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ANY years ago, I worked in New York city for a TV and media giant – NBC. As housing was extremely expensive in New York, I had to share a place with a former college friend. Interestingly, every day after work, when we both returned home after a long day, we both used to complain about how horrible our jobs were. I never understood why she complained at all. After all, she was working for one of the top modelling agencies in New York as a model, and was always out having fun and partying. On the other hand, she could never understand why I was upset. I worked with the most exciting TV and Media Company in the world. I was sitting next to Conan O’Brien’s talk show studio and was personally meeting celebrities and movie stars daily.

One day as I was reading, I came across a quote. It went like this: “Every night before you go to bed write down three good things that happened to you that day. That’s pretty much all it takes to get a happiness boost each day.” And so I decided to follow this advice and write down three positive experiences or amazing things that happened to me daily. I noticed a pattern.

Almost all of these great things were happening at work. I started to question why I previously was so upset and unhappy at work. I soon realised I was extremely happy at work and I only was upset with a specific manager. And then I soon realised that this specific manager was making me do hard, tough work but due to this challenging work, I was actually becoming an expert in managing TV shows. I soon realised my manager was pushing me to help me grow and not because she hated me, as I thought.

Just writing down positive experiences helped me realize that my workplace was exciting, challenging and helping me develop into an amazing leader. I soon started thanking God daily for blessing me with such a wonderful employer and manager. Being grateful helped me realize what I was not seeing — what a blessing our workplace is.

There are many great workplaces in Malaysia too. Many times, we are blind as to how great our workplace is when we are too focused on the negatives. I urge you all to do as I did in New York and count your blessings. I even taught my house-mate to count her blessings and it changed her too!

In this week’s issue of our career pullout, we look at great employers. Graduan conducts a yearly survey at its career fair on top employers to work for and in this issue we feature three of Graduan’s winners – SapuraKencana, Malakoff and Maybank (pages 7, 11 and 13). These are workplaces acknowledged by Graduan’s survey as amazing employer. I have a look inside the pullout and enjoy reading about them and how they make their workplace great. Also, our contributing editor Eva Christodoulou writes the feature story on what makes a great employer.

So, have fun reading this week’s edition and do hope you enjoy your career guide. There are many other special articles on various other topics that we hope will inspire you to keep learning and growing every day of your life. Don’t forget to keep leveraging our amazing videos and other resources which can be accessed online at www.leaderonomics.com or at our main home site www.leaderonomics.com. We wish you all the best in your career journey! I have also started a site on facebook where I share daily leadership wisdom. If you are keen, go over to http://www.facebook.com/roshanthiran.leaderonomics and subscribe. If you do have any feedback on the pullout, feel free to email us at mystarjob@leaderonomics.com. Have a wonderful work week ahead and don’t forget to be appreciative of the great bosses and managers you work for.

Warm regards,
ROSHAN THIRAN
Editor, mystarjob.com & CEO
Leaderonomics
DIVINE HELP
IN OVERCOMING
DRUG ADDICTION

By Angie Ng
angie@thestar.com.my

He survived the dark pit of a heroin failure in “a lapse in reining himself” as a teenage drug addict and is just grateful for being granted a second chance in life. Compared to his “dishevelled and helish” drug addiction days, David Ong is a contented and successful real estate agent. The 58-year-old is the founder and president of real estate agency Reapfield Properties Sdn Bhd.

He has not only overcome drugs since 1977, but has not even touched a cigarette since, which he says contributed to his traumatic addiction to drugs.

Sharing his “most regrettable failure” he has encountered with myStarjob.com so as to forever warn “curious and looking-for-a-meaning-in-life youths from experimenting on drugs, Ong related that it was out of curiosity that he took up cigarette smoking which eventually led to “grass” smoking and before long he was hooked on heroin.

He got hooked on the “hard drug” when he was 19 and his addiction grew for four years. At the height of his addiction, drug dominated every area of his life. Completely enslaved, Ong found his world already torn apart; the harder he fought the deeper he sank, he was constantly insecure, depressed and aware he was not going to make it out alive after seeing many of his addict “buddies” perished after succumbing to HIV and other diseases.

“I was in constant need of drugs and had to spend most of my money to support my addiction. Addicts like me are eventually reduced to a life of begging, stealing, borrowing and piling debts. One is also in pain and has no choice but to force themselves. Being the youngest child and only son among four elder sisters, Ong admitted that he made some really bad choices as a teenager. ‘I hung out with the wrong company while looking for a meaning in life. I did not realise that I was in trouble even though there were many episodes of painful withdrawals when craving for a fix. My drug addiction problem had brought much suffering not only to myself but more so to my parents who had high hopes on me as I am their only son,” he says.

His parents were heartbroken when they learnt of his addiction to drugs. The day his late father broke down and cried, Ong was learned of his addiction to drugs. The day his late father broke down and cried, Ong was learned of his addiction to drugs. The day his late father broke down and cried, Ong was learned of his addiction to drugs. The day his late father broke down and cried, Ong was learned of his addiction to drugs. The day his late father broke down and cried, Ong was.

Without a paper qualification, the senior Ong sought out his friend for a job for his son in a brick works factory in Puchong. But he only lasted three weeks on the job before calling it quits. Ong decided to venture into selling real estate and joined hands with three friends to start Reapfield Properties in 1984. His partners later sold their share when the economic recession hit in 1985. Business was slow and Ong found it hard to make ends meet and had to give up his rented office and work from his house with two supporting staff.

When the Government decided to regulate the real estate agency business, Ong was grateful that he had not sold off Reapfield Properties despite the hard times he faced. He successfully applied for a real estate licence and has built up Reapfield Properties into one of the largest real estate agencies in the country, raking in annual sales value of more than RM3bil last year.

The drug addiction was not the first time Ong had failed himself. He failed his MCE examination and secured only a GCE certificate after passing just two subjects – English and Geography – in that examination. Without a paper qualification, the senior Ong sought out his friend for a job for his son in a brick works factory in Puchong. But he only lasted three weeks on the job before calling it quits. Ong decided to venture into selling real estate and joined hands with three friends to start Reapfield Properties in 1984. His partners later sold their share when the economic recession hit in 1985. Business was slow and Ong found it hard to make ends meet and had to give up his rented office and work from his house with two supporting staff.

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SPIRITED ENDAUVRES
When asked what he has learned from his failures, Ong offers some wise reflections.

“Smooth seas don’t make skilful sailors. Failures are likened to storms of life that will prepare one to handle crises and challenges better.”

“Failures are good if one learns the lessons from them. But those who repeatedly make the same failures are being irresponsible. Like the saying goes, as a dog returns to its vomit, so a man repeats his folly. It is not advisable to make the same mistakes without having learned from them.”

“Out of a bad situation, I am grateful of having this opportunity to care and share with others about the pain and agony of drug addiction, and raise the alarm and level of awareness against falling into those traps.”

“I advise parents and guardians to be vigilant and guide their young with unconditional love and attention. There are many young people who are just going about life aimlessly looking for a meaning in life. Many of them landed with the wrong company and got into different forms of troubles like addiction to drugs, pornography, computer games or compulsive spending.

Young people should find out where their passions and strengths lie and put in the right efforts to excel in their chosen endeavours. “Although it is fine to be curious about things, please don’t experiment with drugs, and other vices. Once you are in it, it is very difficult to shirk off those harmful addictions,” Ong reiterates.

This father of three girls in their 20s certainly knows what he is talking about as he gets ready to share his story with a wider audience.
Last November, a group of teenage boys and girls went out to various locations in Kuala Lumpur and spoke to people from different backgrounds, cultures and age groups. They discovered the general societal perception towards them was that the youth of today are a bunch of nuisance.

Whether the perception is the reality or not, a more important question remains: Under such discernment, where can our youth go to receive the acceptance and empowerment they need to become the hope of our future?

At Leaderonomics, we believe that it takes a village to raise a child and a community to build a leader. Our hope is to continuously build platforms that inspire and empower our young people towards being better leaders. Some of the initiatives we have launched include:

**DIODE Youth Camps**
DIODE Youth Camps are conducted during the public school holidays. Our campers learn to break out of their comfort zones, pick up new skills and to learn from positive role models to grow their leadership potential.

**Youth Club**
Our vision for our Youth Clubs is to bring weekly, intentional leadership interaction and learning into every school. We are currently running these clubs in 5 schools around Klang Valley.

**Youth Inspiration Centre**
Our youth centre, Dropzone, is located in PJ Old Town. It opens on weekdays to youth of ages between 13-19, who come by for our workshops, activities, or just to hang out.

For more information or to get involved in our youth services and initiatives, email us at youth@leaderonomics.com, call 03-79575809 or log on to www.leaderonomics.com
We are all aware of the numerous company hardships and collapses in recent years. However, the human story of individual employees and their increasing disconnection from the workplace. Never have as many people felt so disengaged from their jobs, and so removed from their leaders and the values of their company.

A recent global survey by HR company Hewitt Associates shows employee engagement and morale declined greater in 2010 than at any other time in the last 15 years since the research began. It is not only employee morale at stake. There is a clear link between employee engagement levels and a company’s financial performance. According to Hewitt’s analysis, companies with high levels of engagement (where 65% or more of employees are engaged) outperformed the total stock market index even in volatile economic conditions. From customer satisfaction to productivity, staff turnover to sick leave (disengaged employees are more likely to take sick days), a company’s bottom line is seriously affected.

The cause of such wide scale disengagement is not to be found in company balance sheets, but instead in the minds of company leaders. Research demonstrates that the way a leader thinks and behaves has a critical influence on employees’ feelings about their job and organisation. When a leader creates a bond with employees and engenders a sense of security and trust, he or she is able to keep them committed, highly-motivated and deeply-engaged, inspiring them to do and be their very best.

**Importance of Security and Trust**

Leadership is the foundation for change and as such hold back from seeking the benefitsof change, employees will follow in the same direction. Yet, by letting go of old ways and by acknowledging the loss of the unknown. When the leader is some-what of an unknown quantity, employees will follow in the direction of the leader. Ineffective leaders focus too much on the frustration, the problems and the pain instead of mobilising energy towards the positive benefits in order to reach new levels of performance.

**THE SECURE BASE PRINCIPLE**

In today’s environment, success is therefore dependent on feeling secure in order to seek change, challenge and take risks (even in times of uncertainty). It is essential that leaders serve as “secure bases” for their employees so that the brain’s defensive and overprotective system can be turned off. A secure base leader can create a foundation for a feeling of safety and allows employees to overcome their anxiety and the feeling of being threatened in order to explore, be creative and to take risks.

The goal of a secure base is not safety in itself, but rather the foundation it actives challenge, new learnings and change. Imagine everyone in an organisation striving to fulfill their potential. Secure base leadership is about developing strong and enduring relationships with employees that allow them to do just this.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR GREAT LEADERS**

One of the biggest mistakes made by leaders is to place too much focus on cost-cutting, revenues and facts and figures. In today’s environment, success is fuelled as much by new ideas and identifying opportunities and strategies as it is by dedicated hard work. It is often said that people naturally resist change and as such hold back from seeking difficult high performance goals. However, brain research shows that the opposite is true. People do not naturally resist change – they resist the pain of change and the fear of the unknown. When the leader is some- one who can be trusted, who creates a trusting environment and who communicates the benefits of change, employees will follow in seeking the benefits of that change.

The human brain actually thrives on challenge, curiosity, new ideas and change. This is not to say that change is pain free. Indeed, it is often accompanied by a very real sense of loss for what might have occurred or the danger that lies ahead. Yet, by letting go of old ways and by acknowledging the loss with compassion, leaders and their teams can constructively move forward. Ineffective leaders focus too much on the frustration, the problems and the pain instead of mobilising energy towards the positive benefits in the future. Athletes offer a good model for feedback and relentless learning in a way of life. These intrin- sic motivators are always based on internal values, meaning and purpose. Such great leaders encourage their teams to think and act with intrinsic motivation to make people, teams, organi- sations and the world a better place beyond just driving growth and profits. You cannot expect employees to be positive and fully engaged if the leader’s motivation is not intrinsically driven by values and purpose.

Engaged workforce led by great leaders is the founda- tion that drives success and allows organisations and economies to rise out of the toughest of situations. What I call “leading at the edge” requires an artful mix of focus, moti- vation, inspiration and courage as to constantly push one’s boundaries and to strive for what yesterday seemed impossible. Reaching peak performance is aim- ing for the highest results and not being afraid to learn from failures along the way. The secure base leader is an important key for organisations to drive competitiveness, innovation and creativity to successfully emerge as a winner. To be risk adverse in the cur- rent climate is to stagnate. Leaders that can take this opportunity to transform negative, disengaged teams into highly energised employees are ready to face what changes lie ahead.

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**Table**

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<tr>
<th>Top 5 Ways to Engage Your People</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Change-Driven Decision Making</strong></td>
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<td>Make sure you allow your employees to make their own decisions. Allow them to explore new innovative ways solving problems and be account- able for the results of their actions.</td>
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<td><strong>2. Secure Communication Space</strong></td>
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<td>Ensure that your employees feel that they can openly communi- cate any concerns and ideas they may have. That way they feel that their opinions are valued, and they should feel that are able to disagree with you and com- municate their reasons in a safe environment.</td>
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<td><strong>3. Optimal Workplace Environment</strong></td>
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<td>Employees need to feel that the workplace is a peaceful, secure space where they can concentrate on their tasks without having to worry about conflict and politics among colleagues.</td>
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<td><strong>4. Help Them Discover Their Strengths</strong></td>
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<td>As a leader, you are likely to have more experience than your employees. Try to provide them with guidance and sup- port so that they discover their strengths and how to use them to their advantage.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Involve People in Purpose and Strategy of the Organisation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>When people are involved in decision making for the direction of the organisa- tion, they are more likely to be passionate, interested and engaged.</td>
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**Adapting to Change: Opportunity or Danger**

Change for engaged high performers is always about opportunity; change for the disengaged is always about danger. Today, change is a constant stress on those who cannot embrace it. By its nature, change cannot be defensive – “playing not to lose”. By its nature, change is an important key for organisations and economiesto rise out of the toughest of situations. What I call “leading at the edge” requires an artful mix of focus, motivation, inspiration and courage as to constantly push one’s boundaries and to strive for what yesterday seemed impossible. Reaching peak performance is aiming for the highest results and not being afraid to learn from failures along the way. The secure base leader is an important key for organisations to drive competitiveness, innovation and creativity to successfully emerge as a winner. To be risk adverse in the current climate is to stagnate. Leaders that can take this opportunity to transform negative, disengaged teams into highly energised employees are ready to face what changes lie ahead.

**Creating a Bond with Your People**

By GEORGE KOHLRIESER

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The calculated risk-taking and readiness to adapt and change that is required of cut- ting-edge companies means that leaders have to be able to re-direct the mind’s eye of an employee or team to focus on the vast world of possibilities and opportunities. Unfortunately most managers do not create enough trust to do that and thereby promote employee disengagement.

Great leaders are able to find and encour- age intrinsic motivators in people that drive them to achieve the highest levels of per- formance where challenging goals, tough

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**Secure Base Leadership**

Great leaders are able to find and encour- age intrinsic motivators in people that drive them to achieve the highest levels of per- formance where challenging goals, tough
SapuraKencana Pettyol Bhd is Malaysia’s pride in the sector. The company is the result of a merger between Sapura Crest and Kencana Petroleum, two very successful operators in their own right.

President and group CEO Datuk Seri Shahril Shamsuddin says: “We embarked on this exciting journey as we recognise that our combined strength is greater than our individualities. Together as one organisation we can achieve greater things and tangible synergies that we can be proud of. We are now able to secure larger, more complex and higher-value-added projects that will in return enhance our technical expertise, build further our credentials and enable our people to be part of consolidating our brand as a trusted business partner.”

SapuraKencana has the capability and strength to offer a full suite of integrated services and solutions within the entire value chain of the O&G industry. It has full oilfield development and operations capabilities. It also operates within the full EPCI (engineering, procurement, construction, installation and commissioning) arena. It provides drilling services and is en route to becoming one of the most significant global players in this area with the proposed acquisition of Norwegian firm Seadrill’s tender rig business, due to be completed in the next few months. In addition, the company is also capable of providing additional services such as diving services at different sea depths through the operation of Remote Operated Vehicles (ROVs), in addition to human diving capabilities.

The organisation continuously invests in strategic assets. This ensures that SapuraKencana is capable of bidding for more complex and larger jobs. This also enables the organisation to execute and complete any given assignment in an efficient and timely manner.

SapuraKencana is a home-grown company. Its origins are in Malaysia, and its capabilities and reputation were built and developed in Malaysia. However, recently this reputation and capability have taken the organisation into a journey around the world with a footprint that extends from South-East Asia, to Australia, China, India, Middle East, Africa and Europe. Recent projects have even taken the company to Mexico and Brazil.

A COMPANY WITH PURPOSE AND A WINNING CULTURE

With an inspiring vision, the company is ready to take on the world and expand further in the O&G industry.

“While we demonstrate an entrenched commitment to the highest standards of safety and respect to the environment by understanding, anticipating and managing the inherent risks associated with our operations. It is not enough to be risk aware, we need to be risk averse.”

“We firmly believe in driving a culture of transparency, integrity and empowerment of our people at all levels. They are encouraged to constantly think outside the box and come up with practical solutions for our business and operational challenges. Our people’s technical capabilities combined with an entrepreneurial approach will ensure that we come up with the most practical and viable solutions for the needs of our clients,” Shahril adds.

It is worthwhile to note his views on the company’s values and culture. “We believe, we demonstrate high integrity, we are trustworthy and always are committed to delivering value to our customers. We are accountable to our people, the environment and the communities in which we operate through adoption of sustainable practices that generate profitable and sustainable outcomes. These practices encourage our people to be proactive, responsive to market, business needs and resourceful. We are constantly nurturing of operational excellence and technical capabilities. This enables us to demonstrate our technical expertise and capabilities. We are resilient and will achieve this through the institutionalisation of our knowledge and expertise. It is only through institutionalisation that we will enable this organisation to transcend its founders and current leaders. We need to ensure our business is sustainable irrespective of who leads it. We must strive to strengthen these values and apply them to everything we do, internally and with our clients. It is through these values and beliefs that we will be able to proudly call ourselves a truly made-in-Malaysia Multinational. The trust that our customers place in our ability to deliver, has won us significant new projects in new geographies.”

The recent ranking of SapuraKencana as one of the top employers at the Graduan Aspire Career fair by fresh graduates came as a pleasant surprise to the organisation and reinforces the strength of its ‘people first’ philosophy. “Our people are the multipliers of the value of our assets,” says Claudia Cadena, director, strategic communications and interpersonalskills, who thrive in an environment that requires them to be analytical professionalsboth in the technical as well as the communication and interpersonal front. They are known for their ability to provide support for exploration, development and production activities.

The organisation is structured into four key business divisions which work very closely in order to ensure it is able to provide integrated services and solutions to the clients.

OFFSHORE CONSTRUCTION AND SUBSEA SERVICES DIVISION (OCS)

This division works on the installation of offshore platforms, pipelines and facilities installations of Subsea Umbilical Risers and Flowlines (SURF). It is also responsible for the commissioning /decommissioning and removal of production facilities. It provides Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROV) and underwater services related to the offshore industry.

FABRICATION, HOOK-UP COMMISSIONING (HUC) AND OFFSHORE VESSEL SUPPORT DIVISION (FAB & HUC)

This division provides engineering, procurement, construction, hook-up and commissioning services. In addition, it owns and operates vessels to provide support for exploration, development and production activities.

PROVIDING SERVICES ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN

SapuraKencana is a home-grown company with a global footprint. Its origins are in Malaysia, and its capabilities and reputation were built and developed in Malaysia. However, recently this reputation and capability have taken the organisation into a journey around the world with a footprint that extends from South-East Asia, to Australia, China, India, Middle East, Africa and Europe. Recent projects have even taken the company to Mexico and Brazil.

And A winning Culture

Within the company, the people’s role is significant. They are the values that drive the organisation forward. “We are honourable, trustworthy and always are committed to delivering high integrity, we are trustworthy and always are committed to delivering value to our customers. We are accountable to our people, the environment and the communities in which we operate through adoption of sustainable practices that generate profitable and sustainable outcomes. These practices encourage our people to be proactive, responsive to market, business needs and resourceful. We are constantly nurturing of operational excellence and technical capabilities. This enables us to demonstrate our technical expertise and capabilities. We are resilient and will achieve this through the institutionalisation of our knowledge and expertise. It is only through institutionalisation that we will enable this organisation to transcend its founders and current leaders. We need to ensure our business is sustainable irrespective of who leads it. We must strive to strengthen these values and apply them to everything we do, internally and with our clients. It is through these values and beliefs that we will be able to proudly call ourselves a truly made-in-Malaysia Multinational. The trust that our customers place in our ability to deliver, has won us significant new projects in new geographies.”

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DRILLING, GEOTECH AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES DIVISION (DGMS)

This division operates rigs for the drilling of offshore wells. It also provides geotechnical and geophysical services. Furthermore, it deals with the maintenance and refurbishment of industrial gas turbines, and supplies, commissions and maintains the point of sale systems for petrol stations.

ENERGY AND JOINT VENTURES DIVISION (EJV)

The division provides field development plans. It also provides for the development, execution and completion of field development for the O&G production. It operates and maintains oilfields. The division is also responsible for the management of joint venture operations with Seadrill, Labuan shipyard, Ocean Flow International and Perito.

COME AND JOIN THE FUN

Shahril notes, “Our people are the multipliers of the value of our assets. We carefully build and promote a culture of performance excellence in which technical, professional and leadership capabilities are developed, nurtured and recognised towards the achievement of business outcomes.”

SapuraKencana is constantly on the lookout for capable and ambitious entry and mid-level professionals both in the technical as well as the support functions.

“We look for individuals with strong communciation and interpersonal skills, who thrive in an environment that requires them to be analytical in order to come with the most suitable solution for our clients. Resilience is key, as we operate in a dynamic and ever-changing business environment,” says Claudia Cadena, director, strategic human capital management.

The organisation is positioned to offer a wide range of opportunities to its employees locally and overseas. Firstly, technically-oriented employees will have opportunities build their capabilities and exposure through their involvement in the different projects that the company undertakes.

For individuals in the support functions like HR, finance, IT and legal, just to mention a few, they will have the opportunity to grow and develop not only within their own division but by moving across the different business divisions to contribute and learn about the business in total-

ity. Support functions are expected to be business-savvy, therefore individuals must not only be experts in their own professional line, but ensure that they develop an understanding of the business operations.

SapuraKencana is committed to providing a career to its people. It is up to the individuals to take the challenges and make use of the opportunities.

Employees need to be prepared to undertake and lead assignments that may not be within their scope of work, but which will provide them with additional opportunities to develop, gain operational experience and exposure and grow as leaders.

Employees can also expect to be part of a multi-national and fairly young workforce. Cadena notes, “we have a workforce of over 8,000 people located around the world executing projects. We employ individuals from as many as 20 different nationalities all working together towards achieving a common objective – to execute projects in a safe, efficient, cost effective and timely manner for our clients.”

If you have what it takes and want to be part of this successful organisation, contact the company and send your CV to: www.sapurakencana.com/career
How to Find a Super Employer

CHECK THE COMPANY WEBSITE, BUT ALSO OTHER OPPORTUNITIES ON THE COMPANY. FINDING OUT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ABOUT YOUR POTENTIAL EMPLOYER IS CRUCIAL. THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA, WEBSITES, AND OTHER SOURCES, TAKE NOTE AND CONTINUE TO MONITOR HOW EXACTLY WHAT THEY DO AND WHAT THEY HAVE TO OFFER WILL GIVE YOU AN INFORMED UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THEY DO. IT IS IMPORTANT TO DO SOME TIME TO SEARCH FOR IDEAS FOR OPINIONS OF THE COMPANY FROM SEVERAL SOURCES, SUCH AS EX-EMPLOYEES OR EVEN CURRENT OR FORMER EMPLOYEES. THIS WOULD GIVE YOU A MORE BALANCED PERSPECTIVE.

LOOK FOR A MATCH OF VALUES AND CULTURE. IT IS IMPORTANT TO WORK FOR AN ORGANISATION WITH GOOD VALUES, AND THAT IS THE moment when you will find your true joy. Therefore, try to gather information on the values of the organisation you are about to be hired by, and then think long-term about the opportunities they offer that match those values.

INTERVIEW THEM! WHEN YOU GO TO AN INTERVIEW EVEN THE PRIMARY REASON IS FOR THE EMPLIOER TO FIND OUT WHETHER YOU ARE THE RIGHT CANDIDATE FOR THE ROLE. IT IS ALSO THE TIME FOR YOU TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE COMPANY AND THE ROLE. IN SHORT, ASK ALL YOUR QUESTIONS IN ALL TOPICS YOU COULD FIND ANSWERS FOR ONLINE. PERHAPS ON CAREER OPPORTUNITIES, MONITORING SYSTEM, CULTURE, AND ANYTHING ELSE YOU CONSIDER IMPORTANT.

USE PAST EXPERIENCES. IF YOU HAVE ALREADY WORKED NEROEWISE ELSE, YOU WOULD HAVE SOME EXPERIENCES AND SOME IDEAS ON WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR IN A COMPANY AND THE EXPERIENCES YOU WANT TO AVOID.

CHECK THEM OUT DURING A CRISIS. IF A COMPANY IS GOING THROUGH A TROUBLED PERIOD, OBSERVE HOW IT HANDLES ISSUES. IF IT BEHAVES IN A WAY THAT YOU CONSIDER ACCEPTABLE, IT IS LIKELY THAT IT WILL BE THE SAME COMPANY WHEN IT BECOMES AN EMPLOYER.

ASK PEOPLE IN THE INDUSTRY. PEOPLE IN THE INDUSTRY WOULD KNOW ABOUT A PARTICULAR ORGANISATION AND ITS PRACTICES. DON’T BE AFRAID TO ASK ANYONE, JUST BELIEVE OF INTELLIGENT, NEGATIVE COMMENTS BY COMPETITORS.

ASK ITS EMPLOYEES. ITS EMPLOYEES WILL HAVE TO BE CONNECTED WITH MANY PEOPLE WHO WOULD OTHERWISE NOT CONNECT WITH YOU. USE THIS WEAPON SHILLY TO TRY TO CONNECT WITH CURRENT OR FORMER EMPLOYEES OF THE COMPANY TO GET AN OVERVIEW OF HOW THE COMPANY IS WORKING.

ENSURE THEY ARE PROFESSIONAL. WHEN FINDING AN EMPLOYER, IT IS IMPORTANT TO GAGE THEIR PROFESSIONALISM. LOOK OUT FOR TELL-TALE SIGNS SUCH AS THE LENGTH OF TIME THEY TAKE TO GET BACK TO YOU. THE WAY THEY RESPOND, AND THEIR WRITING STYLE. PARTICULARLY ANY GRAMMAR OR SPACING MISTAKES. WHEN YOU HAVE AN INTERVIEW, THEIR BEHAVIOUR DURING THE DAY TOWARDS YOU BUT ALSO OTHERS AROUND YOU IF THE OFFICE CAN SAY A LOT.

FIND OUT ABOUT THEIR CULTURE. EITHER BY ASKING AT THE INTERVIEW, OR SEEKING TIME IN THE OFFICE, OR FOLLOWING UP IF THEY HAVE INFORMATION THAT THEY TRY TO INFORMATION ON THE ORGANISATION’S CULTURE.

FIND OUT WHAT CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES THEY OFFER. CAREER OPPORTUNITIES, BOTH IN AND OUTSIDE OF THE COMPANY, ARE A BIG DRIVER FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

BE CAUTIOUS OF COMPANIES OVERSELLING THEMSELVES. IT IS A COMPANY OWNED ITSELF; IT MAY MEAN THAT THEY HAVE SOMETHING TO HIDE. LOOK AT EVERYTHING THAT IS COMING FROM THE COMPANY ITSELF ON ITS GLAMOUROUS SIDE, BUT ALSO LOOK IT FOR INFORMATION FROM OTHER SOURCES.

THINK LONG-TERM. WHEN THINKING ABOUT JOINING A COMPANY, EVEN IF YOU ARE THINKING AT THE MOMENT OF THE SALARY, DO NOT LET THIS BE THE ONLYTHING THAT DRIVES YOUR DECISION. THE WAY YOU ARE MORE LIKELY TO LOOK AT ALL THE SMALL DETAILS THAT ARE RELATED TO BEING A GREAT EMPLOYER, AND ENSURE THAT YOU END UP WORKING FOR ONE.

By Eva Christodoulou

EVIC每年有几千名新毕业生进入职场。选一家 Continuantly, becoming a great employer is not as simple as meeting the needs of your current or former employees. They will give you an informed understanding of what they do. It is important to do some time to search for opinions of the company from external sources, such as ex-employees or even current or former employees. This would give you a more balanced perspective.

LOOK FOR A MATCH OF VALUES AND CULTURE. It is important to work for an organisation with good values, and that is the moment when you will find your true joy. Therefore, try to gather information on the values of the organisation you are about to be hired by, and then think long-term about the opportunities they offer that match those values.

INTERVIEW THEM! When you go to an interview even the primary reason is for the employer to find out whether you are the right candidate for the role. It is also the time for you to find out more information about the company and the role. In short, ask all your questions in all topics you could find answers for online. Perhaps on career opportunities, monitoring systems, culture, and anything else you consider important.

USE PAST EXPERIENCES. If you have already worked nowhere else, you would have some experiences and some ideas on what you are looking for in a company and the experiences you want to avoid.

CHECK THEM OUT DURING A CRISIS. If a company is going through a troubled period, observe how it handles issues. If it behaves in a way that you consider acceptable, it is likely that it will be the same company when it becomes an employer.

ASK PEOPLE IN THE INDUSTRY. People in the industry would know about a particular organisation and its practices. Don’t be afraid to ask anyone, just believe of intelligent, negative comments by competitors.

ASK ITS EMPLOYEES. Its employees will have to be connected with many people who would otherwise not connect with you. Use this weapon shilly to try to connect with current or former employees of the company to get an overview of how the company is working.

ENSURE THEY ARE PROFESSIONAL. When finding an employer, it is important to gauge their professionalism. Look out for tell-tale signs such as the length of time they take to get back to you. The way they respond, and their writing style. Particularly any grammar or spacing mistakes. When you have an interview, their behaviour during the day towards you but also others around you in the office can say a lot.

FIND OUT ABOUT THEIR CULTURE. Either by asking at the interview, or spending some time in the office, or following up if they have information there, try to get information on the organisation’s culture.

FIND OUT WHAT CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES THEY OFFER. Career opportunities, both in and outside of the company, are a big driver for professional development.

BE CAUTIOUS OF COMPANIES OVERSELLING THEMSELVES. It is a company owned itself; it may mean that they have something to hide. Look at everything that is coming from the company itself on its glamorous side, but also look it for information from other sources.

THINK LONG-TERM. When thinking about joining a company, even if you are thinking at the moment of the salary, do not let this be the only thing that drives your decision. The way you are more likely to look at all the small details that are related to being a great employer, and ensure that you end up working for one.
Ways to be an Effective Change Agent

By Rupa Sivanoli
rupa.sivan@leaderonomics.com

When change management first came about, especially in the Malaysian context in the early to mid-1990s, part of the checklist of getting the change agenda off successfully would include enlist- ing opinion leaders and positive influencers to become “Change Agents”. To soften the connotation of the word “agent” which tends to have a bit of a “James Bond” spin on it, the role would also have other names such as Change Champion, Change Ambassadors, Change Leaders, “Juara”, etc.

Either way, there are several characteristics that cut across these chosen ones:
- They are handpicked by the management
- They cut across the hierarchy and geographical spread of the organisation
- They are willing to take on the change related tasks such as cascading communications and supporting the change programme needs in general.

Change agents are only human

The effectiveness of Change Agents will depend on why they are needed in the first place. Just because change management methodology stipulates that having a change agent network increases the chance of successful change it does not mean that in practical terms this would be the way to go.

Change leaders are something you build within your organisation as a means to enhance clarity through communication and it is a machinery that should be used for change related messages as well as non-change related messages. In essence having a sustainable network for involving, engaging and cascading should be the focus. Then, look at the content that is being poured in and pulled out from it.

So, the effectiveness of a Change Agent really depends on the infrastructure they fit into in order to undertake their roles. If it’s done as a one off exercise with the usual grand launch and fanfare, it’s more difficult to sustain.

The best way to enlist Change Agents is on a voluntary basis starting with those who truly believe in the business merits of the proposed change. Never mind if the numbers are not there, it is better to focus on quality of outcomes and work with genuine support.

Appoint someone to be the sounding board or coach to this group of “pioneer” Change Agents and let them decide how they ought to expand given the scope of work that they believe needs to be covered. If you set up the Change Agent community as a self-directed work team with the mandate of supporting the users through the change, it’s a good start.

8 Useful Tips for Change Agents

Given that the Change Agents need to wear different hats and sometimes the expectation can be really broad – one minute being able to talk different languages and the next instant to stand in front of a town-hall meeting of people and sell the virtues of the change project.

It’s really a big task and it’s tough for these change agents. The trick to effectiveness is to increase one’s versatility or understand one’s shortcomings so that as a change agent you can leverage on your fellow change agents to help deliver some of the tasks that need to be done. In addition to this some tips to bear in mind:

1. Information and Data Overload is your Friend Not Foe
Accept that you will be lost in most of the initial meetings and allow your mind to just absorb new information. Just like an unfinished jigsaw puzzle, you will get to a certain point where you see the bigger picture and everything will fall into place nicely.

2. Be Curious and Network
You will have access to new people (other teams, vendors, access to different levels of management, etc) and where previously in your operational role hierarchy or expertise matters, now the expectation is not as great on a Change Agent who is seen as a facilitator of change. So take advantage of the situation – if you are persistent there is no reason anyone should be reluctant to help.

3. Be a Learning Person Yourself
Influencing others to learn new things and embrace new ways is best achieved through role modeling. Change Agents have to be in love with learning, and constantly learning new things themselves. Then they will find new ways to communicate those things to their target audience in everyday language (work situations) and not the language of “finance”, “technology”, and “process”. Treat everyday as a classroom and if you’re lost – don’t be shy to ask for help.

4. Document Your Own Learning
Given that this is a new role and you will be learning new things, the best way to keep track of your “ah-ha” moments or pitfalls, is to jot them down. Especially with regard to the connections you start to make in terms of the change project, the ideas you may have, and the people related issues that catch you off-guard. For example, Mr A is a useful resource, but he is retiring in eight months – he is keen to help in an informal way but is reluctant to be visibly associated with the project. If you document this nugget of information, chances are you’ll remember it when you need it.

5. No Fear!
You’ve got to be fearless and not worry about keeping your job. Changes are something better is waiting for you if you are genuinely passionate about driving the change – people will notice your efforts. Given the accelerated pace of change in the workplace today, the skills you would have gained will be highly valued.

6. Laugh When It Hurts
The tasks that need to be done are not always glamorous – in fact at times it can be very discouraging work. You need a good sense of humour. It also helps when you have a group of change agents that are supportive so that you can get together and let off some steam as a group.

7. Know the Business Before You Try To Change Anything
You can’t be an effective change agent if you are too theoretical and stay disconnected to business realities. Respect business pressures and work around them.

8. Finish What You Start
Many change projects (especially the long haul ones) lose momentum along the way. Most of the time this is due to key team members leaving. Try not to add to this statistic.

Being able to play the role of a Change Agent, especially in a large scale change is an opportunity not to be missed; it will put you through the grind but you will certainly come out of it with a better perspective and a renewed sense of professional confidence.

Former Big Four management consultant, Rupa strives to add business value through simplification of thoughts and actions, when it comes to planning and managing workplace change. To engage her for the benefit of your organisation, email people@leaderonomics.com
To find out more about careers at Top 50 Employer Graduan Aspire 2012, visit www.malakoff.com.my.

**MALAKOFF TAKES YOUR CAREER TO GREATER HEIGHTS**

By PREMA JAYABALAN

**MALAKOFF Corp Bhd** needs no introduction, being a renowned Malaysian power company that generates and sells power as an independent power producer to Tenaga Nasional Bhd. Established in 1975 as a plantation-based company, it has spread its wings and soared high throughout the years and today has established itself as the leading IPP in Malaysia with an effective capacity of 5,020MW comprising six power stations. Malakoff now holds 22.5% of market share for the installed generation capacity in Peninsular Malaysia. Being a giant organisation which is vast spreading its interest to establish itself in other nations, Malakoff is one of the sought after employers in Malaysia by many fresh graduates and young employees.

In the current era, the talent market is highly competitive in Malaysia, with attrition rates reported as high as 75% in 2011 (according to a study by the Malaysian Employers Federation); thus, attracting and retaining talent is increasingly a challenge for companies. The statistics are compounded by competitors in the throes to recruit the top talents while candidates get savvy seeking bigger and better offers.

For companies, the competition is fierce as companies are driven by a dynamic and robust succession planning process augmented by a comprehensive leadership development curriculum. While HR plays the facilitator role, the key success factor of this programme is attributed to the stewardship and participation of the senior management led by CEO Zainal Abidin Jalil, an engineer who joined Malakoff in 2011 as one of the EDP recruits. Raihana graduated from the previous year. The EDP programme has taught me various aspects from operating and maintaining the power purchase agreement and how energy is traded, thus creating a sense of pride and loyalty towards Malakoff—an increasing important attribute in retaining talent.

The organisation has integrated Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as part of its business management for its strong CSR programmes implemented under its flag-ship platform—the Malakoff Community Partnerships. This avenue enables Malakoff employees to play an active role within the communities where the organisation operates, thereby creating a sense of pride and loyalty towards Malakoff—an increasing important attribute in retaining talent.

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**ACNOWLEDGEMENT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Malakoff places much emphasis on its role as an organisation that cares for the wellbeing of its employees through its active engagement with its staff regarding their performances. Feedback is regularly provided to ensure that their progress is acknowledged, while shortcomings are looked into. According to Zainal, senior vice-president, Corporate Services Division, a “Clear Corporate Key Performance Index” is set for each employee at the beginning of the year. The index enables the company and the staff to collectively evaluate their performance and progress. The organisation in turn rewards high-performers accordingly, which motivates employees to achieve and exceed the targeted goals.

In addition, Malakoff also reviews employees’ compensation and benefits periodically against the market. This ensures that the staff remuneration scheme is competitive enough to retain top talents and attract outstanding candidates, he adds.

**CAREER PROGRESSION IN MALAKOFF**

Built within the core of Malakoff’s Human Capital Development is its structured Talent Management Programme. This programme is driven by a dynamic and robust succession planning process augmented by a comprehensive leadership development curriculum. While HR plays the facilitator role, the key success factor of this programme is attributed to the stewardship and participation of the senior management led by the CEO. The intervention applied in the development of future leaders through the programme goes beyond classroom training. It includes job rotations, stretched assignments and project management with effective coaching and mentoring in place.

There is the Education Assistance Programme (EAP) that provides financial assistance to staff who aspire to elevate their academic credentials through education courses or professional qualifications relevant to their job or planned positions.

**YOUNG RECRUITS**

On average, to support the growth agenda of the organisation, Malakoff has been recruiting between 30 to 40 fresh degree and diploma graduates annually while successfully maintaining an attrition rate of about 3% annually. Malakoff looks out for applicants who are balanced, with good academic achievement, possess “soft skills” such as communication, problem solving, interpersonal and the ability to be flexible and agile.

The organisation offers a wide platform of exposure of engineering skills for young graduates.

It allows young recruits to apply the knowledge gained from education into the working world. At the same time, they are also provided with a variety of training to enhance their knowledge while concurrently creating experts within the new and young talent. Not to forget, the good remuneration package and extensive benefits for its employees.

New recruits are put on the Executive Development Programme, EDP which is basically a kick-start programme for new employees who are exposed to the overall business nature and working culture of Malakoff (locally and internationally), guided by an experienced mentor. Throughout this programme, new engineers will be rotating in various divisions of Malakoff and are expected to complete a module that comprise my mentors that need to be learnt within that division.

The EDP programme has taught me various aspects from operating and maintaining a power plant to dealing with procurement matters such as working with vendors and contractors. I also fully understand the Power Purchase Agreement and how energy is traded. This programme has enhanced my inter-personal and soft skills thus encouraging me to be an all-rounder employee. It has given me the career satisfaction that I have been looking for,” says Raihana Idayu Rahmat, an engineer who joined Malakoff in 2011 as one of the EDP recruits. Raihana graduated from University of Auckland, New Zealand with a bachelor degree in electrical and electronics engineering.

**A WELL-ROUNDED WORKFORCE**

In an effort to build a more engaged, productive and satisfied workforce at Malakoff, the organisation has integrated Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as part of its business management for its strong CSR programmes implemented under its flagship platform—the Malakoff Community Partnerships. This avenue enables Malakoff employees to play an active role within the communities where the organisation operates, thereby creating a sense of pride and loyalty towards Malakoff—an increasing important attribute in retaining talent.

Malakoff is known for its strong CSR programmes implemented under its flag-ship platform—the Malakoff Community Partnerships. This avenue enables Malakoff employees to play an active role within the communities where the organisation operates, thereby creating a sense of pride and loyalty towards Malakoff—an increasing important attribute in retaining talent.

In an effort to build a more engaged, productive and satisfied workforce at Malakoff, the organisation has integrated Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as part of its business management for its strong CSR programmes implemented under its flag-ship platform—the Malakoff Community Partnerships. This avenue enables Malakoff employees to play an active role within the communities where the organisation operates, thereby creating a sense of pride and loyalty towards Malakoff—an increasing important attribute in retaining talent.
Jimmy Wales, Founder of Wikipedia Unveils His Leadership Secrets

Introducing to you our new weekly column, The Leaderonomics Show. Each week, Roshan Thiran or Lily Cheah meets with successful leaders, authors, thought leaders and various well-known personalities from around the world and asks them about the secrets to their success and find out their leadership secrets. This show is aired weekly on www.leaderonomics.tv and you can catch the full interview there. This week, we kick off the new column with a special feature on Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia.

By ROSHAN THIRAN & PREMA JAYABALAN
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Wikipedia is almost everyone has heard or used it once before. Some of us constantly access this particular site to get information on all types of matters. There are bound to be answers for any topic under the sun to be found here. Jimmy Donal Wales is most renowned as the co-founder and promoter of the ever famous non-profit online encyclopedia known as Wikipedia. Born in Alabama, United States, this post-graduate holder in finance together with Larry Sanger helped launch Wikipedia, a free, open content encyclopedia in 2001. Wikipedia is part of a non-profit foundation called Wikimedia. This site started garnering instant popularity and went on to be a phenomenal success due to its rapid growth. As Wikipedia’s public profile grew, Wales became the project’s promoter and spokesperson and in 2004, he co-founded Wikia, a privately-owned, free Web-hosting service, with fellow Wikipedia trustee Angela Bressey. When I asked Wales what gave him the idea to start Wikipedia, he quickly explained that as he saw more and more software developers work on collaborative efforts, he knew that there was potential for collaboration to work in many other areas. And as he pondered this brave new collaborative world, he knew that if he talked about his idea for a free encyclopedia everywhere he went, he could inspire people to partner with him to develop and grow his idea. In fact, most people thought he was crazy. But that never derailed him from his goal of giving everyone access to a free encyclopedia. He managed to get a hundred folks inspired with his vision and was interested and excited with the concept. He still faced significant challenges and issues. And there were so many unanswered questions: How do we compete with Microsoft (Encarta)? How do we create an encyclopedia with one employee? How do we spread the word about Wikipedia? Yet, in spite of all the issues, challenges and obstacles, Wales explained that as long as he was having fun and because he knew he was helping to make the world a better place, he kept chugging along.

Prior to Wikipedia, Wales failed in numerous ventures. His first failure was with Loop Lunch, where people could order lunch online. He also failed at Nupedia, a precursor to Wikipedia. He failed at a few other initiatives but unlike many others who would give up and accept failure, he kept persevering and kept going.

That is a great lesson to learn from Wales. In fact, he talks frankly about each of his failures and the precious lessons he learnt from each one. All of us fail and mess up at times. The key question is, do we learn from our failures? Do we pick ourselves up and keep persevering even in defeat? Do we embrace failure or fear failure? According to Wales, the best people to hire are people who failed but have picked themselves up and have learnt precious lessons in life and business. Are you learning great lessons from our failures or just brushing them off and not learning much?

To access the full interview with Jimmy Wales and to access other videos of inspirational personalities, visit www.leaderonomics.com/theleaderonomicsshow

Amongst those that have recruited in the last 12 months, 62% have recruited young people (27 per cent of all establishments).

21% of all employers recruiting young people reported that their most recent recruit was to a Sales and Customer Service role.

9% of job applicants falsely claimed they had a college degree, listed false employers, or mentioned jobs that didn’t exist.

Workplace violence is the foremost concern of corporate security directors at Fortune 1000 companies. Other top concerns include employee selection and screening concerns, fraud and white-collar crime, theft, drugs and alcohol in the workplace and unethical business practices.

“Part Time Jobs” is searched online 1,945% more times a month than “Full Time Jobs”.

The main benefits reported by employers who have recruited young people were an ability to be moulded (32%), their enthusiasm (30%) and their willingness to learn (20%).

Applicant Form

34% contain outright lies

34% of all application forms

- Experience
- Education
- Ability

32% said they had a

9% of job applicants falsely claimed they had a college degree, listed false employers, or mentioned jobs that didn’t exist.

On average, in US businesses, at least half of all new hires “don’t work out”.

Application Form

“Part Time Jobs” is searched online 1,945% more times a month than “Full Time Jobs”.

| DID YOU KNOW? |

- 34% of all application forms contain outright lies about experience, education and the ability to perform essential functions on the job.

- Workplace violence is the foremost concern of corporate security directors at Fortune 1000 companies. Other top concerns include employee selection and screening concerns, fraud and white-collar crime, theft, drugs and alcohol in the workplace and unethical business practices.

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- Workplace violence is the foremost concern of corporate security directors at Fortune 1000 companies. Other top concerns include employee selection and screening concerns, fraud and white-collar crime, theft, drugs and alcohol in the workplace and unethical business practices.
“OUR people, an integral part in the success of Maybank, had voted quality of work, better use of skills and greater work flexibility as the top three engagement drivers Maybank offers them,” says Nora Ab Anan, senior executive vice-president and head of Group Human Capital, Maybank.

“Being in the right role or doing work that appeals to them is even more important than remuneration per se. At Maybank, we nurture and grow our people via a multitude of development and learning programmes that are flexible and customised rather than a one-size-fits-all solution. This approach enabled us to accommodate the needs of the different generations as well as targeted to meet individual career aspirations.”

In the business world context, the external environment will shape both the individual and the organisation on their own perspectives on critical business issues such as leadership, decision-making, communication and problem-solving, amongst others. In the light of these external factors, Maybank looks deeply into understanding employees’ preferences within key demographics to ensure alignment of run- ning a 21st century business with 21st century workplace practices and programmes. In the GRADUAN Aspire 2012 results, graduates indicated their deciding factor in selecting their preferred employer is the scope of the job, things they want and job satisfaction and also a job that leads to a positive career path. Young talents want an organisation that solicits and acts on employees’ opinions or suggestions and involve employees in decisions that affect them.

The group’s enhanced talent management framework ensures the right or potential talents are placed in the right jobs and that there is visibility of talents across the group via multi-level talent review platforms. The varied development and learning programmes ensure nurturing of employees across the multiple dimensions of knowledge, confidence, and skills to excel. The multitude of development programmes designed specially for fresh graduates empowers talents to hone their leadership competencies and business awareness, as well as prepare them for the right job fit in the organisation.

GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

Maybank has six group pipeline programmes and these are in addition to other entry level fresh graduate positions. These programmes last two specific objectives, to create a pool of well-rounded professional bankers with an appreciation of Maybank’s frontline challenges, insights into customer-centric product develop- ment and the prudence of measured risk-taking, and to groom fresh graduates especially for the specialist functions of credit, risk management, accounting, and treasury market.

With a growing number of Gen Y joining the workforce, this group is becoming an essential part of the organisation as it will soon be at the forefront of the business, driving initiatives to achieve its vision of becoming the regional financial services leader. Young talents are also seeing Maybank as a bank for talents via its “GO Ahead” Employer Value Proposition (EVP) that inspires them to seize opportunities to grow their career. Efforts to provide young talents with a differentiated EVP where they can thrive and find meaning by the group have been widely recog- nised. Maybank retained the top position for two consecutive years as the Preferred Employer of the Year at Graduan Brand Awards. Similarly, it was named the winner in the banking and finan- cial services category in Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers consecutively in 2011 and 2012. Its overall ranking across all categories has improved, moving to third in 2012 from fifth in 2011 and 17th in 2010.

Fresh graduate development programmes blend-on-job training with formal face-to- face learning and experiential development to ensure junior talents receive all the support to accelerate their functional and leadership development. A series of entry level pipeline programmes are aimed at developing skill sets and leadership capabilities and have groomed over 200 graduates who embarked on these programmes.

Global Maybank Apprentice Programme (GMAP). A two-year on-the-job programme for graduates to experience different functions within an area of their choice via job rotations. It includes a three-month international assignment to encourage cross-border exposure and network among young talents. With the enhanced pro- grammes, Maybank saw an increase in retention rate from 60% under the old programme to over 80% under GMAP.

Global Management Entry Level Programme (BMELP). This is designed to groom aspiring branch/centre managers by providing them with targeted learning and skill sets through an intensi- fied training experience in branch management. Since its inception in 2011, 1,200 trainees are undergoing both formal and experiential learn- ing, networking with professionals, and enhanc- ing their understanding of customer service and staff management before they are accelerated into a managerial position within one of Maybank’s business lines.

Maybank/Ernst & Young Management Associate Programme (Maybank/ EY MMAP): Associates undergo a three-year attachment at Ernst & Young as auditors earning their professional accounting qualification sponsored by Maybank. There are other pipeline programmes for the various lines of businesses, namely the global markets trainee programme, invest- ment analysts programme, and credit pipeline pro- gramme, which trainees undergo structured learning and development programmes related to the chosen field.

To build capabilities and grow professionally, the robust talent management system reviews talents against Maybank’s leadership competencies to identify them for leadership or management development programmes that are tailored for different levels of talents.

Maybank’s graduate programmes grew from 3% (2009) to 25% (2012) of the senior officer population. Yearly, Maybank recruits close to 3,000 graduates across the group internationally to ensure that Maybank has a strong workforce for various pipelines including management roles.

The success of these initiatives to nurture young people and the traction of the transformation initiatives have translated into significant improvements in Maybank’s people and the many achievements the group has earned in the past year. Its key retention rate has improved year-on-year from 52% in 2010 to 80% in 2011 and 82% in 2012. Offer acceptance rate of new joiners stand at 97% in 2012. These improv- ing scores demonstrate the effective- ness of its focused employee development strategies.
HOW TO LOOK LUXE 
WHEN YOU DON’T HAVE THE BIG BUCKS

By WENDY LEE
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0 K. So you have secured your first job. The first thing to do is to get some decent clothes, which nowaday are probably sponsored by your parents or with some 'angpows' from gracious aunts and uncles. But six months down the road, you’d probably be itching to get some new stuff, either for self-gratification or to impress clients, colleagues and bosses. For most of us not living out of inheritance, with an average salary of RM2,000 – RM3,000 per month, after deducting monthly expenses on petrol, rental, food, and other miscellaneous, it is still a stretch to get yourself a decent working suit. But with limited funds, you will still want to dress well and look good. So, how do you look luxe when you really don’t have the big bucks?

1 FABRICS, FABRICS, FABRICS

I’m sure some of you might have the experience of making an online purchase as you were attracted to the style of the cloth- ing, only to be disappointed later as the qual- ity of the item wasn’t as good as expected. Regardless of the cut and style of the cloth- ing, if it’s made from cheap fabric, it is notice- able. Therefore, avoid buying anything that has lint coming out easily, or anything that is too shiny. Men’s shirts that are made of polyester will make the wearer look sloppy. Generally speaking, the thicker and the more textured the fabric is, the more expensive the garment will look.

2 SPURGE ON THE OUTSIDE, SAVE ON THE INSIDE

A good, well-cut working suit that cost you RM500 paired with a RM50 blouse. What is not visible is not important and will not make any impact. Regardless of the cut and style of the cloth-

3 ACCESSORIZE TO HIKE UP THE PRICE

Accessorising is the answer to all wardrobe malfunctions and clothing dilemmas! Just because you got your blouse from the market place, it doesn’t mean you can’t dress it up with great accessories. Paired with carefully selected pieces, you are indirectly allowing the cheap factor of your clothing to fade into the background. Example – a plain white T-shirt worn with an exclusive pendant necklace will instantly elevate the status of the T-shirt. So, make an impact with the accessories you choose.

4 MIX LOW-COST WITH POSH

Here’s one great way to stretch your wardrobe choices. Mix cheaper items with pricier ones. The expensive ones will elevate the whole look. For instance, pairing a design- er dress with a pair of inexpensive shoes, or carrying a stylish handbag when you are in your pants and teen. The overall effect is then balanced. So, put your creativity to test and mix and match your way to a great style.

5 ONLY IF IT FITS

You should wear your clothes, not let your clothes wear you. Just because you can get something over your head, it doesn’t mean it actually fits you. The labels on the back don’t mean anything if you have to hold your breath and squeeze into that tiny dress. Remember, anything that is too tight, too big, too short, will always cheapen your look.

6 BE YOUR OWN MAGGYVER

Hem it, shorten it, taper it, nip it, hide it, change it! A little alteration can go a long way! One of the easiest ways to add a bit of glitter and glam is to replace tacky cheap buttons with contemporary alternatives. This helps add style and sophistication. Get rid of unnecessary embellishments that are no longer in trend like big bows or lace trimmings, and replace them with modern sequins. You will see the difference immedi- ately!

7 GO WITH DARK MONOCROMES

It is easier to pull off an image of elegance with a dark outfit than if you are in sweet and nice features. Otherwise, exercise good grooming! You can go au naturel if you are blessed with good skin and nice features. Otherwise, exercise good skin care regime or add on a little makeup. It can lift your luxe level three notches up! The bottomless soup bowl

By TERRY SMALL
myStarjob@leaderonomics.com

I’m full but I’m going to eat this any- way. How much would you eat if your soup bowl had been secretly rigged by scientists to always stay half full? When would you stop eating? Would you stop??

A group of scientists conducted a study to answer these questions. This is what they found. People who ate from a normal soup bowl ate, on average, nine ounces of soup. Most finished the bowl. People who ate from bowls that had been rigged with a tube to always stay half full no mat- ter how much they ate, averaged 15 ounces of soup. They ate and ate and ate!!

THE BOTTOMLESS SOUP BOWL

Surely the latter group would have figured out what was going on. Not a chance!!

This experiment illustrates an interesting aspect about your brain and the interesting relationship it has with food. You brain is a goal seeking structure. Thus, most people are “target eaters”. We stop when the plate is clear, or the bowl is empty. Not when we are full. Mindless eating.

Start to notice when you are full. Pay attention to your attention, be aware of your awareness, be con- scious of your consciousness. I’m full but I’m going to eat this anyway.

Habitually making this observation will probably cut your calorie consumption by 30%. It did for me. Eating is a brain activity as much as it is anything else.

Here are a few additional tips from brain research on mindless eating:

GROOM TO PERFECTION

One of the easiest ways to look expen- sive is to practise good grooming! You can go au naturel if you are blessed with good skin and nice features. Otherwise, exercise good skin care regime or add on a little makeup. It can lift your luxe level three notches up!

AND HERE ARE 3 QUICK TIPS FOR THE GUYS:

1 Taper and fit:

Never allow your fabric to bunch up by the sides or to tuck excess fabrics on the back of your pants. Make sure your shirts taper with your body. Excess materials make you appear flabby and disheveled, and cheapen your overall look.

2 Keep it simple:

It is easier to spot a cheap shirt if it’s adorned with extras such as tacky col- lars, fuzzy cuffs, and fancy buttons. If these aren’t done well, they will just draw attention for the wrong reasons. With limited budget, get a simple shirt, iron it and you will look like a million dollars.

3 Wear an undershirt:

To not only protect your shirt from sweat, but it will also extend the lifespan of your shirt. The best part? Wearing and undershirt creates the illusion of thicker fabric and make your shirt look more expensive.

Remember, style is not a question of money. You cannot buy good taste. By just following the few rules above, you can look priceless even when you are cashless.

Wendy Lee is the president of MABIC (Malaysian Assoc. of Brand & Image Consultants) and a director at Brand Image International (a firm believer that with Style... there must be Substance)
Dear Careernomers,

I would like to ask for your opinion. I have just graduated from a human resource management course and now I feel my future is uncertain. Why try to take on part time jobs that are not even related to my studies and I feel lucky to have these opportunities. I also try to attend courses conducted by the Government to get professional certifications, for example, the Safety and Health certificate and the SAP training programme that take almost six months to complete. I am confused as to whether I should pursue an entry level management trainee programme, or just continue to improve myself with some professional certifications for a better future. I just wonder where I should be right now.

I would also like to know if there are any other professional courses related to my field of work. Thank you.

Warm regards,
IDRIS

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Coming up in next Saturday’s issue...

ISKANDAR MALAYSIA, A REGION RICH WITH OPPORTUNITIES

RESUME

Also next week

Read all about how adopting flexible workplace arrangements helps retain women at work in Women And Careers

Consulting Corner talks about pursuing your dream job instead of getting influenced by others

Learning promotes the formation of new connections between neurons in the brain, says Terry Small in Brain Bulletin

Take a peek into the life of a coffee barista and what it takes to make a good cup of coffee