A CAREER IN THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

READ ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES IN THIS FAST MOVING BUSINESS

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GET A MENTOR

Having a mentor at work can help your career reach new heights

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Can enhance your power in the professional world

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Roshan ThiRan

Ready, get set, work
Our workplace guru gives 10 ways to get yourself motivated for work. Pg 6

TOP 10

Handing stress at work
We all experience pressure and need it to motivate us. However, too much of it can lead to damaging consequences. Stress is the physiological and physical effects on a person whether it is mental, physical or emotional. Work-related stress derives from many causes: long hours, job insecurity, conflicts with bosses and/or colleagues, heavy workload, and the threat of losing your job or being redundant. If work stress is not dealt with, you will not be able to function at your best and this results in poor job performance and can even tarnish your relationships with your co-workers. Here are some ways to keep your stress levels down.

Maintain a strong social network
A strong social support group made up of friends, family and peers is essential in helping you through the hardest of times. These are the people you feel comfortable with when you need cheering up. So take some time off to grab a cuppa with your friends or call your family as it will elevate your spirit and in turn, reduce your stress level.

Identify the cause
Identifying the cause of the stress helps you to figure out what needs to be changed or improved. Usually work stress occurs when one feels that he or she is not in control of a certain situation - this could be resolved by reorganising and prioritising your tasks.

Self-care
Start by paying attention to your emotional and physical conditions. When your needs are fulfilled, you will manage work stress without becoming overwhelmed. The better you feel, the more resilient you are to stress. Exercising and getting enough sleep are examples of how to take care of yourself.

Meditate
When practising meditation, your heart rate and breathing slow down, your blood pressure normalises, oxygen is being used more efficiently, and you sweat less. There are many different types of meditation techniques that can calm your mind and reduce stress.

Think positively
Studies indicate that optimism or pessimism may affect the quality of life. Optimism enables you to manage better in difficult situations, like reducing the effects of stress on your body.

...
WHILE some people will automatically "switch off" when it comes to making meaning of numbers, famed American physicist, Dr Michio Kaku makes a living crunching and simplifying complicated mathematical data and numbers.

In many ways, his fascination with physics and numbers makes him a modern day Albert Einstein. In fact, the physique of the 65-year-old professor of theoretical physics at the City University of New York has a slight resemblance to the great physicist.

So it was not by chance that he chose "analysing data from a mass spectrometer" as his first job when he was 19 and a first year student at Harvard University.

Working at leading electronics company Varian Associates, the young Kaku’s job involved using a POP-10 computer to analyse collected data.

Sharing his first job experiences with mystarjob.com, Kaku says that back in the 1960s, getting data from a mass spectrometer was, in fact, hard work.

"It took many hours to analyse the data; to find out what chemicals were inside an unknown sample. My job was to computerise everything, so that, with a touch of a button, one could get all the data required instantly."

His job involved working with vacuum pumps and electron guns; shooting ions out of the electron guns, through a magnetic field and a mass spectrometer detector, after which a computer would analyse the data to reveal what was in the original ion beam.

Although it may seem complicated, he says "the computer made the whole process rather painless." The one thing he learned from his work was the power of mathematics to govern the properties of atoms.

"If I had written down an equation for a particle moving in a magnetic field, and then actually did the experiment, the particle would obey the equations exactly. It was amazing. I could actually predict and change the trajectory of sub-atomic particles by using pure mathematics. This made me appreciate even more the power of pure mathematics to govern the behaviour of atoms.

"Mathematics to me was not just scribbles on a sheet of paper, but the laws behind reality itself," he explains.

He also cherished the opportunity to interact with other physicists.

"This was the first time I could work professionally with other physicists, and they provided role models for me. I did not feel out of place anymore, unlike high school days.

"All my life, I had read and idolised the work of great quantum physicists who solved the mathematics of the atom, but I had never actually met many of them in person. One of my supervisors was Dr Richard Ernst, who would later win the Nobel Prize in Physics for work that eventually paved the way for the MRI machine, which has revolutionised all of medicine. It was quite an experience working with skilled and competent physicists at Varian," he beams.

Kaku has had over 70 articles published in physics journals.

He has also written more than 70 articles on string theory, supergravity, supersymmetry, and hadronic physics that have been published in physics journals.

On television, he has appeared on Discovery, BBC, ABC Science Channel, and CNN, written for popular science publications like Discover, Wired, and New Scientist, and has been featured in documentaries like Six is Never Enough and a recent BBC series on the nature of time.

He explains that his fascination to Einstein’s search for a theory of everything “an equation perhaps no more than one inch long that would explain the entire universe” - has inspired him to write books and host television programmes on leading-edge science.

Einstein died when Kaku was just eight, but he can still recall people talking about the theory that the genius physicist could not finish. Even at that tender age, he had made up his mind "to be part of the effort to finish Einstein’s theory.

His fascination with the future, especially science fiction, and frustration of not finding the right books on the subject also fuelled the writing interest in him.

"So I made a promise that when I grow up to become a theoretical physicist, I would, in my spare time, write books about advanced physics and the future, to explain to the average person the wondrous and fantastic physics that was being studied by the world’s leading physicists,” Kaku explains.

If Kaku has his way, many more young people will be signing up to study science and physics.

"I tell young students that the engine of prosperity is science. All the wealth we see around us is a direct result of science, especially physics.”

To him, physicists were the ones who had helped to invent and build some of the most important inventions of all time, including electric motors and generators, the transistor, the laser, radar, TV, radio, the GPS system, space programmes and modern electronics.

"In fact, physicists invented most of the 20th century. So I tell young students that, if they become a physicist, they will join the ranks of some of the most important scientists who have shaped human destiny, with names like Newton and Einstein,” he says.

DR Michio Kaku will be in Kuala Lumpur on April 9 to speak at The Business of Innovation forum organised by The London Speaker Bureau. For more information, visit www.bizinfovation.com.my or call 03-21920988.
LEADERONOMICS OPENS IN PENANG

INVITATION TO
CEO Roundtable

To mark the opening of our new offices in Penang, we would like to invite CEOs and business leaders to a networking session with Johan Merican (TalentCorp CEO) & Roshan Thiran (Leaderonomics CEO).

DISCUSSION TOPIC:
Talent for the 21st Century

Date: Monday 21st January 2013
Time: 8:00pm - 9:30pm
Registration will be open from 7:00pm.
Light refreshments and finger food will be provided.
Venue: Level 3A, Star Northern Hub
202 Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah, 11900 Bayan Lepas, Penang

Please RSVP your attendance to Lily Cheah at lily.cheah@leaderonomics.com

www.leaderonomics.com
MENTOR–MENTEE ALLIANCE
MENTORING IS CONSTRUCTIVE IN ENHANCING YOUR CAREER

By PREMJA JAYABALAN
premja.jayabalan@leaderonomics.com

Aspects in mentoring are not confined to just gaining knowledge and skills but it also involves developing personal qualities and competencies. Key elements needed to sustain a favourable and progressive relationship are mutual respect and trust between both parties.

Mentoring partnerships promise great rewards and bring mutual benefits. For a mentor, it is a platform to flourish one's leadership ability besides reaping a personal sense of satisfaction for having changed someone else's life. For the mentee, it provides a sense of achievement in having widened one's knowledge and skills whilst simultaneously acquiring priceless advice and guidance from individuals deemed as experienced professionals in the industry.

For both parties, mentoring is an avenue to improve one's communication and people skills besides brainstorming to come up with creative and innovative ways to prosper in careers.

ADVANTAGES OF BEING A MENTOR:

- Mentoring not only enables a person to elevate someone's life but a mentor's life can be ameliorated on a professional and personal level as well. Here are a few things mentoring can do:
  1. Helps enhance communication skills – Your mentor may not be at the same wave length as you or might be from a different environment or background. Thus, you might not be able to communicate with him/her as you usually do. This scenario will push you to research and find effective ways to communicate better with your mentor in order to foster a good mentoring relationship whilst simultaneously introducing you to different methods of effective communication.
  2. Helps strengthen your leadership skills – By advising and counselling your mentee, you will be able to cultivate the ability to be a good motivator and bring positive influence to others. It also boosts your confidence and will enhance your relationship with other employees.
  3. Helps elevate your career – Enhancing and rejuvenating your leadership skills as a mentor can make your job performance more solid and get you promoted to management or senior level management. In today's world, getting recognition for having helped someone achieve something plays an important part in career advancement.
  4. Introduces you to new things and widens your perspectives – While mentoring, you come across many newcomers from various backgrounds with little or no experience. Most of them are also from the younger generation and by engaging with them, you will discover how they think and perceive things. They may also have fresh ideas and thoughts which will help you in your work and personal life.
  5. Helps achieve personal happiness and satisfaction – Knowing that you are a big reason for your mentee's happiness will always be remembered for the way you present yourself. A positive approach can open up opportunities of promotions and advances.
  6. Helps you climb up the career ladder – Equipped with advice and teachings from your mentors, there is no stopping you from staying focused, determined and on track in your career goals. Having learnt the ropes, you will be able to make all your career aspirations a reality.

BENEFITS GAINED BY A MENTEE:

- Mentors will be able to gauge your ability and competency and advise you accordingly. They are also able to assist you in identifying your key talents and skills and help you with the training needed to enhance them. They will be able to provide you with valuable knowledge and teach you all that you want to know or advise you.
- Provides you with valuable advice and thoughts – Priceless insights and sound advice and information can be gained from a good mentoring relationship. Mentors can provide you with information you need to help you tackle tough situations and move ahead in your career. You may also learn short and effective methods to move fast in your career.
- Helps form a strong and established network – Having a mentor can open up channels for you to meet influential and prominent people who will be able to help you in your career. You will also be able to expand your network of professional and personal contacts.
- Helps you in communicating with higher level management – Your mentor will be able to improve your communication skills and teach you the ropes on how to speak to people from different levels in the organisation hierarchy. Having this important skill is essential as you will always be remembered for the way you present yourself. A positive approach can open up opportunities of promotions and advances.

HOW TO FIND A GOOD MENTOR:

1. Ask yourself what you are looking for in a mentor.
2. Check with your company's human resources department to see if it has a mentoring system established.
3. Research people in the company (or your field), and find out information about them.
4. If you are over 50, consider getting a mentor that is younger than you, to gain from their insights on fields you may not be too familiar with.
5. Create a list of people who seem like a good fit for you.
6. Start contacting them, perhaps with a polite email, and see who responds.
7. Try to form a relationship and get to know them while letting them tell you about themselves.
8. Make it fun and interesting for them, and don't forget to give something back! Remember, this is a two-way street and your mentor should also find the relationship interesting - it's not just about you!
9. Become a mentor yourself - this will help you understand your mentor's perspective, and enhance your relationship.
10. Like so many other things, when you find the right mentor, you'll know it.
8. **SELF-MAINTENANCE**
They say presentation is key, so dress to impress! It is important for you to feel confident wherever you go. And with that confidence, you won’t dread going to any places at all – even to work!

7. **REFLECTION**
Take a notepad and jot down all the things that you like about your job. This allows you to feel grateful about your workplace and at the same time inspire you to get more things done.

6. **BE A STEP AHEAD**
By planning ahead, you will be doing the things you’re going to look forward to at work. It could be the coffee breaks with your colleagues, or the day you’ve mustered the courage to ask your colleague out. Whatever it is, it will definitely get you excited for that day.

5. **TARGET ONE GOAL**
Sometimes we feel that there are too many things going on at the same time. We feel that we cannot go on and slow down instead. If this is the case, target one goal at a time at work. Prioritise your tasks and goals and tackle them one at a time.

4. **UP THE BUM GOES**
You don’t have to sit around at the office the whole day. Go and explore! How much do you know about your office building, really? This little adventure will make you look forward to going to work. But remember that safety comes first! Bring a friend or two and don’t go wandering alone. (This can also build and improve relationships with your colleagues).

3. **APPRECIATION**
It is always a great practice to appreciate someone, especially if he or she has helped you. A little warning though, this gratification process is highly contagious. Once you start appreciating someone, that person will do it to others and soon, your office is filled with happy, helpful and grateful people. Now isn’t that a lovely place to work in?

2. **CHALLENGE YOURSELF**
Create goals that you will look forward to achieve. We, as humans, like to accomplish things and feel that sense of achievement. Be it a small or big goal, just as long as you look forward to accomplishing it. Remember, it’s okay to start with baby steps!

1. **REMEMBER YOURSELF OF WHAT YOUR JOB MEANS TO YOU**
Reminding yourself of what made you choose your career and why you are passionate about it. It will make long hours feel much shorter. After all, it’s not a job if you love what you are doing!

9. **AWESOME SONG PLAYLIST**
It is the perfect thing to kick-start your day. It is one of the most essential things to lift the spirits. Listening to great songs on your way to work makes the journey pleasurable.

10. **TAKE NOTE OF YOUR MOTIVATION LEVELS**
We all know that we cannot be motivated to work 24 hours a day. So, take note of your motivation levels and what makes it fluctuate – make sure you do your hardest tasks while you are highly-motivated, and then with the worst over, you won’t feel so bad about completing the rest.

To view this video, visit www.leadonomics.tv/top10
POWER UP WITH YOUR GARB

AN OUTFIT THAT SAYS, “I MEAN BUSINESS”!

1. WEAR STRAIGHT LINES IN YOUR GARMENTS
One of the easiest ways to project a no-nonsense, serious look, is to wear garments with straight lines. Curved lines convey fun, informality and relaxation. Blouses with lapels and sleeves project more authority and competence, compared with something sleeveless and with ruffles and lace. Similarly, striped ties will send an authoritative message compared with paisley.

2. THE LITTLE TOUCH THAT COUNTS
Attention to detail can make a difference between mediocrity and someone that looks polished, professional, and confident. Wear cuff links. Carry a briefcase instead of a purse. Pick pearl earrings over plastic ones. These items can help you exude power and confidence and thereby, project an authoritative impression.

3. BE WELL-HEELED
What about women’s shoes? The undisputed dark-coloured, closed toe, one to two inches pumps. Clients DO notice your shoes. So, your shoes must not look as if mice have nibbled on them. Heels are preferred for ladies, but it should not be so high that you trip on every single step. One to two inches are good. For men, opt for black polished dress shoes. The rule of thumb is that your work shoes should not look overly sexy, athletic and frumpy. And yes, this also means you should never wear Laces.

4. DARK SUITS WIN HANDS DOWN
Black, dark grey, dark blue are strong colours. If you want to project an image of strength and power, these are the colours you should go for. You may stray from these three colours, but keep the suit dark. For jackets and suit, the darker the colour, the higher the level of professionalism. The stronger the colour, the more powerful the wearer will be perceived.

5. SHOW LESS SKIN
Power up by covering your skin. All things equal, a longer-sleeved shirt has more power than a short-sleeved shirt, a knee-length skirt has more power than a mini-skirt, wearing pantyhose is more powerful than bare legs, because more skin is covered. A general rule of thumb when dressing for power is to "raise the necklines, lower the hemlines."

By WENDY LEE
wendy@chap-one.com

If your clothes don’t convey the message that you are competent, ambitious, self-confident, reliable and authoritative, nothing you say or do will overcome the negative signals emanating from your apparel.

The sad fact is that people will indeed judge you by your clothes. If you want to advance in the workplace, be promoted, look like someone authoritative, then start looking the part!

1. A perfect world, substance will win over style every time. However, the truth of the matter is that you must look the part if you want to get ahead. When all your energy is focused on just carrying out your everyday tasks, it is very easy to let your wardrobe slip into a state of disrepair. Before you know it, your work clothes are tattered, too small, or, worse yet, out of style.

2. When it comes to authority, having height helps. So stand straight! The squarer your posture is, the more authoritative you will seem. An outfit that says, "I mean business!"

3. Stand tall and speak louder. When it comes to authority, having height helps. So stand straight! The squarer your shoulders, the more stable people will perceive you to be. Gentlemen – place both feet a little further from each other. Ladies – move a few steps around to claim your space. You are now sending a visual image “I am the boss!” And when your posture is straight, this will help you speak a little louder. Higher volume projects higher authority, but you should increase only your volume, not your pitch. If your pitch goes up at the end of the sentence, it will seem as if you are asking a question. This will make you sound as if you are seeking approval and make you seem less authoritative.

4. Connect with your eyes and smile confidently. Use short, concise sentences. A chunk of words can be a phrase or a short sentence. This will help you eliminate filler words like ‘ums’ and ‘ahs’. Pause between points and take your time to finish whatever you intend to say. And never start your sentence by apologising. “I am not sure if this is ok…” or “I may be wrong…” This will only show your weakness and insecurities.

5. Lower your pitch. “I’ll be back,” says Arnold Schwarzenegger, in his low-pitched, deep voice. Imagine if he had said it in a shrilled, high-pitched, voice - it would have conveyed a totally different message altogether. Low-pitched deep voices command respect and suggest leadership qualities, whereas high-pitched voices are associated with weakness and submissive behaviour. Schwarzenegger sounded authoritative, powerful, domineering, someone you will listen to. Ladies, while it is true that most males are attracted to feminine, soft-spoken women, if you are in a leadership position, I’d suggest you lower the pitch of your voice. People will take you more seriously and pay more attention to you.

6. Behave like you mean business!

Wendy Lee is the president of MABIC (Malaysian Association of Brand & Image Consultants) and director at Brand Image International. She is a firm believer that with Style there must be Substance.
Well intervention / well integration

She has since graduated.

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partner is rewarding.

My job is exciting

YEARS IN OIL & GAS:

The result was an entitlement
to an integrated multi-skills envi-

Zarool adds.

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sought after due to their inherent

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My dealings with TalentCorp have

have been tenacious enough as I

management and

dependents under 18 years of age are eligible

Spouse and dependents under 18 years

Permanent Resident (PR) status for foreign

Completely-Knocked Down (CKD) vehicles.

Tax exemption for all personaleffects brought

back into Malaysia under one consignment.

attraction and retention (star) technology specialist in specific domain

Talents are placed in Malaysian and interna-
tional companies. To equip fresh graduates with industry-spe-
cific skills instrumental to improving

and integrity troubleshooting, are two skills
that are much in demand.

Lee finds work

energy sector – O&G! Lee finds work

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NAME: Bemi Ludin

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CAREER FAIR
FOR O&G TALENTS

TALENTS ARE ASSETS! YET, THEY ARE AS SCARCE AS OIL IN THE OIL FIELDS!

Universiti Teknologi Petronas and TalentCorp will jointly organise the oil and gas (O&G) sector Focused Career Fair (SFCF) targeted at the O&G National Key Economic Areas to search for talents.

WHO ARE THE TARGET TALENTS?
- University students (year one to four)
- Fresh graduates
- Young professionals (one to three years experience)

SPECIALISATION/TRAINING
The O&G industry needs talents from different disciplines. With the right attitude and aptitude, you can be hired!
- Engineering
- Geology
- Marketing
- Economics/Statistics
- Environmental science

WHY PARTICIPATE? THERE ARE MANY REASONS.
- Find out about yourself
- Get employed or secure an internship
- Contribute to the nation's economy
- Join the high income and high value-added O&G sector

Meet recruiters from top O&G companies at the SFCF:

DAYS/DATES:
Saturday and Sunday, Jan 26 and 27, 2013

TIME:
9am to 5pm

VENUE:
Hall 3, MidValley Convention Centre, Kuala Lumpur

OIL & GAS SECTOR
VALUE CHAIN

UPSTREAM
Exploration
Geological field party
Seismic field party
Drilling crew
Exploration Drilling
Development Drilling
Production
Lifting the oil and gas
reservoirs & production
Drilling crew
Drilling crew
Well crew
MDT
Transportation
Pipeline transportation
Production
Crude oil and natural gas
transported to arrive at a given
location at a certain date.

DOWNSTREAM
Refining
Distribution
Marketing
Trading
Refiners process crude
feedstock into a variety of
products such as heating oil,
asphalt, diesel, petrol etc.

Value Chain:
Crude oil and natural gas is
transported to arrive at a given
location at a certain date.

Source: TalentCorp’s Oil & Gas Sectoral Study

COMPANIES RECRUITING?
Malaysian and international O&G companies involved directly or indirectly in the O&G business. Among the participating companies are:
HOLISTIC APPROACH IN OCEANEERING ASSET MANAGEMENT

Oceaneering is a global oilfield provider of engineered services and products primarily to the offshore oil and gas industry, with focus on deep-water applications.

Q: WHAT DOES YOUR COMPANY DO?
A: Oceaneering Asset Integrity is an industry leader in the provision of inspection and integrity services. Consistent organic growth coupled with strategic acquisitions has positioned Oceaneering as one of the largest providers of integrity services in the world.

Q: SHARE AN INTERESTING CHALLENGE FACED BY YOUR COMPANY.
A: Asset owners want to improve operational performance and profitability. They want a modern maintenance solution that is cost effective and uses minimal manpower. Our Asset Integrity management and services can change the way O&G companies manage their resources. Our maintenance management solution is holistic whilst our approach is risk-based. This enables operations and maintenance staff to focus on the most critical areas.

Q: WHAT ROCKS FOR FRESH GRADUATES?
A: Opportunity in asset management. Why? Most O&G companies are shifting towards cost effectiveness and maintaining life cycle of assets due to aging assets.

Founded in 1964, Oceaneering offers:
- Remotely operated vehicles
- Built-to-order specialty subsea hardware
- Subsea intervention and installation services
- Asset integrity management
- Non-destructive testing and inspections
- Manned diving

TOP JOBS IN DEMAND FOR DEGREEHOLDERS AND SKILLED TALENTS
- Mechanical engineers
- Geoscientists
- Mechanical technicians
- Material & metallurgical engineers
- Electrical & instrumentation engineers
- Chemical engineers
- Petroleum engineers
- Electrical technicians
- Civil & structural engineers
- Health, safety and environment engineers

OFFSHORE SPECIALTIES
- Procurement
- Plumbing
- Installation & commissioning (EPCIC) management

JOb AREAS (TOP 10 BY SHORTAGES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Area</th>
<th>Experienced Talent</th>
<th>Average time to fill positions</th>
<th>Fresh/Inexperienced Talent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Engineer</td>
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<td>Petroleum Engineer</td>
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Q: What does your company do?
A: Oceaneering Asset Integrity is an industry leader in the provision of inspection and integrity services. Consistent organic growth coupled with strategic acquisitions has positioned Oceaneering as one of the largest providers of integrity services in the world.

Q: Share an interesting challenge faced by your company.
A: Asset owners want to improve operational performance and profitability. They want a modern maintenance solution that is cost effective and uses minimal manpower. Our Asset Integrity management and services can change the way the O&G companies manage their resources. Our maintenance management solution is holistic whilst our approach is risk-based. This enables operations and maintenance staff to focus on the most critical areas.

Q: What rocks for fresh graduates?
A: Opportunity in asset management. Why? Most O&G companies are shifting towards cost effectiveness and maintaining life cycle of assets due to aging assets.

Source: TalentCorp’s O&G Sectoral Study

For degreeholders and skilled talents

- Engineering
- Construction
- Subsurface
- Electrical & instrumentation
- Welding
- Procurement
- Plumbing
- Installation & commissioning (EPCIC) management

- Mechanical engineers
- Geoscientists
- Mechanical technicians
- Material & metallurgical engineers
- Electrical & instrumentation engineers
- Chemical engineers
- Petroleum engineers
- Electrical technicians
- Civil & structural engineers
- Health, safety and environment engineers

Top jobs in demand

- Engineering
- Construction
- Subsurface
- Electrical & instrumentation
- Welding
- Procurement
- Plumbing
- Installation & commissioning (EPCIC) management

- Mechanical engineers
- Geoscientists
- Mechanical technicians
- Material & metallurgical engineers
- Electrical & instrumentation engineers
- Chemical engineers
- Petroleum engineers
- Electrical technicians
- Civil & structural engineers
- Health, safety and environment engineers

Source: TalentCorp’s O&G Sectoral Study
A recent study has proven that your sub-conscious mind is smarter than you.

Researchers at Yale University found that when depressed or suffering from loneliness, both men and women tend to take longer bath and/or shower.

The difficulty in getting out of bed in the morning is called dysania.

In a recent sleep study, people who were awakened at the beginning of each dream, but still allowed their eight hours of sleep, experienced difficulty in concentration, irritability, hallucinations, and signs of psychosis after only three days.

A study shows that people who sleep on the left side of the bed are generally happier and have lower risk of depression.

The components of the brain that carry information to long-term memory turn off while sleeping. That is why dreams quickly fade out after you wake up. Normally, only fragments of a dream left in short-term memory have a possibility to be converted after you are awake.

On average, our short term memory is capable of holding only five to nine (seven is an average) items at a time. Have you observed that most phone numbers have only seven digits?

Researchers at Yale University found that when depressed or suffering from loneliness, both men and women tend to take longer bath and/or shower.

After three gruelling months of intensive training and entry-level work experience, four students graduated with “full honours” and permanent job offers from their respective sponsoring agencies.

The Graduate Fellowship Programme, a collaboration between the 4As, MSA, and MAA, was initiated to attract new talent into the industry with short-listed candidates required to undergo a vigorous training programme conducted 95% by The Advertising Academy, and an internship at the sponsoring agencies.

Laughing provides physical and emotional release, which keeps the mind and heart healthy.

30% of the world’s entire population is now online, and the global time spent online per month is equivalent to 3,995,444 years.

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DO YOU OR YOUR KIDS MAKE ANY OF THESE MISTAKES?

1. Leave studying and homework until the last minute.
2. Get to the bottom of page and wonder what did you just read?
3. Get marks below potential.
4. Lack motivation.
5. Spend too much time studying.
6. Achieve grades too low for university admission.

Terry Small is a brain expert who resides in Canada and believes that “Anyone can learn how to learn easier, better, faster, and that learning to learn is the most important skill a person can acquire.” To interact with Terry, email mystarjob@leadenomicals.com

In the next Brain Bulletin I will tell you why you don’t have a brain. REMEMBER: “You are a genius.”

GOOD HABITS START ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS

By TERRY SMALL
terry@terry-small.com

O you know what the No.1 job of your brain is? The No.1 job of your brain is to keep you alive! Your brain is mainly concerned about survival and it was hard-wired that way. For example, no one taught you to quickly pull your hand off of a hot stove! Learning on the other hand is a different story. Your brain wasn’t hard-wired to sit and learn. You have to learn how to learn. Learning is a critical skill for everyone. Were you ever taught how to do this?

Most of us weren’t. So here it is. Most of us are back to school or work. Let’s make this year more effective. Work smarter, not harder! It’s all about strategies. This article recently appeared in the North Shore News. If you are a student, it will help. If you are not a student, it will help. Learning is for life, in fact, learning is one of the best ways to keep your brain healthy.

GOOD HABITS START ON FIRST DAY OF CLASS - SET STRATEGIES TO HELP STUDENTS EXCEL AT SCHOOL

North Shore News Aug 18, 2006, by Lisa Fonte

“Terry Small is a brain expert who resides in Canada and believes that “Anyone can learn how to learn easier, better, faster, and that learning to learn is the most important skill a person can acquire.” To interact with Terry, email mystarjob@leadenomicals.com

A lot of students don’t really know how to study. “That’s why many students seem to struggle in school these days in subjects like math, science and social studies,” says Terry Small, a former teacher and now a full-time speaker who helps students and parents put together strategies to help students excel in school.

What students along with their parents need to do is to set strategies to get, store and review information so that they can excel throughout the school year.

“I try to give parents and kids a complete strategy to use before the first day of school and until when the learning experience (exam, project, school year) is over,” Small says.

Small recommends students start off the school year on the right foot.

“Preparation for the final exam starts on the first day of classes.”

On the first day of school, get to know the teacher and make a good impression as judgements are often formed during the first week.

“Make the first week so you set the tone for the entire year. Make a good impression and get on top, especially in a subject that is cumulative like math.”

With math, it’s easy to get behind quickly.

Small says that students need to set goals at the beginning of the school year. “In reality, it’s the single most important thing a student can do.”

“Take a piece of paper and at the top, label (for example) “Tom’s goals”. List your subjects and ask yourself, realistically, what is the best mark I think I can achieve on my first report card?” for each subject. Small says, “Stretch yourself a bit, but make it realistic.”

After your goal-setting session, make copies – one for the bedroom wall, the front of your binder, on the fridge and in the locker. All are places you will see your goals posted every day.

“Essentially, what happens when you see those goals is that those marks go up by magic.”

“Why does Coca-Cola spend millions of dollars on advertising?” Small asks. “Advertising works.”

Setting your goals, writing them down and posting them up is essentially a form of advertising to yourself. “You are influencing your behaviour,” says Small.

Also during the first week of school, start well by making a weekly time chart on a spreadsheet to schedule your home work, or home study, as Small likes to call it.

We schedule dental appointments, sports practices but often homework is left for whenever so the brain defaults it to a “B” priority. Small says.

If you are in Grade 8, about one hour per day six times a week is a reasonable amount of time for home study, says Small. One hour of study time can be broken up into two 30-minute time periods.

“Take Friday off for good behaviour.” Post the schedule on the fridge.

“It makes home study an A priority now that it is scheduled.”

Having a schedule also takes the argument out among parents and students as are held liable because they make their own schedule. If they don’t like the time scheduled for a week, they can change it the following week, he says.

Home study should be the consistent systematic reviewing and previewing not only the material assigned by the teacher, Small says.

Previewing is a great way to stay ahead of the game especially in subjects that are easy to fall behind in.

“For instance in math, if the teacher reviewed page 48 in class, he will most likely review page 49 the following day. Your ideal scenario would be to preview that page 49 the prior night.”

Small explains that the Vancouver Canucks plan their opposition before the game. They watch videotapes and watch how the opposing team plays to help increase their chances of winning the game.

Students can do similarly in school by taking five to 10 minutes to preview pages that will likely be covered in class the following day.

While setting goals, writing them down and posting them, making a weekly home study schedule, and making a good first impression the first week of school is important to excelling in school. Other study tricks will help students do well as exam time approaches.

“One of the biggest issues facing students is diet,” Small says.

Start the morning right with a healthy breakfast. Drink lots of water and drink water before feeling thirsty.

“Most students’ brains are dehydrated,” he says.

Set up a study area and keep the room temperature on the cool side – about 18 degrees Celsius.

Use a master binder to get you ready for studying. Take breaks every 10 to 15 minutes to keep the brain sharp. A good way to determine the amount of breaking time is to take your age and add by two minutes. After the age of 18, break intervals stay at 20 minutes, he says.

When studying, prepare questions and answers and use memory and mastery cards. Small says to use the active learning approach where you interact with the material as opposed to passive learning where you read notes over.

“If you watch a basketball game, you do learn but by playing you learn more,” says Small.

Studying out loud, writing things down as you study and adding colour to notes will help increase information retention.

Get on your feet as it will help retain information more. “When you stand up it increases the blood flow to the brain.”

Small also recommends playing baroque music softly in the background while studying.

When putting together a study strategy put parents on your team. “The more the parents are involved the more the marks go up.”

Decrease the amount of TV that students watch. “TV viewing goes up, marks go down,” he says.

When you sit down to do homework, tackle the least favourite or hardest subject first.
MANAGING IN AN ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

By GARY MILES
mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

The International Monetary Fund has forecast that the world economy in 2013 will remain sluggish with 3.6% growth. Although Asia is still set to grow, China and India will also witness a slowdown. While the Malaysian economy, according to the Economic Report 2012/2013 released by the Finance Ministry recently, is anticipated to strengthen further and grow at a faster rate of 4.5% to 5.5% in 2013, the unpredictability of the world situation, particularly concerns surrounding the eurozone debt crisis and the US fiscal cliff, may herald a rude shock for the region, which is dependent on Western trade.

Companies, anticipating the worst situation, are likely to have already begun belt-tightening measures, bracing for an economic downturn. It is very easy for managers in all types of organisations to imagine that with astute cost-control and a tight rein on their workforce they can weather the storms of economic turbulence. While strong attention to the bottomline and careful management on spending cuts to trim unnecessary expenses may be important strategies for managers to adopt, there is a danger that organisations may, in their zeal to control costs, cut back on development with longer-term damaging implications for business and the economy.

Companies must be mindful not to repeat the mistakes of the financial crisis of 2008/2009 when many organisations retrenched workers only to find themselves severely short of talent when the economy recovered. While ensuring that the people have benefits packages that are regular annual salary increases and are not isolated from their workers, the levels of employee engagement were higher especially in tough times. Above all, managing in an economic downturn means having strong internal resources of resilience that enable you to brush off the setbacks, learn from the mistakes of the past and use that learning to push forward a vision that you and your people believe in. People in organisations do not follow half-empty glass managers or those who panic when the going gets tougher. They are more likely to respond to those who proudly say, “Keep calm and carry on.”

HAPPINESS INDEX

There is a school of thought that managing in an economic downturn means working even harder to raise productivity. Globally, people aspire to be at the top of the happiness index as well as the productivity index. Recent research from our Management Agenda—a national survey in the United Kingdom undertaken by Roffey Park, which highlighted challenges facing managers in their day-to-day work — showed that many managers in the UK had never been used to leading their people in a recession. This was because the UK had enjoyed a long period of prosperity prior to the 2008/2009 financial crisis. And it is easier to get results out of people when everything is going well and every individual is guaranteed a regular annual salary increase; it is much more challenging when times leave key staff discontented and move away from the organisation once the economic situation improves. Through the implementation of talent succession management programmes, which utilise cost-effective approaches to talent development, financial prudence need not be at the expense of talent retention. Cost-effective approaches to talent management such as job rotation, short-term attachment, coaching and mentoring can complement higher spending on other development initiatives which may need to be managed more tightly during a downturn.

Other non-traditional ways to compensate lowly-paid workers include flexible work hours and options to work from home on certain days.

STRONG SENSE OF PURPOSE

It is during an economic downturn and under the clouds of uncertainty and anxiety that true leadership must come to the fore. It is about engaging with the workforce in a way that galvanises workers to pull together in tough times and continues to give them a strong sense of satisfaction with their work. A strong sense of purpose binds people together in troubled times. Therefore, to be an effective leader, managers have to engage their people regularly around purpose which needs to be articulated at every possible opportunity; they need to reiterate the mission and vision of the organisation and enrol workers in the organisational purpose and their role in that purpose.

Recent research by Roffey Park on employee engagement found that where managers led by being constantly visible to their teams, communicated at regular intervals and were not isolated from their workers, the levels of employee engagement were higher especially in tough times.

By GARY MILES
mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

INVEST AND ENGAGE

Consulting Corner

What’s After SPM tells inspirational tales of everyday Malaysians who paved their own way to success. Discover the roads many others have taken and you might just uncover your own!

Exclusive Offer!
TalentCorp is sponsoring a limited amount of books. All you have to do is turn up at MAPCU Higher Education Fair – Mid Valley Exhibition Centre on 26-27 Jan 2013 to redeem the books for FREE. One book per student and while stocks last.

What’s After SPM?
101 stories, 101 young Malaysians
By TalentCorp

What’s After SPM tells inspirational tales of everyday Malaysians who paved their own way to success. Discover the roads many others have taken and you might just uncover your own!
DEAR CAREEROMBRES,

I am particularly interested in a career switch to investment banking/corporate finance.

I am in my mid-30s and an accountant, having 14 years in accounts and finance. I am currently a finance manager with a US-based multinational company, responsible for business finance support. I have been in this role for the past 2½ years and realise that this is not my aspiration. In my past roles, I was mainly involved in financial and management accounting with relatively limited exposure in corporate finance.

I have only been involved with group finance functions during one of my roles with a public-listed company where I was responsible for consolidating results, quarterly announcements, board paper preparation and some basic corporate exercises.

I am contemplating a career switch into areas like corporate finance - working in an investment bank or a public listed company that has high involve- ment in corporate exercises.

Do you think it is a good idea to switch careers and start all over again? If this is the case, I may need to move from a junior position with a lower pay scale.

Honestly speaking, I have financial commitments which can be difficult for me to meet if I earn a lower pay. Do you think it is something really worth doing or are there alternatives that could allow me to maintain at least my current salary after switching career?

I truly appreciate for your kind advice.

Best regards,

JASON

DEAR JASON,

Firstly, may I commend you for having the courage and foresight to take the necessary steps towards depth in the finance function. Your spread of exposure across the various accounting and finance roles is a strong foundation that you can leverage as you consider making your next move.

Whilst corporate finance and investment banking have a lot in common, especially the aspect of raising capital, they are also quite distinct in the job scope/approach. Firstly, corporate finance is a role that can be in-house within an organisation or an external role whereas investment banking is a client organisation (for example with the Big Four accounting firms). Investment banking, on the other hand, is a role that resides within an investment bank and acts as an external consultant to organisations in meeting their capital needs. This minor distinction in itself is something you have to consider as you analyse your preference whether you’d like to be part of an organisation’s finance team or act as an external consultant.

At the same time, corporate finance is a role which is more strategic in nature, has a wider spectrum of goals besides just raising capital especially concerning how the organisation’s corporate structure is optimised and poised for growth and requires more withstanding of investment bankers in many of their projects. Whereas, investment banking is a specialist profession and in many cases is more about being able to raise capital for a client organisation guided by banking rules.

I do think it’s important for you to find out more about the nature of both roles so that you are able to narrow down your targeted role with more precision. I must say that the mindset of corporate financiers and investment bankers are different from the perspective and mindset you would have while in your various accounting and finance roles. Often, in business finance or accounting, the mindset is more retrospective and also risk averse (maybe due to the “conservative” approach required by accounting practices) whereas in corporate finance and investment banking, your mindset has to be one that considers more economic forces, a higher tolerance for risk and creative ways to structure deals and portfolios to achieve the maximum capital position. So, even if you have the finance and accounting experience as an advantage, your challenge will also be whether your financial mind-set can be applied to any of the two roles.

In my humble opinion, corporate finance is probably a slightly easier transition for you as you can leverage your finance and accounting experience very well in all the corporate exercises. In fact, in most MNCs, there is definitely a robust corporate finance division (or maybe it’s called something else like the corporate investments division/ventures division, etc). If you can apply for an internal transfer in your current company, it would be a better choice and your compensation level will most likely not be imported.

If you do plan to apply externally to the big corporate finance consulting firms, your background is an advantage and as long as you are willing to learn and put in the hours, you can pick up the skills sets of corporate finance. You may not lead a team in the new role, but your compensation level will unlikely be impacted.

The switch to investment banking may be more challenging for you as it involves quite a big change from the corporate environment you are familiar with to a banking environment. Also, the level of competition is stiffer and you probably have to start from scratch in this arena as your juniors (in age) who started their career in investment banking will be way ahead of you in terms of specialisation and expertise. Your compensation here is hard to predict as investment bankers earn as much as the deals they close, so it’s driven a lot by your expertise and ability to generate capital and wealth for your clients. The income potential and also the demand of the job is different from whether you are inclined to go with the Buy-side or Sell-side of investment banking.

Being in your mid-30s is still a reasonable time to make a switch if you really believe that this is the path you want to take. But do consider the requirements of this job from all aspects and whether it suits your family needs as well.

ANG HUI MING

DEAR JASON,

Thank you for your question. You have shared a bit of background on yourself and that helps. In spite of the recent setback in the global financial world, Malaysia is well-positioned and there is still a huge demand for good candidates in the financial sector. Your question is specific and I will attempt to draw down and answer it.

Your current role in this US-based MNC would have given you a lot of insights as to how a business is operationally run and you could be doing loads of analytic work. This also means that you are exposed to MIS reporting and a good financial infra-structure. The previous exposure to the board and drafting of papers also adds weight to your resume.

You did mention and I am assum- ing that you have a good accounting and finance degree and have achieved professional certifications besides having 14 years of experi- ence. To move to corporate finance, here are some options:

1. Join an investment bank;
2. Join a bank or insurance company that is strategically looking for acquisitions and have an active strategic planning function. Not all organisations have a strategic planning function but those with sizeable assets and revenue will probably have one. Sometimes, the strategic planning function is subsumed under the finance function. Over the next 10 years or so, we foresee that there will be a lot of mergers and acquisitions (M&As) in Malaysia and the region which would impact the insurance sector.

These are possibly two places where you can locate a role quickly. In terms of age, your past commer- cial experience will put you in a good stead. Essentially, corporate finance means managing shareholder value better and you should join a forward looking organisation, that has loads of cash and is actively looking out for deals.

To move here, this is what you can do:

1. Identify a good headhunter who specialises in the financial services. At your age, you could be earning around RM180,000 to RM200,000 per annum and this means that your potential role could be operated by a search company. They would have their ears on the ground and can link you to some interviews.
2. Read the local and regional newspapers daily and shortlist some of the companies that you like and analyse their corporate plans and how are the dealmakers behind them. That is also a good way to know if they are potentially hiring or looking for resources.

Sometimes, joining an organisation is about timing. If you are in the right place at the right time, then the negotiations could be in your favour. However, if you go to a well-managed brand company then chances are the HR head and business partner will recognise your past achievements. To do the corporate finance function well, you need not only be a good com- mercial manager and have a good nose for how business is man- aged, but you should also be able to value organisations and their potential business. At the end of the day, HR heads would like to look for an applicant more holistic- ally; he must not be a job-hopper, but has worked in good brand names. Other factors include mannerism, interpersonal and influencing skills, depth of past experience, conceptual thinking, the ability to develop people, lan- guage and numerical abilities. In corporate finance, one must also have the ability to work with third parties like bankers, lawyers and accountants especially during due diligence and acquisitions phase. You should try and promote your business experience and your project management skills if any. The best place to start is to revamp your resume to highlight your commercial skills. Write to fit the potential role you are aiming for. You should at least attempt to satisfy your short-term curiosity and try and gain access to some interviews. It is only through try- ing that you will know. I would also encourage you to complete a three-year term in your current company. Reconnect with your former colleagues and bosses, and you will be surprised by how much they can be of help as well. Good luck.

NANCY LIM

The opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of myStarjob.com
Coming up in next Saturday’s issue . . .

CAREER ADVICE FROM SPIDERMAN

Get an insight into the daily routine of an MMA fighter in A Day in the Life.

It takes the effort of those around you to build a leader, writes Roshan Thiran in Be a Leader.

Emotions in the workplace are not necessarily harmful. Find out more in Women and Careers.

Ways to reduce stress and benefit your family relations, in Worklife Balance.

Also next week.

SPIDER LABORATORY

myStarjob.com, Saturday 19 January 2013