MEETING THE TALENT NEEDS OF MALAYSIA

TALENTCORP PARTNERS EMPLOYERS TO NURTURE, ATTRACT AND RETAIN TOP TALENT

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Succession planning

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ENTRY POINT PROJECTS (EPPs) in the Oil, Gas, and Energy sector are expected to contribute RM141.1bil to the Gross National Income (GNI) of Malaysia in 2020.

In Malaysia, Talent is especially needed in high value and high growth areas such as Oil, Gas, Energy, Business Services, and Healthcare.

The goal of the Economic Transformation Programme is to create 457,200 jobs in the Tourism sector, and 74,000 in the Agriculture sector by 2020. The Returning Expert Programme (REP) facilitates the return of Malaysian professionals from overseas to help overcome the shortage of expertise in the country and to create a world class workforce in Malaysia, especially in the context of the Economic Transformation Programme.

In the ICT sector, skills that are sought after include creative multimedia, human resource management, software development, enterprise resource planning, and business intelligence and analytics.

The opinions expressed in this career guide are those of the writers or the people they quoted and not necessarily those of Leaderonomics.
By ROSHAN THIRAN
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IT'S ALL ABOUT BS!

IS YOUR BELIEF SYSTEM CURTAILING YOUR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT?

One year of him breaking the world record, 37 other runners broke the four-minute mile barrier. And the following year saw 300 other runners go under four minutes for the mile.

In 6,000 years of human history, no one was able to break the four-minute mile, but once Bannister proved it was possible, so many others have been able to do it.

It had nothing to do with improved training or better tracks or more skilled athletes. It had all to do with the belief systems ingrained in these athletes’ mind. The moment Bannister showed the world it was possible, people believed it was possible.

There is no other more dominant directing force in human behaviour than belief. Four beliefs are often described as impossible goals.

This belief system is shared by many of us, even when we are stuck and unable to move forward.

One of the defining characteristics of our belief system is the belief that we are incapable of achieving something. The belief is often rooted in our upbringing, experiences, and social conditioning. It is this belief system that can limit our potential and prevent us from reaching our full capabilities.

The same happens with Southwest Airlines when a ‘Bannister’ appears and drives change in that industry, others will almost immediately follow suit. For example, prior to Apple entering the telecommunication and music industry, most players kept to industry norms and beliefs.

The same happened with Southwest Airlines in the aviation business, Nirvana in the “property” industry and Starbucks with the café business. They were all like Bannister, breaking belief systems in their industry.

So often our beliefs hold us back and limit our progress. So, what are other limiting beliefs that we may have? Among them are:

- I don’t have the talent to do this.
- I can’t change this. This is just the way I am. I am born with no talent.
- I have to be realistic.
- Being average is OK.
- He has always been luckier than me.
- Who am I kidding? I am nobody.
- They are successful because they’ve been lucky.
- I don’t have the educational background required for success.

Just as we have limiting beliefs about ourselves, we also may have beliefs about other people, which bind us in many ways. If we see someone by himself, we may interpret that he is not friendly and may not ask him to help us. If we think others are more capable and superior, then we will not challenge them.

About 15 years ago, I lived in London and used to play for a small team in a park weekly. Our team was pretty decent and we used to win our matches against rather poor opponents. I always believed that we would win every game as the opponents were weak.

One Saturday, the opposition team took a 3-0 lead at half-time, I was extremely angry that we were losing to a “lousy” team. So, I started taking the ball and dribbling towards the goal. I scored a goal, then another, and finally late in the game another goal.

The game ended 3-1 and I was upset we drew the game. After the game, some of the other team members came to shake my hand and introduced themselves. I was shocked that many of them were part of a professional football team set up in Sweden.

If I had known I was playing against professional players, I would never have dreamed of dribbling pass them. But as my BS told me that these were just usual “normal” opponents, I played out of my skin.

OVERRIDE SELF-DEFEATING BELIEFS

Here are a few steps to help you reframe your belief system:

1. Identify those self-defeating beliefs in your life that are derailing you from your goal. Review this list of “derailing” beliefs and start noticing when you pop up in your life.
2. Identify specific situations which trigger these beliefs.
3. Begin the process of changing your belief system. This requires changes in three areas:
   - 1. CHANGE YOUR LANGUAGE – Stop saying “I can’t do this” and say “Yes, I can”.
   - 2. CHANGE YOUR PHYSIOLOGY – Let up and move around whenever you feel a belief is constricting you. Jumping and moving around is a powerful tool to interrupt your thought patterns.
   - 3. CHANGE YOUR FOCUS – Stop focusing on how great the opponent is or how unqualified you are but focus on your goal.

Keep reminding yourself that regardless of how challenging the road ahead may be, you must overcome these challenges to achieve your goal. Remember, the four-minute mile was not a physiologcal challenge, but a mental one.

Belief alone does not yield success. Great breakthroughs can only be accomplished through hard work, planning, leadership and practice, but without the fire of belief, most people quit.

Bannister practised hard, strategised and ran fast. But his belief system told him it was impossible, he would probably have never achieved his feat. We often compromise our goals through our limiting and self-imposed BS which cripples us with fear. Only open can you change that.

What are the things in your life that you want to do but everyone thinks are impossible? Maybe even you believe they are impossible. Perhaps it is a goal you have given up on, or a target you think can’t be achieved. Maybe you think it is impossible to turn your business around or to inspire your employees?

Whatever may be your ‘four-minute’ hurdle, you can only start planning and working to achieve it if your belief system is altered. So, start by re-framing your beliefs from “I can’t find a solution” to the belief that “I can”.

Bannister was asked in a recent interview what he thought from a standpoint of physiology was the limit to our ability to break records. His reply was: “There is no absolute limit.”

The same applies to us. There are no limits to what we can achieve, if only we believe.

Roshan Thiran is CEO of Leaderonomics, a social enterprise who helps organisations develop leaders by reframing their belief systems. To watch Roshan interact and learn from great leaders, from all over the world, logon to www.leaderonomics.tv for some amazing leadership TV shows.
Managing Talent and Succession Planning

**Critical for Malaysian Companies to Have Programmes in Place**

1. Demographic shift – Maturing of the senior management rank (baby boomers and grey tops) and lower employment participation rate due to declining birth rate.
2. Economic growth rate and an ever-changing skill and knowledge requirement.
3. Expectation on corporate boards to broaden their oversight by including people risks such as management succession and capability development.

A traditional replacement planning approach, such as three candidates for each management position on the organisational chart, is not practical anymore due to the frequent need to restructure. An approach aiming to increase the bench strength to meet future needs should be taken, Ng says. He says an example of a good talent management structure is one that is segmented by types of talent, such as entry level recruits (young leaders), high potential pool (emerging leaders), and potential successors to the top (senior leaders). Various approaches, investments and oversights are provided to each segment in order to ensure a continuous flow of talent pipeline.

**BRIDGING THE GAP**

Without being able to tell a success story to their current and future talent in the form of actual talents who climbed the ranks and made it into the C-suites, talent management and success planning will be only perceived as lip service, which might impact the employer brand in the long run, he explains. Ng says while it is good to groom internal talents, there should be conscious and focused efforts to ensure diversity of backgrounds and experiences at the top team.

"It sends a clear message, especially among public listed companies, about the sustainability of the organisation, when there is a clear internal succession plan in place for the top executive. So diversity (in terms of in-company versus external executives) can be built in one or two levels below the top executive to ensure diversity," he says. Na says research has shown that the market is generally more favourable to an internal CEO coming in to take over if the company requires a significantly new strategy and direction for its business. However, he says, the expectation is that the company should stay the course and only make incremental changes, an internal CEO successor would be preferred. Whatever the strategy opted for, what matters ultimately will be the organisation’s ability to stay relevant and persist for the long-haul.

**IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE A FOCUSED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, WHICH IS LINKED TO BUSINESS GROWTH IMPERVATIVES AND THE USE OF ANALYTICS TO DETERMINE TALENT NEEDS, THAT IS INTEGRATED WITH THE SUCCESSION PLANNING PROCESS.**

— Dr. Jens Ballendowitsch

**“ATTRACTION, ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION OF HIGH PERFORMERS AND HIGH POTENTIALS ARE STRONGLY DRIVEN BY CAREER PROGRESSION. WELL AS LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, MENTORING, COACHING AND REGULAR EXPOSURE TO SENIOR LEADERSHIP ARE IMPORTANT ASPECTS A COMPANY CAN PROVIDE TO THESE HIGH-IN-DEMAND EMPLOYEE GROUP.”**

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**COUNTRY MANAGING DIRECTOR, ACENTURE MALAYSIA**

**“MIDST the increasing competitiveness business environment of today, the maxim that “organisations exist to persist” is indeed serious business. To survive in this competitive environment, organisations have to prepare themselves not only to withstand any eventualities, but also to emerge triumphant vis-a-vis the competition. Besides offering exemplary products and services, how well companies manage their talent pool is one of the critical factors that will decide the fate of how well they will fare at the end of the day. Given the onslaught of changes underway, how important is talent management and succession planning to the survival of companies, and how well are Malaysian companies faring in managing their talent responsibilities?**

Stressing the importance of talent management and leadership development to competitive organisations, Accenture Malaysia country managing director Goh Aik Meng says having well thought out talent, leadership and culture initiatives which are aligned with real business needs, still remains a key challenge for Malaysian companies. “It is necessary to have a focused leadership development programme, which is linked to business growth imperatives and the use of analytics to determine talent needs, is integrated with the succession planning process,” Goh says. He stresses that succession planning is a critical people management practice that enables organisations to translate the realisation of business benefits as it requires dynamic and effective leaders. “Businesses that actively manage their talent pipeline and grow their existing talent are more likely to become high performing businesses. This process will ensure that the organisations are systematically identifying and preparing high-potential candidates for key positions,” he shares with myStarjob.com.my.

Goh says succession planning initiatives should be part of a broader management development effort and must be integrated with other human resources initiatives. This allows better decisions to be made and will be able to identify internal potential successors based on their skills and competencies. Concurring with Goh, Dr. Jens Ballendowitsch of international consulting firm Aon Hewitt says given the prevailing shortage of talent, the importance of talent management and succession planning, especially among Malaysian companies, is becoming more critical. Ballendowitsch, who is Aon Hewitt’s practice leader talent for Malaysia, says as the economy continues to grow, employers should explore methods besides the tried and tested practices because they would be facing growing challenges to attract and retain critical talent to expand their businesses. “Attraction, engagement and retention of high performers and high potentials are strongly driven by career, as well as learning and development opportunities. Mentoring, coaching and regular exposure to senior leadership are important aspects a company can provide to these high-in-demand employee group,” Ballendowitsch says.

**GROOMING INTELLECT**

Talent management can be either a discipline as big as the human resources function itself, or a small bunch of initiatives aimed at people and organisation development. Ballendowitsch says it is not only to attract and retain key talent and to drive high performance, companies need to establish a robust and attractive talent management system – an initiative that Malaysian organisations are increasingly embracing on.

“A talent management system goes hand-in-hand with succession planning. Once the talents are defined and managed, those outstanding talents should enter a succession planning programme. This is a logical step because the objective of talent management must be to identify future senior leaders who possess the right skills and competencies and exhibit the right behaviours that ensure the future success of the company,” Ballendowitsch elaborates.

Giving the thumbs up for talent management and succession planning, Aon Hewitt senior client partner, South-East Asia Na Boon Chong says it is part of good corporate governance practice for boards to manage CEO and key officers’ succession plans. Na says the increasing pressure for talent management and succession planning is driven by the confluence of a number of factors.

**EXPECTATION ON CORPORATE BOARDS TO BROADEN THEIR OVERSIGHT BY INCLUDING PEOPLE RISKS SUCH AS MANAGEMENT SUCCESSION AND CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT.**

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HELP SHAPE
OUR NEXT
GENERATION

WE’RE HIRING

Blueprint Delivery Directors, Managers, and Executives
- Role requires supporting delivery of the Malaysian Education Blueprint initiatives
- Experience in Strategic and Corporate Planning, large scale transformation programs, organisation and performance management required
- Distinctive problem solving and facilitation skills
- Strong planning, organisational and analytical skills
- Good communication skills, Bahasa and English required
- Strong drive and leadership with a passion and excitement for education

Corporate Functions Directors, Managers and Executives

Change Management and Stakeholder Engagement
- Responsible for internal communications within the Ministry, including execution of a comprehensive change management strategy for the delivery of the Malaysian Education Blueprint
- Good interpersonal and communication skills, and stakeholder management ability
- Strong creative, strategic, and organizational skills required

Finance
- Responsible for overseeing financial budgeting, accounting and auditing, financial reporting, payroll and treasury services
- Establishing and managing financial controls and processes for procurement, contracting, and claims
- Experience in finance and accounting required

Performance Management
- Oversight for program and data management for all Blueprint initiatives and projects
- Strong analytical and organizational skills, technical knowledge
- Experience in performance management, KPI setting and monitoring, initiative tracking required

Talent Management
- Design and implement Talent Management process, including recruiting, on-boarding, professional development and retention
- Responsible for workforce planning and annual HR plans
- Strong interpersonal and communications skills, planning and organizational abilities required

Please send your complete curriculum vitae (including position applied for, complete academic record, description of work experience and expected salary) to recruitment@padu.edu.my. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Education is the bedrock of development. As times evolve, so must our education system, not only to keep up but also to keep ahead. PADU is a newly incorporated Delivery Unit set up to support the Ministry of Education to deliver deep transformational change to our education system in line with the Malaysian Education Blueprint released on September 6, 2013. PADU will be staffed with exceptional talents from the private and public sectors. We offer market-competitive compensation, excellent networking exposure, and the opportunity to shape the future of our nation through education reform.
JOINING FORCES WITH EMPLOYERS TO MEET TALENT NEEDS

TALENTCORP at Work Locally and Abroad

TalentCorp was established on Jan 1, 2013 under the Prime Minister’s Department to formulate and facilitate initiatives to address the availability of talent in line with the needs of the country’s economic transformation. Collaborating with relevant government agencies and employers in priority economic sectors, it develops demand driven initiatives focused on three strategic thrusts. Specifically it aims to:

1. OPTIMISE MALAYSIAN TALENT: TalentCorp’s work in this area focuses on the pipeline of young Malaysian talent, and seeks to channel them towards opportunities in key sectors. By helping with the school-to-work transition through initiatives like the Structured Internship Programme, and upgrading to training in new areas, it ensures a steady flow of high quality talent into areas within the public and private sectors.

2. ATTRACTION AND FACILITATE GLOBAL TALENT: TalentCorp organizes International Outreach and recruitment programs to further raise awareness of job opportunities in Malaysia. It promotes opportunities for those looking to return, an important opportunity for collaboration and contribution back to the country for those who are still abroad. The initiative also includes the Malaysia Executive Recruitment Programme (MERP) recently approved by National Talent Office, which is the return of notable Malaysian professionals created.

3. BUILD NETWORKS OF TOP TALENT: TalentCorp also focuses on building robust networks to create a talent pool, to better enable engagement and leveraging of top talent as opportunities arise. This talent pool is also aimed to provide platforms for collaboration and contribution from talent abroad.

TalentCorp sees itself as the bridge between the public and private sectors in Malaysia. While it’s an arm of the government, it also works with the public sector to introduce and implement policies and initiatives to nurture, attract and retain top talent for the country.

WE BELIEVE THAT MALAYSIA TRULY HAS TALENT AND THAT TALENTS OF ALL BACKGROUNDS WILL BE ABLE TO FIND MEANINGFUL, PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THIS COUNTRY. TOWARDS THIS END, WE COLLABORATE WITH EMPLOYERS AND ENGAGE WITH TALENT AT HOME AND ABROAD TO PROMOTE THE DIVERSE AND DIVERSITY PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN MALAYSIA.

LEE SIO HONG, PARTNER, PEOPLE TEAM, ERNST & YOUNG

“Talent is not unique to any one sector. It is the core strength that can drive any talent ecosystem. TalentCorp, with its wide-reaching network and structured approach in engaging employers and talent, offers a unique platform to effect transformation in our economy.”

CANNING NUR ARAH KAHN, GROUP HUMAN RESOURCES AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS DIRECTOR, NESTLE MALAYSIA

“As the world’s leading in

health and wellness company and the largest FMCG company in Malaysia, Nestle offers young graduates exciting careers as opposed to just a job, with great opportunities to get to the heart of our key business areas in Malaysia and gain a global international exposure. At Nestle, we believe in grow

ning our people to manage and lead the business in the future. We are committed to do our bit to bring Good Food Good Life into the lives of all Southwest Asians. We are happy to have GEMS programme in Malaysia as a key initiative to take us to a next level.”

The GEMS programme supports the nation’s focus on improving graduate employability by matching skills to create better career paths for young talent.

1. CAREER AWARENESS

Works with employers to educate undergraduates on Malaysia’s leading employers. Introduces opportunities through employer brand awareness seminars and competitions.

2. STRUCTURED INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

Offers internships to companies providing quality internships for 1,200 graduates trained and placed in 2012.

3. SCHOLARSHIP TALENT ATTRACTION AND RETENTION PROGRAMME

Enables government scholarships for returnees from abroad, offering 500 places with private sectors employers.

4. FLEXWORKLIFE MY

A platform for employers to share alerts to job seekers and promote flexible work arrangements and gender-friendly workplaces.

5. OPTIMISING MALAYSIAN TALENT IN MALAYSIA

Building networks of talent with companies to employ top foreign talent. TalentCorp is helping foreign talent. We are pleased with the broaden the pool of talent available.

6. FACILITATING FOREIGN TALENT

Employment Pass II

Provides platforms for hiring foreign talent. TalentCorp is helping foreign talent. We are pleased with the broaden the pool of talent available.
“Investing in Malaysia is more than just about hiring talent. Technip brings new technology to Malaysia and invests in human capital development programmes. Training people and upgrading their skills makes them want to stay with us. We collaborate with TalentCorp on graduate upskilling programmes, where for example a group of graduates are put through a two months of technical knowledge training followed by six months of practical training to become piping and structural engineers. In addition, Technip has been able to tap on the pool of government scholars through the Scholarship Talent Attraction and Retention (STAR) programme. In the space of experienced talent, Technip has also leveraged on initiatives like the Returning Expert Programme (REP) to attract Malaysian professionals from abroad and also the Residence Pass – Talent (RP-T) for top expatriate talent. "Technip has been able to bring technology challenges to Malaysia, including deepwater field developments and the world’s first two floating LNG projects. Hence, we have great career opportunities for both fresh and experienced global talent right here in Malaysia."

"We believe in ‘growing our own timber’, not just for Petronas, but for the industry. Petronas leverages on the strengths of the industry players, by getting the industry to play a role in nurturing students and making an impact on the university in terms of its curriculum. "We also wanted better collaboration between academicians and the industry. Petronas is one of the participating companies of the UTP Student Industrial Internship Programme endorsed by TalentCorp under its Structured Internship Programme placing final year students in various companies for a period of seven months. "This way, students will be able to experience the work environment and industry requirements, as well as develop their soft skills. Furthermore, this internship also serves as a recruitment platform for companies like Petronas. Apart from that, we are also working closely with Talentcorp in the area of retaining and attracting PhD scholars from overseas universities to contribute back to the country via the STAR programme.”

"TalentCorp as the one-stop centre for all TalentCorp endorses, both in and outside Malaysia. Therefore, this internship also serves as a recruitment platform for companies like Petronas. Apart from that, we are also working closely with Talentcorp in the area of retaining and attracting PhD scholars from overseas universities to contribute back to the country via the STAR programme.”

"We see the wonderful work that TalentCorp is doing, and are privileged to partner with TalentCorp on many projects. Certainly, we see many areas where there is synergy if you like, both CIMB and TalentCorp are obsessed with talent development. We have been collaborating with TalentCorp on many fronts, including taking part in career fairs that Talentcorp endorses, both in and outside Malaysia. "TalentCorp as the one-stop centre for the 10-year Residence Pass-Talent (RP-T) since April 2011 has also facilitated the processing of these passes for our top foreign talent at CIMB. Such initiatives increase the attractiveness of Malaysia as a career destination. We also fully support TalentCorp’s initiatives that bring together leading employers to help young graduates make the transition from school to work through various career awareness programmes, outreachs and its Ready4Work.my website. "TalentCorp on its part recognises CIMB’s innovation in talent development and shows its support in tangible ways. For instance, this year, TalentCorp is sponsoring our CIMB Asean Stock Challenge, the only regional virtual stock trading competition for university students. TalentCorp has also repeatedly shown its appreciation for our CIMB Fusion, the only graduate management programme that offers dual employment opportunities.”

"PwC has always been a strong proponent of developing and promoting talent in Malaysia. We believe that in advancing the national talent agenda further, collaboration with key enablers is the way forward which is why we’ve supported TalentCorp’s initiatives from its early days. "This collaboration has strengthened our relationship with a number of initiatives: outreach to Malaysian talent abroad; improving employability of graduates through TalentCorp’s Ready4Work.my portal by providing content; participating in the Structured Internship Programme; promoting flexibility in the workplace to help the retention of women in the workforce; and sharing of best practices on work-life integration on the flexWorkLife.my portal. "Working together with TalentCorp has undoubtedly also helped improve PwC’s own employee value proposition and given us more insights into the human capital innovation taking place in this country. So it makes business sense for more employers in Malaysia to collaborate with TalentCorp as part of their talent investment initiatives.”

"TalentCorp was established to be a focal point in addressing the need for top talent to drive the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP), which is the catalyst for economic growth and investments needed for Malaysia to achieve high-income status in the next seven years. "While the Government will prioritise its policies and spending for the ETP, the bulk of investments, targeted at 92% by 2020, are to be financed by the private sector. The private sector, therefore, has been placed in the driver’s seat in the implementation of the ETP. Delivering on talent is integral to the success of the ETP. As a result, TalentCorp is focusing on building effective partnerships between the public and private sectors to ensure the availability of top talent, especially for the key sectors of the economy. These sectors include:

- Oil, gas and energy
- Financial services/accounting
- Fast moving consumer goods
- Electrical and electronics
- ICT and shared services
- Healthcare
Ling Ming Choo :: Human Resource Director :: Unilever Malaysia

“Unilever is passionate about attracting overseas-based Malaysians. By leveraging on TalentCorp’s extensive networks in the global market, we are able to reach out to more Malaysian students abroad, with the aim of bringing them back to undertake a rewarding career at Unilever.

“We believe strongly in the importance of building Malaysia’s talent pipeline and we’re delighted that TalentCorp shares this same vision.”

Raj Purushothaman :: Managing Director :: National Instruments

“Being a relatively new investment in Malaysia, building and growing a sustainable pipeline of industry relevant talents remains a key goal for us.

“At National Instruments, we provide scientists and engineers with tools to accelerate innovation and believe in promoting an innovative culture with university graduates early on. TalentCorp’s Innovation Malaysia Design Competition is aligned to our beliefs on talent development and promotes industry and university collaboration.

“We are delighted that the team on National Instruments’ track emerged as the winner for the 2013 competition for their ‘Oil Palm Fruit Ripeness Detection Kit for Harvesting Decision’. The partnership with TalentCorp has been encouraging and we look forward to doing more together!”

Shankar Nagalingam :: HR Director, South Asia and ANZ :: Dell Malaysia

“Dell is actively collaborating with TalentCorp on building a diverse sustainable talent pipeline for the nation. We are working together on communicating the vibrant job opportunities in the shared services sector to young graduates through participation in local career fairs and providing content for collaboratives on the sector. We also believe that an engaged and diverse workforce is a competitive advantage to Dell.

“Being a diversity advocate, I work closely with TalentCorp on gender diversity initiatives with the aim to increase the participation of women in the workforce and in decision-making positions. My role includes advocacy on gender diversity through various media channels and networking sessions, as well as sharing experiences and guiding employers who are keen to implement work-life practices.”

Datuk Dr Mohd Sofi Osman :: Vice-President APAC Region, Worldwide Operations and Engineering :: Altera Corp

“We see great synergy in working with TalentCorp in the realm of optimising Malaysian talent. We have embarked on a drive to build a sustainable talent pipeline for high value added jobs at Altera Corp.

“Through various TalentCorp initiatives like the Scholarship Talent Attraction and Retention (STAR) programme, the upskilling programme FasTrack, the High Income Talent Research Scientist Engineer programme (HIT-RSE) and Structured Internships for undergraduates, we are confident of attracting bright Malaysian engineers to high value-added careers in the electrical and Electronics sector.

“FasTrack is a great example of companies collaborating for the larger good, to make graduates industry ready and build a R&D talent pool for the nation with a long-term goal of embedding this content in the education system.

“The FasTrack Masters programme, introduced in 2013, encourages graduates of high calibre to pursue their education in high-end design and process technology.

“It’s been great working with TalentCorp and we look forward to more exciting times together!”

The graduation ceremony of FasTrack, a 12-month programme targeted at high-achieving Malaysian engineering graduates.

 Winners of the Innovate Malaysia Design Competition 2013 event, Penang.
MAKE A MATE DATE

By TERRY SMALL
mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

1 You eat differently. Portions usually get smaller. One way to feel healthy in the summer is to reduce your carbohydrate intake. It’s good for your brain and prolongs your life. You probably eat differently, too.

2 You exercise more. Walks and bike rides are easier when the days are longer. The benefits are many. Your brain grows new neurons (neurogenesis). Blood circulation increases – this provides your brain with more oxygen and glucose.

3 You drink more water. Summer is hot. When it’s hot you drink more water. Your brain is 85% water. When you are well hydrated you learn better and you have more energy. Water is needed to efficiently manufacture neurotransmitters in the brain, including serotonin and melatonin.

4 You are more social. In the summer you spend more time with family and friends. Your brain needs social connections. Spending time with people is a fundamental tenet of cognitive health. The Journal of Public Health reports that having a larger social network can reduce your risk of dementia and cognitive impairment. Try to arrange and attend a few more social events than you normally do.

5 You need more time off in the summer and probably pick up a book or two. Reading-water your brain up. Learning new things grows connections between your brain cells. Scientists call this neural reserve. The more you learn, the better. Try reading something you normally wouldn’t pick up. If you always read novels, try a non-fiction book and vice versa.

6 You spend more time outdoors. Being outside is good for your brain. Richard Louv just wrote a book called The Nature Principle. Essentially, he feels many of us suffer from a nature-deficit disorder. Getting outdoors seems to boost mental acuity and creativity. Your brain also appreciates the extra Vitamin D. Try taking up a hobby or activity that can only be done outdoors.

7 You relax. Things slow down in the summer. A little stress can help your brain function. However, too much stress can literally make you stupid. Prolonged stress can be toxic to nerve cells in your hippocampus – impairing memory.

One way to cut stress is to go out in nature. Try blocking out a little more “white space” in your calendar just for you and your brain.

Congratulations on learning something about your brain today. The Brain Bulletin is committed to help to do just that.

Always remember: “You are a genius!”

By DR GREG SMALLEY
mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

ARRIAGE is an amazing adventure that has the potential for greater joy than any other human relationship. However, the daily responsibilities and stresses of having a career, home, children, debt, friends and other activities create a unique challenge for couples. The health of our marriage can have a profound effect on how we function at work. Ever had a heated argument with your spouse and then gone to work angry? Emotions can carry through from the home life into the office.

The challenge usually surrounds the issue of priorities and time. Often, we build our careers at the expense of investing time into this crucial relationship that lies at the core of our family life. Sadly, many couples buy into the false notion that they simply don’t have enough time, energy or money to date their spouse. The hustle and bustle of our fast-paced life often reduces the health of our marriage even as we continue growing on the work front.

A relationship that lies at the core of our human relationship.

The health of our marriage can
date night is a fantastic idea to make sure you and your spouse are connecting positively and enjoying each other’s company on a regular basis. It doesn’t have to be expensive or elaborate. The important thing is to make spending time alone together a priority for the both of you.

Sponsoring can easily become distant roommates under the stress of work, household duties and childcare. We need to feel that the adrenalin in us is still pumping and is in abundant supply. Don’t ever get tricked into believing that your marriage feels like a “recycled” union of two tired and bored souls. I strongly encourage you to diligently pursue “fun, adventure, play and laughter” in your marriage – start dating again!

Dr Greg Smalley is executive director of marriage and family formation at Focus on the Family in Colorado Springs, US. He will be in Malaysia from Oct 11 to Oct 12 to speak at two events: Date night and Marriage conference. You can register online at www.family.org.m
I have been nearly 10 years since I left school, but the memories of it are still fresh in my mind. I remember how nervous I was and how my stomach churned at the thought of failing one of my exams.

It was just an exam, but the fear of failing was so strong that I would have preferred to curl up into a ball and hide in the garbage room forever rather than face the embarrassment if I were to flunk that paper.

Being brought up in a competitive environment where failure was not an option, I felt as if I had lost the ability to function like a normal being. I kept myself busy with “Plan B” – how to turn myself into a ball, tree or plastic bag (as Katy Perry has suggested) and never be heard of again.

Failure is like a mother who wakes us to get out of our comfortable bed, and see how it has affected our life, through the mirror, understand why we failed and to start new things. Failure is like a good gym instructor who trains us to get fitter and stronger. It is hard work at first, but once we see the results of our training, we will be able to proudly stand in front of the mirror and say “Hey, this is worth it!”

THE BEAUTY OF FAILURE

As much as we may hate it, we have to learn to accept the fact that failure is part of being human. We make mistakes and we learn from them. Without failures and the pains that come with them, we would never understand or perhaps remember valuable lessons. We may not be able to comprehend the lessons that failure is trying to teach us the very moment we fall, but I believe when the time is right, we will be able to look back, see the bigger picture, understand why we failed and see how it has affected our life, perhaps even in a positive way.

Of course I am not trying to imply that we must always fail first in order to learn, but it is important to learn how to embrace failure and see it as an essential part of our learning curve.

Failure is like a mother who wakes us up from our ‘dream’ and pushes us to calm us down, listen to you are employed? Don’t start staring at your phone. You've arrived at the office and are shown to the waiting room. What if you told the receptionist that you just need a few minutes could be a deciding factor of whether or not you are employed? First impressions are generally formed while the applicant is waiting in the lobby, and they become relevant to the hiring decision between 5% and 10% of the time. Here are some dos and don’ts when playing the waiting game.

TO SIT CALMLY AND QUIETLY

Your nerves may be getting to you, but the most important thing is to stay calm.

Don’t try to make small talk with the receptionist. She or he may not appreciate the interference during work hours.

DO LOOK OVER YOUR NOTES AND RESUME

Take this precious time to gather your material and your thoughts one last time to make sure everything is in order.

DO ASK FOR RELEVANT COMPANY MATERIALS TO READ

This will definitely get you points when your interviewer shows up in the room. It shows that you are serious about the job and the company.

DON’T PLAY WITH YOUR PHONE

Leave the Candy Crush requests alone. Don’t text or make phone calls. Whatever you want to do with your phone, just don’t. It only shows disrespect if the interviewer comes into the room and you’re busy tapping away.

DON’T START LISTENING TO MUSIC

Ok, so it is taking a little longer than expected. That doesn’t give you the green light to take out your MP3 player and plug in your music. This is disrespectful to your interviewer, if you need music to calm you down, listen to it on your way over to the interview.

DON’T LOOK BORED

Resist doodling, yawning or just looking bored. Apper alert, focused and eager.

When you feel like a failure, remember that each failure is leading us towards a greater moment. Whenever failure comes and visits, greet it with a smile and thank it for helping you move on to the next step towards success.

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Always remember that you are not alone and never ever punish yourself for your failures.

I used to feel like I was drowning whenever I was on the verge of a failure. I hated that feeling, but I used it to push me to recover quickly from that failure.

I have also learned ways to cope with such circumstances. I have also learned through failure that we are all truly an island, because there will always be circumstances. I have also learned ways to cope with such circumstances. I have also learned through failure that we are all truly an island, because there will always be circumstances. I have also learned ways to cope with such circumstances.

It has always been a struggle for me to face failure. However, I have been lucky to be constantly surrounded by a great group of people who have never ceased to help me get over failures in life.

As years have gone by, I have learned ways to cope with such circumstances. I have also learned through failure that we are all truly an island, because there will always be circumstances. I have also learned ways to cope with such circumstances. I have also learned through failure that we are all truly an island, because there will always be circumstances. I have also learned ways to cope with such circumstances.

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DEAR RAVI,

First and foremost, I must congratulate you on obtaining a degree in English Literature. In doing so, you have taken the road less travelled and pursued a career of your choice.

It is only natural for parents to be concerned as they hope that their offspring would have less worry and more financial freedom in life.

Today, many Malaysian high school students who are in government schools or pursuing A-levels have the option to take up English Literature.

Students who score well in physics and mathematics take up this subject too as it offers them an opportunity to read history, autobiographies, sociology, and gives them a great sense of how man and society have evolved and how men behave in various cultures.

Does this have value in workplace? Yes, it does. Broadly, there are easily eight main areas in which you can attempt to find a role. Here are some suggestions, some of which may appear bold and untraditional:

1. Civil Service: Language is always useful and you can apply to become a civil servant, a diplomat or a press secretary/liaison officer. Many successful careers start in the Civil service.

2. Journalism: Journalism is a wide area, and you could join a newspaper, radio station, or television station and specialise in a specific type of news. Within this grouping, you can also join broadcasting and be a producer or scriptwriter. Depending on your interest, you could even head for the foreign or research or produce educational segments.

3. Communications and consultancy: Public relations in Malaysia has come of age and you can consider a role in public relations and start off as a junior PR consultant. Ideally, you should join with some experience to writing editorials in a newspaper or publishing house and demonstrate that you can produce a good and clean copy.

4. Market research: Another area which attracts many English Literature graduates is advertising. You could start off as a copywriter or an accounts management staff. There are many recruitment and online agencies today and you could find opportunities that specialise in writing recruitment copies. This is also a good field to start as, it will bring you closer to learning the human resources function.

Social media is also booming and demands for good writers in this field is growing.

My company hires English Literature graduates for communications and also digital marketing.

5. Human resources: English Literature graduates also do well in human resources and a strategic place to start is in recruitment or in training and development. Both of these functions would demand strong analytical abilities and writing skills. If you present well, this would be a bonus.

6. Market research: If you have strong command of the language, another area which demands well-spoken individuals, is that of market research. Activities like focus groups and also qualitative surveys are a good area to go into as they demand researchers who can speak and facilitate well. Many organisations use research today and it is very important to us.

7. Academician: There is a huge demand for English Literature graduates now especially at the local teachers training college, schools and also universities. You can commence to teach after a few years, sign up for a Masters in English Literature or in education and this can also help pave the way for a rewarding career in academia.

8. Blogger: In the interim if you have loads of time to spare, set up your own blog and start writing in an area of your interest. Do proper research, and you can add this on to your resume while applying for a permanent role. A professional blog will showcase your writing abilities.

Many organisations tend to attract those who come from the sciences and those who are strong quantitatively. However, more and more organisations are also needing those who graduate from the humanities so that there is a better appreciation of the non-economic aspects of an organisation, but also of the people who work in them.

You should start job-hunting by putting together an up-to-date resume with well-polished content. Use a persuasive copy and sell to your potential employer the benefits of hiring you.

There are many famous people who have taken up English Literature or English and Literature and done extremely well. Boris Johnson read Classics at Oxford; Andrea Jung became CEO for Avon, actors David Duchovny, James Franco, Brooke Shields and also Kate Beckinsale all studied literature. Remember many of these jobs require client contact time and are market-facing in nature. Thus, it is vital to present yourself professionally.

Happy job hunting,

NANCY SY SIM-LIM

DEAR CAREER NOVERS,

I am an English Literature graduate, and am about to start applying for jobs. I have started having second thoughts regarding the value of my degree.

My parents were against me taking this up degree, arguing that the only thing I can do with such a degree is to be a teacher/professor of English Literature. I have always had a strong passion for English classical literature. Yet now that I have graduated I fear that my parents’ reasoning will prove right.

Do you also feel that a degree in liberal arts, and more specifically, English Literature is a waste? What sort of careers do you think would value my qualification? It would be great if you could provide me with some insight on this, as having an HR expert’s opinion on the matter will help me understand this industries’ side of the story.

Warm regards,

RAVI

Qualifications-practice identical theories and thinking skills – this cuts innumerable.

Students from non-IT backgrounds like graduates of liberal arts can contribute here as they are trained to challenge, analyse and respond differently.

Many have started to hire graduates with specialisation outside of their core business. My team members in Organisational Development & Learning comprise of graduates in actuarial science, psychology, business administration, English and social sciences.

Your parents may be right in thinking that no organisation would be excited with a 50-page thesis on the works of Shakespeare. However, employers would be interested in the skills applied to writing the thesis, as it projects the ability to analyse complex material comprehensively and imaginatively, and deciphering and articulating it persuasively and fluently.

Too often, we are guilty of expecting that a liberal arts degree will fit into a specific job. And too often, we fail to recognise that with the dynamic nature of business, the world needs to be agile and continuously gain knowledge and skills to stay relevant. Bracken Darrell recognises that “the most successful people are the ones who have learned to broaden their skills with traits that will give them an edge”.

In short, there are many areas within the business world where you can apply your skills and knowledge. Nevertheless, there are some suggestions that may be directly related to your present training:

1. Copywriting for advertisements
   - Copywriting for advertisements
   - Copywriting for advertisements
   - Copywriting for advertisements
   - Copywriting for advertisements
   - Copywriting for advertisements

2. Advertising:
   - Advertising
   - Advertising
   - Advertising
   - Advertising
   - Advertising

3. Corporate communication
   - Corporate communication
   - Corporate communication
   - Corporate communication
   - Corporate communication
   - Corporate communication

4. Market research:
   - Market research
   - Market research
   - Market research
   - Market research
   - Market research

5. Blogger:
   - Blogger
   - Blogger
   - Blogger
   - Blogger
   - Blogger

6. Academician:
   - Academician
   - Academician
   - Academician
   - Academician
   - Academician

7. Market research:
   - Market research
   - Market research
   - Market research
   - Market research
   - Market research

8. Blogger:
   - Blogger
   - Blogger
   - Blogger
   - Blogger
   - Blogger

9. Corporate communication
   - Corporate communication
   - Corporate communication
   - Corporate communication
   - Corporate communication
   - Corporate communication

10. Copywriting for advertisements
    - Copywriting for advertisements
    - Copywriting for advertisements
    - Copywriting for advertisements
    - Copywriting for advertisements
    - Copywriting for advertisements

11. Advertising:
    - Advertising
    - Advertising
    - Advertising
    - Advertising
    - Advertising

12. Market research:
    - Market research
    - Market research
    - Market research
    - Market research
    - Market research

13. Blogger:
    - Blogger
    - Blogger
    - Blogger
    - Blogger
    - Blogger

The opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of Leaderonomics or myStarjob.com

Also next week

Bill Rancic dishes out words of wisdom for aspiring entrepreneurs

Summary of Shawn Achor’s book: The Happiness Advantage

Opportunities abound in the East Coast Economic Region

The best leaders in the world are relentless

If you have any suggestions or feedback on our content, get in touch with the Leaderonomics team at mystarjob@leaderonomics.com. For advertising and advertisers, contact Ian Kee@leaderonomics.com - 016 974 7087

Bill Rancic dishes out words of wisdom for aspiring entrepreneurs

Correspondence communication

a) In-house publications and annual reports: companies use multiple channels to connect with their employees, suppliers and shareholders

b) Social media specialist: Many companies have Facebook and Twitter as an alternative form of communication with today’s younger generation

c) Business website management: This too is another channel to connect with customers in relation to the products and services a company has to offer.

Public relations and branding

In today’s world, perception and branding is a key component to market a company. Public relations involve official communication via the company’s spokespersons with the media. This would require meticulous scripting and writing by the people in this department.

Advertising agencies

Copywriting for advertisements (print, radio or television), brochures and other points of sale material require communication specialists.

There is a universe of possibility out there, you just need to identify what you want to do and you can pick it up by the end by sharing this piece from Emily Dickinson with you:

““The Truth is Possibility - A fairer House than Praise - More numerous of Windows - Superior - for Doors - Of Chambers as the Cedars - Impregnable of Eye - And for an Overlaving Roof The Gambrels of the Sky - Of Visitors - the fairest - For Occupation - This - The spreading wide my narrow Hands - To gather Paradise.”

Best wishes,

EMILY WONG HIE LING