road to success, to share our network with us, and to assist you towards achieving your career goals. If you want to make a huge impact and be on par with your bosses and your network.

3. **learn to lead a frugal life**

Learn to take risks as success always shows itself at unexpected moments. Resolutions are a significant aspect to look into when you are embarking on a journey towards career success. There are the stepping stones that keep you in line and prevent you from being swooped down by the devil. Most people lack dedication and discipline to carry out a large dream, thus when it fails, they get off the track. Always make sure that your resolution is in line with reality. You may start off dreaming small but the ability to achieve each dream will garner more and more success as you progress. Sincerely, make your resolution specific. Be specific about what you want instead of leaving it vague. For example, don’t just say “I want to get promoted” but be clear of exactly what you want. Considering your resolution makes it irreversible and confirmed to you on how to achieve it. When you make it specific, you are clear on what you have to do. For example, a resolution which says “I want to get promoted” in my current position or an account executive and move to the tax department” will enable you to draw an outline on what needs to be done to achieve this and you will be clear on how to work towards it.

4. **be alert and always get ready to take action**

Keep yourself abreast with the current events in your field. Networking should be done earlier. Being associated with a broader and diverse network enables you to get a desired job easily. Networking is a significant aspect of your career. Your resume need not comprise your details, education, tasks and accomplishments. Pen down the tangible achievements in your career. Your resume need not be too long and detailed. Adopt the “short and straight to the point” method when you explain yourself. Most importantly, always remember to update your resume with your recent achievements.

5. **build a strong network**

Networking eliminates all the fear and anxiety, making you step higher in your career and bringing you fortunes. We expect our network members to be on the road to success, to share our network with us, and to assist you towards achieving your career goals. If you want to make a huge impact and be on par with your bosses and your network.
**DKSH BATMAN PROGRAMME**

**By EVA CHRISTODOULO**

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DKSH is the leading Market Expansion Services (MES) provider with a focus on Asia. Essentially, DKSH helps other companies and brands grow in new or existing markets. Their leading position is based on their ability to deliver every service their business partners need to grow in their target markets. To achieve this, they offer a comprehensive and highly tailored portfolio of integrated services along the entire value chain for any product, from sourcing, research and analysis, marketing and sales, distribution and logistics to after-sales services.

As such, DKSH’s key assets are its people, and talent development is an HR imperative.

Jeffrey Vincent Ng, human resources director of DKSH Malaysia Sdn Bhd says, “In DKSH, our people are specialists with strong industry know-how and technical expertise. With rising customer expectation and Gen-Y talents who are more tech-savvy and demanding, DKSH has specially designed such a programme that challenges them in an unorthodox way and offers practical training.

This is essential and will positively impact our business, particularly our front-end team members. This programme is part of our initiatives as we continuously develop new ways to improve our talents’ knowledge and equip them with new ways to manage the complexity of our business. By doing so, we hope to also develop and retain talents.”

He notes that the objective of this programme is to develop their talent pipeline so that their future leaders are well-equipped to contribute to the sustainable profitable growth of DKSH in years to come. The programme is concentrating on assistant managers and managers across all business units and support functions within DKSH.

The reason these individuals were chosen is simply that these are the people that will grow and assume future senior leadership roles within the organisation.

Ng added, “This is not the only talent development programme we have. We have another program for developing the senior leadership team called Leadership Enhancement and Acceleration Programme (LEAP), which is also a 12-month programme.”

The programme, however, comes with challenges for the participants. "Since the BATMan programme is akin to a mini post-graduate programme, it requires participants to be dedicated and persevere in making this a success for them. They need to juggle between work and attending intensive workshops. Workshops can take up a few full days each quarter, requiring them to be away from the office for training and seminars. However, we view this as a positive challenge as it sharpens their time management and organizational skills.”

This programme is novel for this level of employees, and it is expected to be a fruitful experience. It is expected to have many benefits for both the participants and the organisation. As far as the participants go, Ng notes that by the end of the programme they are expected to be equipped with experience-based knowledge and skills to lead their respective teams, to develop business acumen which would help them in dealing with situations to yield positive outcomes, to enhance their critical thinking and groom them to be mature managers, and to allow them the opportunity to progress further in the organisation.

As for the organisation itself, the programme is useful in terms of helping to identify and develop talents, aiding in succession planning, and with talent retention.

Ng says that with the programme launched last October, “It is definitely too early to comment on its results. Having said that, we have been receiving positive feedback from the participants and also their supervisors, and we are optimistic that the BATMan programme will yield positive outcome”.

**WHAT THE PARTICIPANTS THINK:**

**WONG CHON KIT, IT SECURITY MANAGER, CSSC**

Personally, I think the BATMan programme is aptly named because the Batman character is known for his careful planning. As a team leader that provides tactical planning and consultation to the entire DKSH group, the programme benefited me a lot.

Managing people’s expectations is one of the most important aspects for me to ensure fast and precise delivery as well as meeting the expectations of the company.

The training is a good opportunity to learn what it means to be a leader and what it takes to be a great manager.

In the first session of the programme, I was exposed to valuable information that is not found anywhere. The workshops furnished me with information on my strengths, and provided guidance and information on how I can further improve in those areas. On top of that, it also gave me ideas on how we should prioritise. I don’t see any weakness in the programme. I would definitely recommend this to other people.

**GOH KOK WEI, SALES MANAGER, BUSINESS UNIT PERFORMANCE MATERIALS**

I was nominated by my general manager to take part in this interesting programme tailor-made to unleash potential within a leader. I felt honoured to be selected and knowing that this is a programme that one could not afford to miss, I’ve taken up this challenge despite my hectic schedule of being a sales manager, looking after several portfolios.

Attending the BATMan programme, I learned how to capitalise on my own strengths using “Strength Finder”. I will continue to use this powerful tool to further polish my capabilities to help me “shine” in my career.

What I like about this programme is the case study sessions, in which we are required to identify problems and seek the best ways to mitigate issues. It is also encouraging to see that this programme provides a platform for managers like us to accommodate and accept each other’s ideas even though we are from different background and business units.

I would recommend this programme particularly for first time leaders to determine and maximise their strengths, and I find that it is a good programme that will help groom us to be unique leaders.

**FOO WEI WEI, KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER, BUSINESS UNIT CONSUMER GOODS**

So far, after attending the first course, the programme has been a great discovery about myself in ordinary circumstances, we do not fully realise our strengths and go on a path of personal development. This programme has provided me with a clear picture of my own strengths and how I can enhance them as a tool to use not only in my work environment but also with family and friends. So far, this programme has been an eye and mind-opener for me.

I will encourage my colleagues to participate in this programme if given the opportunity. In my view, all employees at executive level and above should attend the BATMan programme.

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**DKSH**

**EMPOWERING MIDDLE MANAGEMENT**

**MANAGING SELF – Understanding oneself, one’s strengths and areas for improvements and how one can use self-awareness to become better managers**

**MANAGING PEOPLE – Tools, frameworks and behaviours needed to work and motivate others**

**MANAGING BUSINESS – Understanding business needs, profit and loss through business simulation to develop business acumen, decision making skills**

**MANAGING CHANGE – Framework and mindset to be a part of business transformation, organisation culture or other change management initiatives**

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**WONG CHON KIT, IT SECURITY MANAGER, CSSC**

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**GOH KOK WEI, SALES MANAGER, BUSINESS UNIT PERFORMANCE MATERIALS**

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**What I like about this programme is the case study sessions, in which we are required to identify problems and seek the best ways to mitigate issues. It is also encouraging to see that this programme provides a platform for managers like us to accommodate and accept each other’s ideas even though we are from different background and business units.**

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**The development programme forms an integral part of DKSH’s talent development initiatives focusing on four areas, i.e. managing self, people, business and change.**

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**The programme is useful in terms of helping to identify and develop talents, aiding in succession planning, and with talent retention.”**

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**By EVA CHRISTODOULO**

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**Jeffrey Vincent Ng, human resources director of DKSH Malaysia Sdn Bhd**

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**Jeffrey Vincent Ng, human resources director of DKSH Malaysia Sdn Bhd**

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**Jeffrey Vincent Ng, human resources director of DKSH Malaysia Sdn Bhd**
A YOUNG MUSICIAN ONCE ASKED A PERFORMER, “HOW DO YOU GET TO CARNegie HALL?” TO WHICH THE ANSWER WAS: “PRACTICE. PRACTICE. PRACTICE!”

LEADERSHIP THROUGH PRACTICE

By RAINA RADZAI
mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

It is a known fact that the best path to learning and growth is through real-life situations. Real-life situation practice. That is by taking on challenges that stretch our capabilities as opposed to simply relying on courses or textbooks. What this means is that anyone can develop their leadership potential and be a great leader simply by doing what they are doing without having to wait for an opportunity to attend a leadership programme just so that they could learn on how to be a leader.

Just like learning any new skills, whether learning to play an instrument or a sport, the same goes for leadership skills. It gets better with practice. To become better at it, you should seek out challenging (stretch) assignments and view situations and challenges as opportunities to learn and grow to develop your leadership skills. This means asking yourself how you want to be as a leader (envisioning) ahead of any situations, conversations or challenges; also being aware of what’s happening and grabbing the opportunities to exercise your leadership skills while you’re in these situations, and then pausing to reflect and internalize the learning afterwards.

The best and most effective way to grow as a leader, apart from conscious practice to develop your leadership skills, is by regularly seeking feedback from others. This is especially useful and most practical by creating your own support team where you can talk things through, get some perspective, readjust, and help get you back on track. Some perspectives, readjust, and help get you back on track.

The support team you can talk things through, get some perspective, readjust, and help get you back on track. With the help of the support team you can talk things through, get some perspective, readjust, and help get you back on track. Doubts and times when you would need to let off some steam due to pressure or reach a point of giving up. With the help of the support team you can talk things through, get some perspective, readjust, and help get you back on track.

Leadership requiresing a leader requiresing a leader requiresing a leader requiresing a leader requires. You can talk things through, get something more powerful. That is, to continually be “up to something”, something that’s important to you and you are driven to do something about it. Leaders who are in touch with a future that matters to them allow this to guide their thoughts and actions in everything that they do. These factors will give them enough supply of motivation, persistence, resilience and staying power. It is the vision that motivates and drives them to take action.

Of course, being a leader doesn’t guarantee a smooth-sailing path. You will be faced with resistance, doubts, fears, uncertainties followed by setbacks and disappointments which will challenge you and if not addressed, will take you away from being at your best. Granted, there will be times when you might think about giving up or that voice in your head telling you that you’re not good enough. But you will keep on going because you’re up to something that matters to you. When this happens it’s good to pause and reflect on who you are currently and whether it’s who you want to be. And then make a conscious decision to choose who you want to be. And remember, you don’t have to do it all by yourself, engage your support team and keep on practising!

IF NOT US, WHO?
IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

By EVA CHRISTODOULOU
Email: eva.christodoulou@leaderonomics.com

JOHN F. Kennedy was one of the most memorable presidents of the United States; and not just because of his assassination. His words echo in the ears of many around the world even today, inspiring young and old minds to pursue their dreams and make something meaningful. It is about time that we listen to our inner voice, and implement the change we have always been thinking about in our careers. With the new year having arrived, it is time to truly reflect on our career and lives and see how we can change for the better, how we can become the person we want to become. If not us, then who will actually give us that push? If we don’t start now, then when do we plan to implement change? Now is as good a time as any to take a leap and plan ahead for our career, implementing all those changes we have been thinking about and deliberating on for a while. It is easy to make excuses and delay taking tough decisions or implementing major changes in our lives. Something in our human nature keeps us from breaking out of our comfort zones and moving towards something new and unknown. We always want the familiar, the routine, the norm. Only those gallant enough will manage to achieve great heights in their career and personal lives. We cannot depend on others to give us what we need. In today’s society, even though we still rely highly on the bonds and relations that our community provide us, we have to strive to achieve what we want for ourselves and our families. Take the leap therefore! Let 2013 be the year of great courage, change and new success in your career and your life! Because “if not us, who? If not now, when?”

Eva hopes that more Malaysians dare to implement change in their careers and achieve their dreams. It is up to us to make our own destiny.
**FINANCIAL** responsibility is the process of managing your money and other assets in a manner that is considered productive and in the best interest of an individual or family. The need to be proficient at this task of finance and money management involves cultivating a mindset that makes it possible to look beyond the wants of today in order to provide for the needs of a good financial future tomorrow. In order to achieve a high level of financial responsibility, the understanding of several key principles is important.

Firstly, it begins with understanding the difference between needs and wants. This helps to ensure that the more important purchases are taken care of while goods and services that are not essential to maintaining a decent quality of life are acquired after needs are met. Some examples of needs that would apply to most include food, clothing, and shelter. Many people would feel that furthering their studies by earning educational credentials at university level is also a need in today’s world.

Once there is a clear understanding of the difference between wants and needs, the next step in financial responsibility involves learning what to do with money left over after the basic needs are met. Saving money should be a priority when evaluating ways to spend your surplus income. Even if no more than a small percentage of the weekly paycheck is set aside in some type of interest bearing account, that amount will grow over time and create a degree of financial security that would not be possible otherwise. Being good with money sometimes means saving a portion of available resources for emergencies or for use later in one’s life.

Creating and sticking to a budget is one of the main criteria in financial responsibility and we are never too young to begin this process. For example, a teenager who is old enough and has a part time job is in a position to make efficient use of a budget. While food and shelter may not be line items for the time being, there is a good chance that setting aside money for meals out, dates, car payments and insurance will be considered important. By creating a budget, it addresses all necessary expenditures and then prioritises those budget items, which makes it easier to understand where the pay from that part time job is going and how to use that money to better effect.

Resisting impulse buying is also key to good financial management. This can often be difficult for even the best of money managers. There are constant visual and audio stimuli through the various forms of media today which entices people to purchase items they do not need and even in some cases cannot comfortably afford. Choosing to shop with a list can cut down on impulse buying to a certain extent. Another way to stem these impulsive purchases is to set aside a fixed amount of the budget that is considered “free” money – that is, money that can be spent on any type of whim the individual desires. But once the free money is gone, there is no more impulse buying for the remainder of the period.

Because financial responsibility involves wise spending, the savvy money manager will learn to determine if the time is right to make a particular purchase. This often involves asking a few basic questions, or is this purchase to replace something of importance, such as a vehicle? Would it be possible to continue using the current item for a while longer and possibly be able to afford a replacement of greater quality later on? If replacement or acquisition is absolutely necessary at this time, will a product of equal quality but with a smaller price tag be acceptable? Purchases should never be made in haste, but only after weighing all our other options available. No description of financial responsibility is complete without mentioning the wise use of credit.

Far too many people assume that as long as it is possible to make the minimum payment on credit card balances, they are in good fiscal condition. That is not the case. Financial responsibility dictates that the less unsecured debt an individual has, the better their financial outlook happens to be. Make it a point to limit the number of credit card accounts you have, and make sure the balances are paid off each statement period or at least no more than within three periods. This will help to minimise the amount of interest paid to the credit card companies, and also provide you with a source of emergency funding or contingency back-up should something unforeseen happen.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TODAY**

- **Resisting impulse buying** is also crucial to good financial management. It’s important to understand the difference between needs and wants, and prioritize spending accordingly.
- **Budgeting** is key to managing finances effectively. By creating a budget, you can ensure that essential expenditures are covered and save for future needs.
- **Saving** money is crucial, even if it’s a small percentage of your paycheck. Over time, these savings can grow significantly.
- **Planning** for emergencies or future needs is important. This involves setting aside money for unforeseen expenses or potential future investments.
- **Learning** to manage finances wisely is a life skill that can bring long-term benefits. It involves making informed decisions about spending, saving, and investing.

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**Creating a Financial Future Through Wise Management**

**By JUSTIN NEVIS**

**Brain Bulletin**

**THE NO.1 BREAKFAST FOR YOUR BRAIN**

**By TERRY SMALL**

terry@terrysmall.com

WOULDN’T it be great to have an elixir that would boost your memory, concentration, and brighten your mood? You’ve got it - breakfast! A meal you must never skip. Breakfast is your brain meal. When you wake up, your brain berries are dropped. They must be restored.

Mountains of research have shown that people who eat a good breakfast:
- Demonstrate better memory
- Think better
- Feel calmer
- Have quicker reaction times
- Demonstrate better memory
- Have a more positive attitude
- Maintain mental efficiency

**Simply eating the right foods in the morning can maximise your brain power. Too often, breakfast consists of sugary cereals, waffles, artificial maple syrup, cinnamon rolls, muffins, and donuts - all will produce a low-grade brain.**

**Breakfast is the most important meal of the day for your brain!**

Here is my favorite “Brain Breakfast”:

1. A quantity of plain, good quality yogurt.
2. A quantity of frozen blueberries (also known as brain berries).
3. A teaspoon of pure vanilla. This raises serotonin levels in your brain.
4. Stir the vanilla into the yogurt.
5. Fresh or frozen blueberries. Stir in.
6. Sprinkle crushed walnuts on top.
7. Sprinkle with cinnamon (balances blood sugar).
China is vast; so is its pool of wealthy consumers. While China is hailed as the world’s largest exporter, the Chinese consumers have become the world’s largest consumers of anything from mobile phones to disposable chopsticks. So many of them and so wealthy, the Chinese consumers collectively, as concepted by many economists, can ward off a present economic status. On the other hand, it has taken the Chinese consumers only a few years to learn what Chinese consumers have embraced the western lifestyle by devouring meat and fast food, vacationing in exotic locations, attending professional sports events, and worshipping luxurious brands. Even rural Chinese, long the laggards of Chinese consumerism, are buying watches, cars, houses and air tickets to travel across the globe. Consumerism is now deeply entrenched in all aspects of Chinese life and there is no turning back. It was the Chinese government that pushed its citizens to spend. By promoting domestic consumption, Chinese leaders hoped to shift from a producing to a consuming economy. Clearly, the strategy has served China well, and benefited many other countries that have goods and services to offer to the Chinese. But the potential perils of Chinese consumerism are now obvious. What are the consequences of Chinese driving more cars, eating more beef, wasting more water and going on more vacations? What are the societal implications when urban dwellers become richer than country folks, and more of the latter are moving to the cities? And what happens when China, already now the biggest greenhouse gas emitter, emits more carbon into the atmosphere? How safe is the rest of the world if the omnipresent Chinese products are mostly fakes – from handbags to aircraft components? And what would happen to some of our precious animals if the Chinese consume them to decimation? The intensified consumerism is affecting the rest of the world as much as it is changing the Chinese society. While the rest of the world stands to reap benefits from China’s healthy embrace of consumerism, China is importing consequences of capitalism that western countries have been trying to liberate themselves from - obesity, unnecessary waste, excessive spending, wealth disparity, pollution and unhealthy lifestyle. On the borderless future that we all will share regardless of nationality, China’s rapid development of consumerism poisons to bring profound impact. As this summary shows, as China goes, so goes the world.

NO GOING BACK? FROM COMMUNISM TO CONSUMERISM

In 1949, with the establishment of People’s Republic of China, Mao Zedong proclaimed his desire to keep China away from foreign imperialists. As he wanted as little integration into other capitalist economies as possible, Chinese leaders, from then on, for the next 30 over years, restricted consumer spending by limiting consumer goods. Consequently, the Chinese found little to buy and few places to buy from. Then Deng Xiaoping changed all that and Chinese leaders then decided that opening to the outside world was an important factor in the development of China’s economy. While it has welcomed foreign investment, China has also, since joining the World Trade Organisation in 2001, granted foreign companies greater access to potential Chinese consumers, moving China closer toward market economy and spurring the Chinese people toward modern consumer lifestyle. China, henceforth, becomes the largest exporter, while Chinese consumers become the largest consumers of anything from mobile phone to cosmetics.

Wanting to avoid the stagnation experienced by other Asian export-led economies such as Japan, Taiwan and South Korea, the Chinese government has in recent years decided to shift from exports to domestic consumption as the key to drive economic growth. It has asked its own people to become China’s own best customers and probing them to consume more like Americans. China, henceforth, changed from being a saving society to a consuming society.

The Chinese are being asked to spend, and they are fast becoming slaves of mortgage, credit cards, and cars. Chinese leaders, in order to push consumerism further, have implemented policies that discourage savings and made it easier for banks to lend money. Efforts to create domestic demand began in the car industry. Price cuts, marketing, access to world-class models and easier credit had helped create soaring car demand, making China the world’s largest car market and surpassing the United States in 2009. The emergence of a vast market for cars is simply a part of the many stimulius programs aimed to boost consumerism. With cars, city centers are mainly for offices and shopping malls, pushing housing areas to the suburbs. Chinese lifestyle is quickly catching on the West.

The genie is now out as Chinese now begin to demand not only automobiles but leading international models as symbols of their wealth and status. The preference for luxurious brands will make the Chinese government’s promotion of its own Chinese cars difficult. Other consequences of car culture include forcible confiscation of private land to expand highways, carbon emission, traffic congestion, and rising gasoline demand. Developing nations are now watching China face what they have failed to do themselves: embrace cars without producing negative consequences.

WHO GETS WHAT? THE LIFESTYLE OF CHINA’S NEW ARISTOCRACY?

Display of wealth and preference for goods were frowned upon and deemed crass during the Mao’s era. But now, people in China show off their affluence and peddle their assets to gain respect. The rich become elites while the middle class move up to become the rich, meanwhile the rural poor scurry to gain from the remaining barrel of capitalist gold.

The affluent Chinese consuming classes have become increasingly brand-status conscious, making China the world’s largest consumer for expensive cars such as Bentleys and Rolls Royce. For the same reason, purveyors of the world’s most famous brands are flocking to China, creating awareness of and preference for global brands omnipresent.

Chinese people are importing not only international luxury goods, but also the international leisure preferences of the rich and famous and the West. Overseas shopping sprees, golf rounds, and ski trips aren’t the only aspects of wealthy lifestyle emulated by the rich as well as the middle class. Other social ills such as insecurity and prostitution have also become status symbols in China.

Rapid rise of wealth has given rise not only to a profound transformation in China, but also widened income and class inequality. In the face of this inequality, the wealth and status of the rich are stirring both jealousy and animosity from the less wealthy. A surprising 65% of the Chinese polled by Beijing Youth Daily admitted to despising the wealthy because they were known to be rich by amassing their fortune at the expense of the state and the people.

Rich people, thus, often feel insecure about the future and fear that their wealth will be used as an indictment, as it was during Mao’s Cultural Revolution. Another worry comes from crimes. Posh cars are often vandalised and homes burglarised. Bullying, harassment, pranks, conspiracies, kidnappings and even murders are common among wealthy Chinese for they are known to be someone who “deserves to die.”

Around the globe, the existence of a broad and stable middle class is one of the hallmarks of an advanced economy, one of the anchors of a prosperous and fair society. As China lunges into more consumption, it is the middle class that hundreds of millions of Chinese citizens must join if the country is to transform itself into one of the world’s leading economies. However, the government’s attempts to create a broader middle class are being obstructed by China’s small pool of middle class, which consists mainly of professionals and workers easily victimised by economic slowdowns. Furthermore, it is mainly those politically well connected people who find it easier to be included into the ultra rich elite, which constitutes merely 1% of China’s population. This limitation has caused the middle class to be entrenched, limiting their ability to consume and spend more.

Currently, it is the ultra rich that get everything and can afford to buy nearly everything. To become a Western-style consumer culture, like that of the United States, China, hence, needs to eradicate corruption and to find ways to trickle wealth down to the middle class citizens. Some worry, however, that China will not be able to do so for corruption is part of the Chinese culture.

MADE IN TAIWAN

Surprisingly, it was Taiwan that taught China consumerism during the Reform Period. It was also from Taiwan that China got the much-needed investment dollars, technology and expertise, having taken enough of which, set China off to the start of its own game of consumerism. Suddenly, the issue wasn’t if the Chinese would like to drink bubble tea, but what brands and how.

Taiwan-style consumerism permeates China in many ways. Along with pop culture and deep-fried dough sticks, Taiwan taught China the concept of franchising and entertainment. The infusion of Korean pop culture into China had also given the Chinese new reasons to travel abroad. Not surprisingly, the Korean Wave had created an ever-increasing interest in visiting South Korea. As Korean TV soaps expand into the living rooms of the Chinese, so did such Korean brands as Samsung, Hyundai, and LG. More South Koreans were being relocated to China, showing the Chinese the Korean way of consumerism.

Taiwan, still, is recognised as the facilitator of China’s contemporary consumer economy. As one Chinese consumer says, she has the Taiwanese to thank for the opportunity to dine at an American-style steakhouse, a French bistro, or a “traditional” Chinese vegetarian restaurant.

Koh Ean Soo and his team take the best books and summarise them into shorter, readable content in the hope of inspiring people to read more and learn more. To read the rest of this summary and summaries of other bestsellers, subscribe to www.thebestbooksummary.com
A study also showed that employee confidence in the job market in Malaysia for 2012 remained high with 67% of the respondents considering the current market to be strong or very strong.

The Employee Intentions Report 2012 by Micheal Page International Malaysia showed that 39% of respondents, being offered the opportunity to progress in their current role was the main reason they would choose to remain with their employer.

A report on job seekers in Malaysia showed that for 46% of job seekers in Malaysia were looking for career progression in their next role.

ExxonMobil oil and gas monoliths were reported by the Forbes Global 2000 to be the No.1 public-listed company in the world with a market value of US$407.4bil.

PwC was rated as the most popular graduate employer in Malaysia in 2012.

A study across 35,000 recruiters revealed that LinkedIn was used more often for "suit and tie" jobs while Facebook was gaining interest among blue-collar job seekers.

LinkedIn, 42% used Twitter, and 33% used Facebook.

The 2012 Bullhorn Reach Social Recruiting Activity Report mentioned that 98% of recruiters used LinkedIn, 42% used Twitter, and 33% used Facebook.

A report on job seekers in Malaysia showed that for 58% of job seekers in Malaysia were interested in looking for work outside the country, with Singapore being the first choice.
We have four experts on career management, HR and office issues who will address your questions weekly. We refer to them as Careerromers - experts in career matters who will help you in your career journey. So if you have any burning question to ask, send it to careerromers@leaderonomics.com and we will get the panel to answer your questions.

This week, Johan Merican, CEO of TalentCorp, and Ang Hui Ming, co-founder of Leaderonomics, answer Joe’s question.

**DEAR JOE,**

I would agree that you should not reinforce the perception of being a job-hopper. Further, if asked, you must be honest about reasons for your moves – from what you mentioned, they seemed to be valid reasons. Notwithstanding the circumstances, it would not be ideal to consider immediately moving on again. You’ve only just joined your current company after a year break from work. Your longest stint in any company, so far, has only been two years. Even with the best explanations, a pattern of continued job changes will ring alarm bells with future employers on your commitment.

You should take on your current role as a challenge and consider how you can build your longer term career. For starters, by all means, upgrade or refresh your competencies. In addition, if you’re already an ACCA affiliate, you should definitely take the next logical step of pursuing membership. Certainly becoming a chartered accountant is a step towards enhancing your career path going forward.

If you believe that your current company’s practices are out of date or not in line with best practices, then you should take it as a personal challenge to drive the change.

Welcome back to the workforce! I hope the one year break was a good time to rest, adjust and settle down after the roller coaster ride of challenges you faced.

Reading through your different questions, I would advise you to give your current role as team lead in the MNC a chance. It’s your first job after coming back from a work break and it’s an MNC, which often times have tons of job opportunities and inter-department moves for long term career progression.

What you are suggesting to your management is to change the current processes or norm practices they have. They are probably getting resistance because:

1) You’re the newbie in the organisation. Sometimes, when new people join the organisation, and bring in new fresh ideas, it is not readily accepted (even if the suggestion is good). Sometimes, people reject people rather than their ideas. You might want to step back for a while and let people accept you in the organisation first before you suggest changes. Give your team and management time to get to know you as well and trust you. Once they trust you, your ideas would be more readily acceptable. When you have established rapport and credibility with your team and management, then its time to put forth your ideas.

2) You are suggesting something new. New best practices means people have to throw away old practices and adopt new ones. That means change. And Change is painful and uncomfortable for most people. Most people fear the pain of change and thus would resist anything that takes them out of their comfort zones. So try to understand your team mates and management as well. Take little steps to bring change into the organisation. Perhaps, start with your team first where you have more influence over and be wise on the things you want to change. Most importantly, you must be able to show your team members the benefits of the practice you want to improve and get their buy in. If you can influence them and get their support, then your suggestion to change will go through more smoothly. And with each small success in changing and introducing a best practice in your team, celebrate the success and move on to more changes. Slowly, but surely, you will be able to improve the situation.

On your concern of being a job-hopper in the eyes of employers, unfortunately, that’s what your CV will reflect. Which is why I do believe it is important for you to stay on for a while in your current role and make the best of it.

I know we often say to “do what you love” but recently, a very wise person I met told me that if we are not sometimes important to “love what you do”. I know there is a lot of wisdom in that statement as there are times when we have to learn to “love what we do” in order for us to grow as well. With challenges and tough situations, we learn key attributes like perseverance, positivity, creativity, influence and so on. Try to do your best in your current role and establish some form of depth in this MNC. It would help strengthen your profile and your stance in front of future employers. And, I do believe you can tell your interviewers the truth, but remain positive about it (ie, don’t make it sound like you are a “vict- tim” of many trials but an “overcomer” of many trials). Lastly, get the ACCA membership and continue to upgrade yourself if you can afford the time and finances. All the best!
Coming up in next Saturday’s issue . . .

Terry Small unveils the secret on how to read something at an amazing speed in Brain Bulletin.

Also next week:

- Get enlightened on the work culture and work experience in Astro, in Company & Talent.
- Hard Talk touches on how the lack of emotional intelligence causes leaders to fail.
- Communicating effectively at work is very important as it determines the success and failure of a team.