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Take a cue from Spider-Man

CAREER LESSONS FROM THE WEBBED SUPERHERO

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A FIGHTER'S FIST

Peter Davis talks about his life as a Mixed Martial Arts fighter.

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NO SHORTCUTS to building leaders - it takes long term investment

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY is not such a dirty word

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A couple weeks ago, I was sitting in the office of Johan Merican, CEO of TalentCorp and I noticed a few movie posters in his room. He had a number of Star Wars relics and then I spotted a poster he had of Spider-Man. I looked up and said “the greatest superhero of all time surely”, I am not sure if Johan agreed with me but I am convinced that Spidey aka Peter Parker is the all-time greatest superhero in both the Marvel Universe and the DC universe (for those who don’t know there are only two great superhero universes - DC houses Superman, Wonder Woman and Batman whilst Marvel has the more exciting Spider-Man, X-Men and Avengers). I know many of you will shrug your head and want to debate with me about the merits of Spider-Man being the greatest superhero but here are three reasons why he surely must be the best.

1. He is the funniest superhero of all – every time I read a Spider-Man comic book, I never fail to snort or snigger in glee at the atrociously ridiculous comments that Parker makes. Even when he is faced with the most fearsome enemy that is about to tear him to shreds, dear old Spidey has the audacity to stutter some comical lines that bring a smile on my face. Surely, just for his sheer comic demeanour he wins hands down.

2. He is the most awesome superhero. He has super powers, spider-senses, can leap tall buildings, is super-strong and yet the kindest and most gentle of humans. Having a kind soul who helps and serves, yet can still look at a bad guy in the eyes and whip the crap out of him, is just awesome.

3. He married a supermodel. Sure Lois Lane looked pretty good (at least in the comic strip) but she was never a supermodel. On the other hand, Mary Jane Watson was a top model and one of the most successful in the world! Only Spider-Man managed to convince the world’s greatest supermodel that Parker was worthy enough to marry her. And she married Parker not Spider-Man. You have to admit that a superhero who manages to have a normal life (and a supermodel wife), is funny and has a kind soul is the best! Seriously, who can beat that?

So, eat your heart out Superman, Batman and Mr Ego Ironman. You are not as worthy of the crown as Parker is. Now that we have established that Spider-Man is truly the king of the super heroes, there must surely be some lessons Parker can teach us on leadership. This week, we journey into leadership and career secrets of Parker, the life of Parker and try to dig out nuggets of wisdom on leadership and having a great career. And so this week, we journey into one of the most great leadersbegan their leadership journey at a young age. In fact, most great leaders began their leadership journey at a young age. As you know, Parker became Spider-Man as a teenager. In fact, most great leaders began their leadership journey at a young age. And so this week, we journey into the life of Parker and try to dig out nuggets of wisdom on leadership and career management from him. Our feature story this week on pages 7 to 11, dives into leadership and career secrets of Spider-Man.

As you know, Parker became Spider-Man as a teenager. In fact, most great leaders began their leadership journey at a young age. As always, enjoy our career guide. We hope it will continue to inspire you to keep learning and growing. We have filled this issue with ideas and resources to help you grow your career. Keep leveraging our amazing videos and other resources which can be accessed at www.leaderonomics.tv or at our main home site www.leaderonomics.com.

We wish you all the best in your career journey! We hope you have as much fun with this pullout as myself and my team at Leaderonomics have had putting it all together. If you have any feedback on the pullout, feel free to email me and my team at mystarjob@leaderonomics.com. We love all feedback (we believe it’s a gift from you to us regardless of the nature of the comment!) so do send us your thoughts, ideas and aspirations for the pullout. Have a super weekend!

Warm regards,

ROSSAN THIRAN
Editor, myStarjob.com & CEO, Leaderonomics

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**CAREER TIPS**

**“WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY”**

This is probably the most iconic line in the entire legacy of Spider-Man. This concept also holds water at the workplace, where people with higher positions and more power shouldered greater responsibility. So when you are eyeing that promotion, bear in mind the responsibility that comes with it.

**MARY JANE SAYS, “GO GET ‘EM, TIGER”**

Every superhero needs a personal cheerleader to bring out the best in themselves. A supportive, nurturing environment in the workplace will motivate employees to do their very best and impress.

**AUNT MAY SAYS, “EVERYONE HAS A HERO INSIDE OF HIM”**

There is so much potential in everybody waiting to be unlocked. It is vital to recognise that each and every employee has a unique talent or special skill that just needs to be unleashed. Develop your forte to achieve your career dreams.

**PETER PARKER TELLS J. JONAH JAMESON, “YOU DON’T TRUST ANYONE, THAT’S YOUR PROBLEM”**

In any organisation, these needs to be a sense of trust among employees across all levels. If there is suspicion arising between bosses and employees, productivity and efficiency can be compromised. Create an organisational culture of trust and faith because no one is capable of doing everything on his own.

**THE MASK OF EMPOWERMENT**

Peter Parker gives a mask to a child in trouble and tells him that the mask will make him stronger. This shows the power of building confidence and heroism in a person. Empower your employees and encourage them to soar to greater heights. Build confidence by encouraging them to go to the next level.

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**IT’S SPIDEY TIME**

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**THE MEANING OF LEADERSHIP**

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**WORKLIFE BALANCE**

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**Brain Bulletin**

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**Two to Tango**

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**Top 10**

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**Superhero advice**

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**10 things you can do to make your job more fulfilling**

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**Powerful punch**

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**No overnight leaders**

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**Boohoo to yeehah**

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**TheMask of Empowerment**

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**Leadership and career secrets of Parker**

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**Spider-Man**

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**January 2013**

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**EDITORIAL**

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**mystarjob.com, saturday 26 January 2013**
By PREMA JAYABALAN
prema.jayabalant@leaderonomics.com

“A child, I was very much into computer games like Nintendo and Mario Brothers. I was not up for martial arts classes or anything like that. As an adult, I got interested in mountain biking and I liked that very much. My friends and I used to do this activity and then, one fine day, we decided to give martial arts a try.”

This was the response I got from the famous, Malaysian Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fighter Peter Davis when I asked him about his involvement in this sport. For those who are new to MMA, it is a full-contact combat sport that allows the use of both striking and grappling techniques, both standing and on the ground, combining a variety of other combat sports. This handsome and tough fighter has a diverse and unusual background unlike any other fighters. Davis is also a well-known Malaysian actor, best known for his role as Eric Tan in the award winning 2008 movie Self Out! He is also renowned in the international world of modelling. Many were cynical as to whether this skill set would help in MMA but Davis shocked the world with a ruthless defeat of Singaporean Kim Hee at ONE FC: Destiny of Warriors, overcoming him within the first few seconds with a stunning back kick.

Davis, who is of English and Chinese parentage, grew up in the UK. When he was 20, he took up an obscure form of Chinese Kung Fu known as Wu Ji Chuan under a Malaysian master and today, at 31, he is an expert in this self-defence technique and teaches it as well.

Davis was an amateur MMA fighter for three years before becoming professional at 26. What started as a hobby soon turned into a passion and Davis decided to take it to a more serious level. He made his mixed martial arts debut against Masaya Doi and won by knockout after just 59 seconds at the UK MMA in 2004. Throughout his career as a fighter, Davis has won five out of many good fighters that you spar with that it is not an easy task. It requires a lot of hard work and dedication. Davis wants them to always remember that it is not an easy task. It requires a lot of hard work and dedication. “Be prepared to give your best and don’t let the glory of winning go to your head. Have respect for other fighters.”

Nevertheless, Davis likes what he is doing because he believes that he is good at it. Winning fights shows that he can fight well and is a boost to him to pursue this sport further. However, he does not intend to be a fighter forever. He plans to retire at 36.

“Fighting can bring some serious damage to the human body and I do not want to put that strain on mine. I want to enjoy life with a healthy and able body. I do, however, plan to go on teaching martial arts. It gives me great pleasure to take my students for a competition and see them win a fight.”

For those aspiring to become fighters, Davis wants them to always remember that it is not an easy task. It requires a lot of hard work and dedication.

“What it takes to be an MMA fighter is that it tests you as an individual. The practices and trainings are no easy feat at all. You get beaten up pretty bad at times. You get punched, develop muscle aches and some bad bruises. It is really a tough competition as there are many good fighters that you spar with during your trainings,” says Davis.

Nevertheless, Davis has won five out of the six matches he participated in. “Well, I was happy that I had won my first ever match but I felt that it ended too soon. For me it was a very short fight and I wanted more. I felt that I trained strenuously for long durations and the outcome was a very quick one”, reminisces Davis when asked about his first ever fight.

For Davis, his typical day begins at 9.45am when he leaves his home to head to the Muayfit MMA Studio in Petaling Jaya. Right after a breakfast of oats, protein meal and flax seed. He is at the studio by 10.30am where his daily regime starts.

“We start off with some warm-up exercises which are essential prior to training. After that, we do a series of training such as sparring, Muay Thai training, sprinting and circuit training. We have to be careful while training because sometimes we incur more injuries during training than the match itself. Some of the guys here are really fit and very good fighters.”

At noon, Davis goes for lunch. The meal comprises chicken breast, half-boiled eggs and salads. Davis has to be on a strict protein diet which is low on carbs. He has to strictly watch his weight as he fights in the lightweight division and he can’t weigh more than what is set in this division.

After lunch, Davis takes a break in the studio while catching up with other fighters. At 4pm, training resumes. This time, it is MMA-sparring, Brazilian Ju-Jitsu and American style wrestling. These fights are performed with partners. It is usually one-on-one but there are also fights that involve one person fighting four people in a row. This tiring and labourious regime goes on until 7pm.

“One of my training in the studio ends, I head to Kuala Lumpur where I teach Wu Ji Chuan to a group of students. This class takes place twice a week from 8pm to 10pm. I find this very fulfilling as I get to impart the knowledge I have to willing students who want to learn the right form of this art.”

After the class, Davis heads home. By the time he is back, he is exhausted and has just enough energy to climb onto bed. This is the daily routine for Davis two months prior to a match. His next ONE FC match takes place next month.

“The most challenging part of being an MMA fighter is that it tests you as an individual. The practices and trainings are no easy feat at all. You get beaten up pretty bad at times. You get punched, develop muscle aches and some bad bruises. It is really a tough competition as there are many good fighters that you spar with during your trainings,” says Davis.

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For those aspiring to become fighters, Davis wants them to always remember that it is not an easy task. It requires a lot of hard work and dedication.

“Be prepared to give your best and don’t let the glory of winning go to your head. Have respect for other fighters.”

With two ONE FC wins under his belt, this Malaysian fighter has shown that he is more than just a pretty face. His unorthodox Kung Fu-based striking style makes him a fearsome challenge to anyone in the ONE FC Lightweight division.
A Leader Is Relentless

Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in prison before he was freed. In spite of his long incarceration, Mandela stayed true to his cause. His relentless pursuit of the vision of an Apartheid-free and united South Africa, saw his dream finally realised.

Great leaders have inspiring visions and persistently focus on achieving their goals. Aung San Suu Kyi, Bill Gates, and Henry Ford concentrated their efforts on dreams of a better tomorrow — Freeing Myanmar, changing the world through software and making cars affordable for everyone.

Leaders are not born. These leaders are not that much different to the rest of us. It is their single-minded approach and passion towards their vision of a better tomorrow that sets them apart.

Be A Leader.

We can help your organisation develop leaders. Write in to: people@leaderonomics.com or call 6012.343.7716
When Maradona proudly lifted the World Cup for Argentina in 1986, I watched and was inspired to play football. Unfortunately, at that point in time, I was a wretched football player – I couldn’t pass the ball, let alone make my class team. But I aspired to represent my school one day.

My friends laughed at my goal as I went on to represent the school and was inspired to play football. Within a year, I ended up playing for my class and later getting into a special training by the legendary Mokhtar Dahari.

Mokhtar was brought into my alma mater, Methodist Boys’ School Kuala Lumpur, to conduct a seven-week training programme. At every session, I always felt Mokhtar picked on me. Being the least "gifted" there, he subjected me to running my self to the limit. You will become MBS captain one day!

Soon after, Mokhtar was taken ill and I never saw him again. He later passed away. Yet, his words inspired me to do more. You have to force yourself to work harder than any of the other players. You think you are going to be special. Work and play hard and keep pushing yourself to the limit. You will become MBS captain one day!

The poll concluded that holding a position of responsibility at school was the most important indicator of a good future leader – and that academic qualification was overrated.

I have always been astounded by leadership at a very young age. Activities, such as scouts, guides or playing on a school team actually furnish young people with skills like team ethos, ambition, goal setting and other qualities we associate with good leadership.

I have always been astounded by leadership at a very young age. Activities, such as scouts, guides or playing on a school team actually furnish young people with skills like team ethos, ambition, goal setting and other qualities we associate with good leadership.

"Fine, then figure out how to do it." Without training really begins at home, and in schools. Harvard professors Marshall Goldsmith and Howard Morgan studied over 86,000 participants and found conclusive evidence that leadership is learnt.

It’s simple – all it takes is for you to be a Mokhtar Dahari and help Malaysia become the land of leaders.

Leadership starts from young. It takes a community to build a leader.
EMOTIONS

The truth is, the tough doesn’t get going; instead, the norm is to break down and have emotional outbursts — it tears, anger or frustration. The ideal of a non-emotional workplace becomes unrealistic when expectations are high and resources remain low.

Although it is perceived as vital to put emotions aside at work, Anne Kreamer, the author of the book It’s Always Personal says an emotion-free workplace is not healthy for businesses.

How true is that stereotype and is being emotional a habit to cultivate at all?

BIG GIRLS DO CRY

As much as emotions are part of being human, they are predominantly a woman’s affliction. Women have been stereotypically defined as emotional creatures because in popular understanding, women are portrayed as being more “emotionally unstable”, perceived to be often going into fits of anger, sadness, despair or panic much more frequently than men.

Women have been blamed for being “unreasonably moody” or “exceptionally emotional during the time of the month” and as a result, often sidelined for promotions.

This is proven by Today’s Workplace which indicates that “women still hold a very small percentage of top-level professional positions” due to this gender stereotype.

It is undeniable that women have the tendency to be more emotional than men and it is also true that some women do end up in a sudden outpour of emotions which may be due to dissatisfaction at work, frustration with clients, envy of colleagues and other domestic issues.

Women overreact easily to issues as they take their work very personally compared with men who will leave their feelings aside, especially when it comes to work.

Also, women get more emotional and cry nearly four times as often as men because they are simply wired differently. Scientifically, Kreamer adds that women have six times the amount of prolactin (the hormone which controls tears) than men.

In addition, women tend to be more emotional because we live in a society that favours women that are nurturers and feelers whereas men are expected to be thinkers and doers.

Having said that, it does not mean that men are not emotional; they just tend to channel their emotions to anger instead of sadness.

EMOTIONS ARE GOOD

As much as society dictates that people should put on a mask at work, having emotions at work is not necessarily a setback. Dan Hill, author of Emotional Intelligence: Leveraging Emotions for Business Success said that “emotions are signals that something meaningful is happening.”

To ban them from the workplace is just Orwellian (which also means destructive to the welfare of a free and open society).

The trick is really to understand our emotions and to harness and manage them appropriately.

Learning to differentiate between emotion, fact and professionalism will create strength in the workplace.

Emotions from women can be seen as negative only when emotional situations are not handled properly. It’s not about hiding our emotions but being careful so as not to be completely emotionless.

Being cold is an attribute that will bring about negative consequences as women are expected to be caring, sensitive and empathetic.

TRANSFORMING EMOTIONS TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Women are emotional beings but that is also an added advantage in the workplace if the emotions are well-managed.

Despite the daunting stereotypes of emotions as weaknesses in the workplace, emotions can be turned into emotional intelligence, which is crucial for business success.

For instance, women are quick to react to emotions and that means they have to ability to detect their clients’ and colleagues’ unhappiness very quickly and take remedial steps to save the day.

Also, when it comes to trusting and respecting professional relationships, women tend to be the ones sent for building networks as they are generally people-oriented compared with men who may be more task-driven.

Being compassionate and having empathy also enable women to deal with people better, hence the reason why there are more women in the Human Resources and Customer Relationships departments.

As much as women are stereotyped as emotional creatures, they are also relationship builders and this is certainly a positive trait because in the workplace, relationships play a vital role in getting the work done.

The attributes of women being more caring and sensitive become the edge to winning people over – it’s not all about logic for women, it’s about touching people’s hearts before the minds.

Therefore, we can discard the notion that all emotions are disruptive and illogical and should be removed from the workplace.

Having said that, it’s important that women comprehend emotions to avoid being viewed as fluffy, irrational, illogical and unreasonable.

For example, since women tend to get emotional at work, instead of exhibiting a meltdown at work, a better way would be to step away and take a breather before getting back to the issue.

Imagine women and men having a “depression tank” but the women invariably having a smaller tank compared with the men.

With every challenge, the tank slowly fills up until it is time to cry it all out.

Once that is done, they are ready to do it all over again.

So having a “macho and robotic work culture” is not encouraged for long-term business success.

It is important that emotions are implicitly translated into good feelings and there is a need to practise positive emotions which will be conducive to the organisational.

When emotional intelligence is practised, it will bring about rapid career growth as it is a precursor of success in the workplace and, in our lives.

So, in conclusion, emotions shouldn’t be shunned but seen as an advantage. It’s all about knowing how to use them.

Jermaine Bee is a manager for the Learning team at Leaderonomics. She believes that women will one day rule the world, if only they are able to learn the mastery of managing emotions. For more information on great training programmes, you can contact her at people@leaderonomics.com
Multi-tasking does not necessarily work. In Spider-Man 2, Peter Parker had trouble juggling work, studies, his social life, and being Spider-Man. There are times when you have to sacrifice one aspect of your life to ensure the other parts thrive. Learn to prioritise.

Disregard what others think of you; just do what you believe in. Spider-Man faces criticism every day thanks to J. Jonah Jameson, but that didn’t stop him from doing what he believes is right. Never let criticism overcome your ability to work and do what you believe is right.

Spider-Man believes in the best of people, even his enemy. In Spider-Man 2, he managed to change Doctor Octopus’ mind to be the man he was before. There is always some good in people, even the grouchy ones. If you are able to look past the bad, you may find that colleague has something more to offer.

Laugh in the face of danger, face a little humour. Like Spider-Man, making jokes in a difficult situation can lighten the mood and lift the spirits. Be an influence for good in the workplace and beyond.

Have a motto or mission statement to live by. “With great powers comes great responsibility”. It is not just a phrase; it is a motto Spider-Man lives by, and his actions are based on this. Having a motto can guide you through your workplace and life and help you stay focused on what you should be doing.

Choose who you want to be with. Get people to support you. As they say, behind a great man, there is a great woman. In Peter Parker’s case there are two, Mary Jane and Aunt May. They are the pillars of strength for him. Surrounding yourself with people that bring you up rather than those that bring you down is one of the secrets to be as great as Spider-Man.

Use your spider sense – be aware of your surroundings and act accordingly. Always be mindful of the things that happen around you as there are always opportunities and dangers that you can either utilise or avoid.

Seek help when you need it. There will be obstacles that can’t be overcome by one person. When that happens, seek help from others. Spider-Man always asks for help when a particular villain was too big for him to handle.

People can change. Spider-Man shows that people can change. Peter Parker changed from being a nerd in high school, to a confident superhero. Giving people the right “power” can make them grow. So give your employees a radioactive bite/project and see where they take it.

Thinking outside the box was one of Spider-Man’s strengths. When the Green Goblin threatened to kill Mary Jane and a group of kids in the first movie, instead of saving them, Spider-Man found a way to save them all. Thinking outside the box can be the key to success as well.

There is always a solution to a difficult problem. When you see the box as one of the way, think outside the box. As Spider-Man says, “There is always a way.”
About Spider-Man

Spider-Man is a comic book superhero published by Marvel Comics. Created by writer-editor Stan Lee and artistSteve Ditko, the character first appeared in the comic book Strange Tales #13, in 1962, under the title "Spider-Man". Since then he has been the lead character in several comic book series, animated television series, television shows, and a series of films starring Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield. He is one of the most recognizable characters in the Marvel Universe and a cultural icon.

Characters

Spider-Man's origin story is iconic, involving a bitten spider and history that leads him to become a superhero. He uses his abilities to combat crime, save lives, and protect the innocent. He has a close relationship with his best friend Peter Parker, who is also Spider-Man's alter ego. Other notable characters include Mary Jane Watson, Gwen Stacy, and the Green Goblin.

In the latest Spider-Man movie, the story follows Peter Parker as he navigates the challenges of being both a high school student and a superhero. He faces new threats, including a powerful villain and internal struggles as he tries to balance his personal life with his superhero responsibilities.

Spider-Man is often referred to as "web-head", "spider-crafter", or "web-head".
NUGGETS OF CAREER WISDOM

By PREMA JAYABALAN
prema.jayabalan@leaderonomics.com

SPIDER-MAN, one of the most celebrated superhero characters, was first created in the early 1960s by comic book artist Steve Ditko, and writer Stan Lee. Every superhero has an origin story, a way in which the ordinary person somehow becomes extraordinary. Spider-Man is no exemption. Peter Parker, a socially awkward, shy high school student gets bitten by a radioactive spider that causes his blood to get affected. The outcome... he becomes Spider-Man.

Spider-Man has always been an interesting and intriguing character that evoked mystery. Moving from building to building with his never-ending supply of web and appearing when least expected, he is always there for anyone who is in need of help. It can't be denied that since his first appearance in 1962, he has been one of the more famous superheroes. As an iconic personality who is worth looking up to, here are some lessons from Spider-Man which can be incorporated into your work life.

1. ALWAYS GIVE IMPORTANCE TO PERSONAL BRANDING

What would become of Spider-Man without his red and blue body suit and mask? Or without the trust and love of the people of New York? Spidey is defined by these elements, as such, is a part of his personal identity. In order to be in the minds of top guns in the working world, ensure that your name carries positive connotations. If you are looking to move forward in your field of expertise and gain kudos for the excellent work that you are producing, people need to know and recognise your name.

Moreover in this era, Google is an avenue used by all, especially potential employers to gain information about you through your social networks and blogs. With such easy access, there is no hiding any negative remarks from the Internet. Thus, always ensure that your name carries only positive and good details.

2. DISCOVER YOUR NICHE

Once Peter Parker realises that he has special powers, he tracks down the thief who murdered his uncle. This goes on until a giant, blood-thirsty lizard appears on Brooklyn Bridge and terrifies the people. At that moment, Spider-Man realises that he has obtained his powers for a greater reason. He is meant to be a saviour who protects people from obtaining his powers for a greater reason. He is meant to be a saviour who protects people from

3. BE AWARE OF WHAT YOU CAN OFFER OTHER PEOPLE

In The Amazing Spider-Man, Parker initially started using his newly-acquired powers to track criminals based on a personal vendetta. It took him a while to realise that his super powers could actually be used to help people and he goes about doing just that. His good deed does not go unappreciated as in the climax of the film, the people whom Spider-Man helped, unite to enable him defeat the villain. A touching ending.

Similarly, when you want to build a professional network consisting of intellectual, smart, genuine and honest people, you need to figure out a way to cultivate and strengthen these relationships. Come up with ways to offer your assistance and help without expecting anything in return. Invest in these people by getting them acquainted with others whom they might find important or interesting. Help them out in their projects or offer to give them information with matters pertaining to their needs and interests. Ultimately, when you need help, you will find people from your network at your beck and call. They will also bring information with matters pertaining to their projects or offer to give them information with matters pertaining to their needs and interests. Ultimately, when you need help, you will find people from your network at your beck and call. They will also bring

4. ASK FOR HELP AT THE RIGHT TIME

If you think about it, at the end of the day, Parker is just another ordinary person. Most people get overwhelmed when they find themselves being embroiled in scary situations over and over again. Eventually, they will need help from other people. Even the amazing Spider-Man cannot be at two places simultaneously. Thus, when in dire need, he requests the assistance of the delightful Gwen Stacy who is also a science chick and her lady love to assist him in formulating an antidote that will defeat the genetically-mutated villain. Without the intervention from Stacy, the day could never have been saved.

This same scenario can take place in your organisation. There may come a time in your professional life when you can't do everything by yourself. There might even come a time when you won't know how to do it all by yourself. When you are faced with this situation, realise that it is absolutely normal to ask for advice and help. More often than not, some people make a wrong assumption that they will look incompetent if they ask for help. Given a choice, a wise person would want to be the one who did not ask for help and messed up big time or would you want to be the one who is given praises for a fantastic job because of the advice given by a colleague? Take the advice given by a colleague?

5. DON'T EVER GIVE UP

In the midst of risking his life to save the citizens of New York, Spider-Man would have thought, “Oh, how I wish I was home watching TV right now. This is so darn difficult.” However, there are lives at stake and Spidey has to get the job done. It does not reflect well on you if you do not complete a task.

Likewise, you will face such a situation in your career as well. There will be times when you find it extremely hard to succeed. Your boss may pile up tasks that may seem impossible to complete. You may be faced with unfamiliar projects and assignments. You may find yourself constantly working but the job is never done. It becomes daunting and all you want to do is to shout “I quit.” But remember, never, ever give up without trying to find a solution. If you have not made any efforts, you will never succeed. Every problem has a solution. It is all about finding it.

HELP WANTED

SPIDEY HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN INTERESTING AND INTRIGUING CHARACTER THAT EVOKED MYSTERY. MOVING FROM BUILDING TO BUILDING WITH HIS NEVER-ENDING SUPPLY OF WEB AND APPEARING WHEN LEAST EXPECTED, HE IS ALWAYS THERE FOR ANYONE WHO IS IN NEED OF HELP.
Stressed out? Plan a family vacation

You can be the best parents to your children and the best employees in the office.

By Zaid Mohamad
zaid@smartparents.com.my

More and more married couples are entering the workforce. Some are doing it by choice in their pursuit of their dream careers, but many couples have to supplement the family income. In addition, the amount of job-related stress is also on the increase. This is not good news to any family. Stressful parents are a “danger” to their children. They can be irrational and highly-emotional in dealing with the demands at home. Feelings have been hurt and trust has been broken. These highly-stressed parents face the challenge of controlling their anger towards their children. Many cases of child and spousal abuses can be attributed to job-related stress.

Therefore, something must be done to prevent such cases. Incidents like harsh reprimands and cutbacks on family budgets are attributed to job-related stress. High-stressed parents face the challenge of dealing with the demands at home. Feelings have been hurt and trust has been broken.

Many parents I know are “afraid” to go for a holiday, especially extended ones for fear of being labelled as “lazy, not motivated or not working hard enough.” I think these reasons exist only in this part of the world because in the West, an employee’s salary may get deducted if he or she is not taking any leave of absence.

Vacations are created for a good reason. No one can work non-stop and still expect high productivity. Even machines need downtime and maintenance. If you are a working parent, you owe it to your family to spend some uninterrupted time to recharge and bond with your family members.

Taking a vacation is arguably the best way to achieve those objectives. I am a firm believer in taking a vacation at least twice a year. I am also a believer in planning ahead for such vacations. From experience, half of the fun is actually in the anticipation of the holidays. By taking a break, I really mean leaving work behind. My former boss used to say, “The best vacation is the one where you totally forget about work, and even your office PC’s password!” I love that guy!

If vacations are too far in between, you should schedule other activities with the family. The key word is schedule, don’t leave it to chance because there will always be other pressing matters to attend to. You can schedule a weekend dinner, a family game, a day out or a short drive to a nearby beach. Whatever it is, chances are you will be smiling as you start counting the days. The stress and pressures will also melt away.

See it in a new perspective

If you can’t change your job, change the way you look at it. If you work in a customer service counter, the endless stream of people can quickly get to you. By noon, your mood and energy are already low as you attend to their problems. It’s time to liberate yourself by looking at your job from a different perspective.

Instead of considering your customers as a burden, take the opportunity to make them happy. Imagine a happy customer going home to his family and bringing cheer to his children. Be proud that you contributed to that. Aim to serve every customer with cheerfulness.

Be the best

Whether at home or in the office, aim to be the best that you can be. This is a powerful motivator to overcome any barriers.

When the going gets tough, the tough gets going. You will not be easily swayed by distractions as you embark on a long journey to attain the best.

Believe and prove it to yourself that you are the best parents to your children and the best employees in the office. If you can do this, you will derive immense satisfaction from your efforts.

So, the next time you are feeling the pressure, turn to a trusted colleague and say, “I don’t need this job, but the job needs me, because I can do it better than anybody else!”

Zaid Mohamad is a father of four, former senior leader in an MNC, and he is a certified parental coach and best-selling author of two books, Smart Parents, Brighter Kids and Smart Parents, Richer Kids. For details of his work, please visit www.SmartParents.com.my or write to him at zaid@smartparents.com.my.

By Terry Small
terry@terrysmall.com

You don’t have a brain. You have two brains!

A left brain and a right brain. Left cortex. Right cortex. They are different and they are connected by a band of 300 million nerve fibres called the corpus callosum. Your left brain is language, math, writing, concrete, organisation, detail, sequence, etc. Your right brain is imagination, creativity, big picture, visualisation, drawing, role-playing, etc.

Want proof of your two brains? Try this:

1. While sitting at your desk, lift your right foot off the floor and make clockwise circles with it.

2. Now, while doing this, draw the number “six” in the air with your right hand. Your foot will change direction! There is nothing you can do about it.

3. Repeat the process, but this time one small change... draw the number “six” with your left hand. Hmmm...

   Have you ever noticed that sometimes your brain seems “stuck”? And other times it seems OK. On those times when it seems that your brain is stuck, there’s a reason. It’s stuck!

   Let me introduce you to something called the Left/Right Dominant Cycle of the Brain. At any given time one brain is up doing most of the work and the other brain is having a “rest.” This is because normal hormonal fluctuations trigger stronger blood flows to different sides of the brain during the day. Every 90 minutes they switch. It’s like having two people spell each other off on a job. This is important. If you have some writing or planning to do and your left brain is down... you have a problem. If your right brain is down and you have to be creative or planning to do and your left brain is up doing most of the work and the other brain will be upper hand. Hmmm...

Remember: “You are a genius”.

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@leaderonomics.com
I MAGINE winning the jackpot and hav- ing all the money in the world — you can do what you wish, buy everything you have ever wanted, lie under the sun at the beach and relax until the end of your days.

But imagine you’ve done that and it’s been a while since you’ve been lying on the beach and you are getting bored and restless now. You start to think, “What is the next great, exciting or interesting thing to do?”

Do you want to teach, coach, entertain, inspire people, explore, manage, plan, sell, pioneer or lead? Your answer to this question will be one of your core values — what really is important to you.

The good news is that you can win the jackpot in life without having to buy a ticket. Of course, winning the jackpot will instantly allow you to do whatever you really want to do. But, think about the odds of winning (one in 49,836,032) and the fact that you can do this now without waiting for the jackpot.

It may take some adjustments to move towards your ideal life, but regardless, you can start today by recognising your top core values and then creating a project that will fulfill that value. That could mean taking part in volunteering activities in a field related to your values, travelling to discover new things to broaden your horizons, taking classes to learn something new and interesting, starting a value-based project, writing a blog or taking acting classes.

IDENTIFY YOUR NATURAL ABILITIES/TALENT

The first step towards discovering your core values is identifying your natural abilities/talent. Understand yourself better by asking those around you — your friends, family and mentors — these questions:

1. What are my greatest strengths/strong points?

2. What is my biggest weakness?

Remember that you are on an information gathering process, so ask for constructive comments and take notes.

3. What do you think my unique talents or gifts are? What comes naturally or effortlessly for me? Remember natural talent can be a part of you that it is like breathing and you don’t even notice it. So it is useful to ask others what they perceive as unique about you.

4. If someone were to write an article about me, what would the article be and where would it appear?

IDENTIFY YOUR PASSIONS

Using the Envy Method, list down the people you envy and what is it about them that you want to emulate. Take the following examples: (i) Sir Richard Branson — Enterprise; (ii) Oprah Winfrey — Wealth and influence; (iii) Margaret Thatcher — Assertive; or (iv) Steve Jobs — Innovative. Then, list down three to five of your potential careers. To give you some heads up, answer the following questions:

1. What do you like to do in your free time?

2. What books do you enjoy reading?

3. What naturally motivates you/comes off naturally to you?

What activities (e.g. games) did you enjoy as a child?

If you were given the freedom to choose, what would you rather do?

What will your legacy be?

The answers will shed some light on your inclinations and provide enough leads to get you to do more of what you love immediately, whether it is career-related or otherwise.

IDENTIFY YOUR VALUES

The activities above will help you to identify your core values, which can be in the form of the following keywords (these are sample values to be used as guidance. A simple Google search on “personal core values” will provide more examples):


ORIENTATE YOUR LIFE AROUND YOUR CORE VALUES

To create a happy and satisfying career, your future career goals should be in alignment with your core values to the closest extent possible. Do your best to match your career goals to one of your top core values or passions in life, and

1. Start expressing your top core values in every way possible, however trivial. If your core value is creativity and you enjoy writing, start contributing articles to your school/local club’s newsletter, consider blogging or other platforms.

2. Identify and seek the relevant tools to achieving your goals/career. An example would be enrolling in a class/study a subject that aligns with one of your top core values, or reading at least three books in your area of interest to understand the topic better.

3. Do volunteering work in the field that matches your values.

4. Kick-start a value-based project, i.e. something that is in alignment with your core values. Experiment with it in your free time. Give the best hour of the day to your project.

5. Set up a powerful structure for support. For example, having a personal support team is a solid structure for support towards attaining your career goal; joining a club that shares your core values is a structure for support to ensure that you move beyond your comfort zone and interact with people with similar values. Focus on developing a solid structure that will help you flourish.

There is always something that you can do today that will allow you to live one of your values. The closer your life is in alignment with your core values, the more fulfilled and satisfied you will be. The key reminder is to always ask yourself, “What will your legacy be?”

By RAINA RADZAIFF
myStarjob@leaderonomics.com

What is the point of sticking to things that have been tried and tested for many years and we know do not lead to substantial benefit? What is the point of following safe old ways of undertaking a task? What good will that bring? How can we see development, evolution?

If you look at the most important discoveries made by mankind, you will realise however of this quote — What if Galileo decided never to mention anything on his belief in heliocentrism since all his contemporaries subscribed to either geocentrism or the Tychonic system? What if Archimedes hesitated to share with the rest his discovery that, if a body is immersed in a fluid it experiences a buoyant force equal to the weight of the fluid it displaces?

They both had much to lose — much more than just reputation; remember, they lived in a time that their life could be in danger for expressing an idea so much against conventional wisdom of the time. What I want to say is — dare to explore an idea that may seem to endanger your career — just be sure to think it through well first. Courage and determination can take you very far, so be valiant enough to try out new things and take a risk, in order to get something bigger in the end.

Eva hopes that everyone will find the courage to push for their ideas, no matter how revolutionary they seem to be — you may be surprised on the outcome they may bring for your career.
By Victor Loh

The end of 2012, I posted a resolution for the coming year on my Facebook page: “MY AM Resolution for 2013: MUST! MAKE! MORE! MONEY!” It was a personal battle cry that was not meant to elicit any feedback, but the enthusiasm with which friends responded took me by surprise! Many wrote and PM-ed me to say how much they liked it, to commiserate, lament or simply to cheer me on.

Clearly, it was a subject that resonated with a lot of people. Now, I know a lot of people are uncomfortable talking about “making money” – ironic considering how necessary it is – but I ask you to please keep an open mind. Hold off any judgment that you may have. Yes, this is about money not greed.

Let’s take a look at number one: MUST

Must for me is a word that personifies determination and emphasises a deep need to make it all at cost. To claim you “must” achieve something is to be willing to put yourself on the line to see it happen. It means giving yourself no other option but to succeed.

At 65, a broke Colonel Sanders cashed in his US$99 social security cheque and travelled across the United States to sell his special 11 herbs and spices fried chicken recipe to restaurants. He was rejected 1,009 times before someone finally said “yes”. Today KFC is one of the world’s largest fast food restaurants and arguably the most beloved fried chicken.

Another favourite of mine is the story of Estee Lauder, founder of the multi-billion dollar beauty empire. In my book Upsides in a Downturn, I claimed Lauder as a classic tale of finding opportunity in the midst of challenging times. She started her business during the Great Depression with just four skincare products she peddled from door-to-door to beauty salons and hotels. She often reminded her sales employees.

In my sales training programmes, I never accept “but I cannot sell” as an excuse because it implies that either you don’t want to sell or don’t know how to. The former is an attitude problem, which is difficult to overcome, because it is a self-fulfilling prophecy. But the lack of knowledge, the latter, should not be a reason to derail ambition. There are always ways, programmes, coaches, mentors, etc. In my experience as a trainer, no one with the right attitude and willingness to learn is beyond teaching.

You know the saying: nobody regrets the things he did, only the ones he didn’t do.

And now comes the ‘dirty’ word money

It is ironic, laughable even, how shy we get about money matters considering how essential it is! As the old adage goes, “money is a good servant but a bad master.” So the best way to approach it is to learn how to make money so that it will always be in your service.

The beauty about money-making is that it is a skill that can be learned. You don’t have to be born with it like talent, beauty or genius. You might have heard of motivational guru Tony Robbins. Robbins is the best in the business. But even he learned his trade like everyone else.

He had no prior training or university education in motivation speaking. A college dropout working as a janitor, he did not even have the money to attend courses. But he did what he could: read.

He developed a voracious appetite for self-help and personal growth books, apparently reading over 700 books in a few short years. He eventually turned his knowledge into a proprietary motivation programme, the precursor to the incredible success he enjoys today.

The difference between winners and losers is simply that winners do the things losers don’t like to do. And what is it that losers don’t like to do? The same things winners don’t like to do! The same things winners don’t like to do! Except winners do not allow these things to stand in the way; they push themselves and do it anyway.

Take action today and be winners in life!

Victor Loh is a passionate advocate for life skill education for youth and children. He is also a best-selling author, award-winning marketer, corporate trainer and entrepreneur. If you would like to connect with him, email him at victor@leaderonomics.com
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This week, Bani Zainal, senior vice-president at Malakoff, and Ang Hui Ming, co-founder of Leaderonomics, answer Tisa’s question.

DEAR CAREERNOMERS,

First of all, I would like to wish you a Happy New Year. There are not many challenges in my current job. I’m working as a human resources (HR) executive in a private healthcare company. I’m looking for a change in my current job. For the past three years, I have been doing the same tasks. I’m interested in getting wider exposure in industrial related matters. I’m planning to take up a certificate in Industrial Relations (IR), but how do I gain the experience? Employers want experienced HR personnel in IR matters. In the course of my work, I had prepared show cause and termination letters. I have also given counselling to employees.

Thank you
TISA

DEAR TISA

Thank you for sharing with us your predicament and a Happy and Prosperous New Year to you too. While I am not sure of your current function in HR, reading from the text you do not find your current job as challenging enough and are looking for a change. There may be many reasons why you find your current job not challenging enough or other functions more interesting, in this case Industrial Relations (IR).

The job may be mundane or operational and you do not get to learn and develop your skills and knowledge in a more specialised manner. If this is the case, taking up a course or certification program in IR is one way you will acquire knowledge in this field. Not only will you learn the technical and academic side of IR you will also be able to exchange ideas and views on the subject. Most of the students of the program are existing HR practitioners. Hence, they will be able to share their experience with you in dealing with different cases and circumstances of IR matters.

You should also look out for a mentor who will be able to guide and coach you while you are attending the course so that you can bounce of ideas and thoughts on the subjects that you study. While you are learning you should put into practice, which you already done to a certain extent from the sound of it, at work. The closest person who can be a mentor perhaps is your immediate superior. If that is so, ask for the opportunity to apply your learning when IR related cases arise in your organisation and guidance when is required. This will provide you the opportunity to acquire the experience you need should you decide to embark on a career in IR later whether in your Company or if you decide to leave in other organisations.

There are many aspects of IR, from dealing with unions in collective bargaining, managing employee misconducts by conducting investigations and domestic inquiries to representing the company in arbitration at the IR Department or the IR Court. Executing all these requires experience and know-how and by looking for opportunities for exposure, you will acquire the necessary experience.

Be also aware that there are other interesting functions also in HR including Rewards and Recognition, Talent Management, Human Capital Development and Recruitment. They are all equally interesting if you learn new and progressive ways of doing things. Look for opportunities to learn these new skills and seek to apply them in your current organisation. If you try hard enough not only will you be able to complement your IR role, it will also open up more opportunities for you in the HR arena.

I wish you all the best in exploring and embarking in the IR field and other HR functions which I am sure will be fulfilling and satisfying endeavor.

BANI ZAINAL

DEAR TISA,

It is good to know that you are looking for new challenges in your job and that you have the desire to deepen your knowledge and expertise in the HR function. Your interest in Industrial Relations is very specific and you must have done some groundwork on this particular area to know that you want to actually specialise in IR.

You are quite right to say that a lot of employers prefer candidates with some experience in IR when they hire. This is because IR is a very challenging and sensitive function in any organisation which requires extra care when choosing the right person for this job. The more experience one has in handling IR issues, the higher the value of that person. On top of that, it’s not just qualification and experience employers are looking for, but also the personality, character and aptitude of the candidate that is critical in stepping into the shoes of any IR role.

If you find yourself facing a roadblock each time you try to apply for an IR role, don’t give up hope. Seek to improve yourself and deepen your knowledge in the area of IR so that it strengthens your resume and also your confidence when going for interviews for any IR role. As you mentioned, you are considering getting a certificate in IR, which I think is a good start. You can consider just a Certificate in IR or consider a Diploma in IR. Many of these courses are very practical in nature and involve a lot of industry experts in the sharing of case studies and real life situations. As you sign up to obtain your qualification in IR, you will also be able to network with all the IR corporate experts who deliver your module. Many of the lecturers are practitioners themselves and they might be a good source to seek jobs in the area of IR.

May I suggest that you look up what Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) Academy has to offer in terms of various certificates and diploma in IR. Or you may check out any courses, trainings and certification some colleges or Universities offer.

Good luck!

ANG HUI MING

The opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of myStarjob.com
Playing to win requires good risk assessment, a clear game plan, and the ability to inspire. Read more in Be A Leader.

The biggest mistake managers make and how to fix it, in Consulting Corner.

Top 10 shares how to break away from the norm and stand out at work.

Group CEO of Stridec Creatives, Sherman Foo talks about his early days’ struggles in Dare To Fail.