TOURISM

has become one of the world’s largest and fastest growing industries.

The travel and tourism sector accounts for

9% of global gross domestic product or GDP, a total of US$6 trillion.

It provides 120 million direct jobs and 125 million indirect jobs in related industries around the world.

Despite economic instability, the hospitality and tourism industry has managed to be relatively unshaken.

MONEY MATTERS

You should not be expecting a four-figure salary but ideally, look for a paid internship where you can earn enough to sustain your basic needs during that period.

No Barista for Hire

If it’s possible, get an inside scoop on the job. “How does the company do real work?” and “do you get to do real work?” are valid questions to ask. You don’t want to spend your internship making coffee and photocopying.

Find Relevance

Internships are not merely for fulfilling undergraduate requirements; they factor into experience when you go job hunting.

TUNE IN

Want practical tips for success on your way home from work? We’re on every Tuesday from 6pm to 7pm.

Every Tuesday from 6pm to 7pm.

Editor, myStarjob.com

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AVING recently been challenged on the subject of global warming, I was introduced to a New York Times bestseller, Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed by Jared Diamond. Why some societies collapse and others don’t

Diamond contrasts modern Montana in the United States, with past societies that have collapsed due to human environmental impacts (some of which include Easter Island, the three tropical Pacific Islands of Mangareva, Pitcairn, and Henderson, the Maya civilization, and North Atlantic civilizations such as the Vikings and Norsemen.) He then contrasts these with some of the challenges facing modern societies such as Rwanda and Australia.

There is also an insightful chapter where Diamond contrasts the Dominican Republic and Haiti – a tale of one island, two peoples, and two histories.

WHY SOCIETIES COLLAPSE: ENVIRONMENTAL FIVE-POINT FRAMEWORK

The first set of factors mentioned by Diamond includes damage that people inflict on the environment that they may not be aware of. The second consideration relates to climate change. This is where the natural climate becomes hotter or colder, drier or wetter, between months or years. He acknowledges that sometimes these changes have nothing to do with people.

The third consideration is the presence of hostile neighbours. What is sometimes ignored in the context of a military conquest are the underlying environmental reasons that impact economic and political decisions – lack of water, deteriorating food supply, lack of materials, etc.

The fourth set of factors is when there is decreased support from friendly neighbours. For example, the risk of this occurring increases when a trading partner becomes weakened. Finally, the fifth set of factors relates to how societies respond differently to their problems.

As Diamond states, “How can we understand such differing outcomes? A society’s responses depend on its political, economic, and social institutions and on its cultural values.” It is important to note that Diamond acknowledges that sometimes societies collapse with or without the impact of environmental damage.

ROAD MAP TO SUCCESS

I appreciated the way that Diamond seeks to draw out some practical lessons from his analysis of past societies and modern societies.

In presenting a “road map to success”, Diamond is implying governments, businesses, institutions and individuals to explore why some societies make disastrous decisions, and what steps can be taken to avoid them. These include:

1. How some societies fail to anticipate a problem before it appears. One classic example he presents is when the British colonizers introduced foxes and rabbits from Britain into Australia in the 1800s. Another is the introduction of the cane toad from Hawaii in 1935 as a solution to the cane beetle pest affecting North Queensland’s sugar cane fields.

2. Societies failing to perceive a problem that has occurred. Three reasons for this he claims are that:
   a) sometimes the origins of a problem are initially imperceptible,
   b) the problem of “distant managers”, or where the decision makers don’t live near the problem, and
   c) when the problem takes the form of a slow trend concealed by wide up-and-down fluctuations, like climate change.

3. Societies making no attempt to solve a problem even when it has been perceived. He believes this primarily stems from “clashes of interest” between people and the attitude of “it might be bad for someone, but it’s good for me.” He simply calls this being “selfish”.

4. Other irrational failures. This can include adhering to a different set of values, clashes between short-term and long-term gains, “crowd psychology”, and psychological denial.

5. Being overwhelmed by the solution to the problem. As Diamond states, even after a society has anticipated, perceived, or tried to solve a problem, it may still fail for obvious reasons: the problem may be beyond our present capacities to solve, a solution may exist but be prohibitively expensive, or our efforts may be too little and too late.

So where does this leave our future? What does this mean for those of us in positions of influence and leadership, or for those leading major corporations? Is it really possible to be more proactive in addressing large scale issues that have the potential to erode the foundations of societies making them vulnerable to the compounding effects of poor decisions in earlier generations?

Heath and Potter present a sobering perspective on questions like this in The Rebel Sell: How the Counter Culture Became Consumer Culture. Every social problem is thought to be caused by a fundamental feature of mass society, whether it is mass production, mass media, the technological denomination of nature or even just repression and the need for conformity. Yet what is so problematic about these explanations is that, apart from being empirically false, they have the effect of tying each one of these concrete social problems into a feature of modern society that none of us could ever reasonably hope (or desire) to change.

This in turn makes solutions to a number of very retractable social problems seem completely out of reach.

While Diamond provides numerous reasons for hope, wish he had spent more time assessing the advantages and benefits of “the globalised modern world’s interconnectedness”. If we could only look beyond our own economic agendas and focus on something much larger, what an incredibly powerful starting point that would be!

I’m not suggesting that any one organisation must ignore the importance of their economic agenda, but rather, evaluate it in a larger context that says two things.

Firstly, we need to be responsible for its multi-dimensional impact – good or bad.

Secondly, we will intentionally look for economic alliances that are strategic in preventing or reducing negative environmental impacts from our products, resources, and services.

What I discovered reading Diamond’s book, is that while the environment may play a considerable role in the collapse of societies, it is not as significant as the underlying assumptions and beliefs that shape the decisions we make in relation to what we need and what we believe is enough.

As naive and simple as it might sound, I believe what Diamond longs to see is that our real wealth would not stem from a position of elitism (power and status), selfishness or rabid consumerism.

Rather, he hopes this would be derived from selfless actions that corporately take responsibility to prevent Darwin’s theory of natural selection coming true in the modern world of economics as it relates to humanity and the environment it depends on. This would take courageous leadership.

WHAT’S THE BOTTOM-LINE?

When we think about issues on such a large-scale as Diamond has done, there is a tendency for some leaders to absolve themselves from taking responsibility for the impact of their decisions, especially when success is slow in coming or when failure is imminent. Ultimately, this is where Diamond’s roadmap to success can provide an excellent foundation for asking some sound questions that will lead to a more resilient decision making process and better risk management.

I suggest it is also beneficial to consider these questions beyond merely a financial perspective. They include questions like:

• Are there any potential risks or problems that could emerge that we are not yet seeing? Have you asked the right people? Are they close enough to what is happening or the impact of the decisions being made? Do they have the necessary expertise?

• Is there a concern about an emerging problem or one that has already been identified that is being overlooked or ignored? Why is it being ignored? What are the long-term consequences of this action for the organisation, surrounding community, or country?

• Is our approach to resolving an emerging issue or problem consistent with our core values, and are they representative of the communities in which the organisation functions?

Dr Glenn Williams is the CEO and principal owner of Outward Looking International, an organisation that empowers leaders and organisations to grow their leadership capacity. To engage Williams for special leadership workshops for your organisation, email people@leaderonomics.com
What is the difference between a leader and a politician? The attitude towards personal popularity. Instead of focusing on potential votes, the leader focuses on the rightness of his cause and his mission.

Here’s the fact – followers who form the majority do not usually welcome any change to their comfort zone. Yet, leaders by definition are those that have a righteous discontent with status quo and seek to achieve that which is yet to be understood by others – a definite recipe for unpopularity.

Any leader that is worth his or her salt must be prepared for unpopularity.

What are the benefits of being an unpopular leader?

1. You will achieve long-term goals. Leaders see a vision which others do not. The reason is because most people are focused on immediate gratification and are not willing to commit themselves to a goal.

2. You will gain authentic friendship. Nothing sweats out your fair-weathered friends than a time of testing and hardship. In the workplace, are you constantly aiming to meet the goals of your employer or are you more concerned about what your colleagues might say? Do not sacrifice doing what is right for the sake of pleasing the crowd.

3. You will offer wisdom to the next generation. Your employees and children are watching you. Character is more caught than taught. If you live your life by popular opinion then there is no real value-add from you that will impact their lives.

4. Your leadership is directly proportional to the single-mindedness of your vision. Practically speaking, you do not need to go around looking for unpopularity – it will come as a result of the strength of your vision. Your job as a leader is to keep the focus clear and avoid distractions at all costs.

5. Your effectiveness as a leader is to determine that your followers also understand and accept the clarity of that vision as well.

6. There is no such thing as an over-communication of vision.

7. You will achieve long-term results.

8. You will gain authentic friendship.

9. You will be prepared to be unpopular.

Here are three leadership actions for you to take in order to stay focused and single-minded.

1. Recognise contribution. Be attentive to what others are doing; in particular, employees need to see a correlation between their effort and the ensuing results. Even indirect tasks like administration needs to be recognised and praised. Do not spend so much time in your office that you are no longer aware of what others are doing.

2. Reprove deviance. Let’s face it – there are plenty of distractions during the day. The seriousness of your vision is tested by your courage to reprimand those who do not contribute to the overall goal.

3. Reinforce communication. Silence is not golden. In fact, unless the leader speaks up, others will take advantage and misinterpret your silence to their advantage.

A manager, when promoted, looks forward to better perks and compensation. On the other hand, a leader who is promoted seeks for greater challenges and a higher vision.

Companies are seeking for visionaries who are clear about where they are going. As they get there, the prospects of opposition do not hinder them – they only motivate them to do better and become stronger. It means being unpopular along the way, then so be it.

Joseph Tan is a trainer that aims to equip leaders to achieve consistent results at work, at home and in life through the development of personal character and the discovery of unique strengths. If you are interested in attending one of his courses, email people@leaderonomics.com
Scott Ragsdale, chairman of naseba.

RAGSDALE IS AMAZED HOW DECISIONS ARE BASED ON THE NUMBER OF “LIKES” IT GETS. HE INSISTS FACEBOOK IS A COMPLETE WASTE OF TIME.

“I keep thinking to myself – Gosh I have to get to that meeting”, he recalls. “I kept thinking to myself – Gosh I have to get to that meeting,” he adds. “I was unhindered.”

“I had a basic salary and I had to sell to earn extra. I seized the opportunity and because I was able to sell on the first week in an office that wasn’t perfect, I progressed very quickly.”

“With 230 employees, we are not superstar successful. I believe we are doing something right, but we are far from the summit and have a long way to go,” he says.

“With many firsts to his credit in endurance sports, Ragsdale became the first Dubai-based man to swim the English Channel in 2010, a 50km journey. After reading that English Channel has less than 30% success rate, I thought that I was wrong and there is a lesson to learn.”

“My career inadvertently took a turn when I left my knees were operated on and I had to go out there to make their goals happen,” he continues. “My career inadvertently took a turn when I left my knees were operated on and I had to go out there to make their goals happen.”

“The JOURNEY TO THE SUMMIT OF HIS MOUNTAIN

With 40,000 euros personally invested, Ragsdale set off again and attempted the climb. He took the company public four years later on the French stock exchange, making him the first American to list a company in France. Naseba was listed as a total market value of US$3.9mil.

“I sold 40% of the company and made a huge chunk of money.”

The economic crisis came and Ragsdale witnessed his share price drop from US$15 to 80 cents. “It was a humbling experience,” he continues. However, instead of focusing on the negatives, he remained positive. In 2010, after the global financial crisis, Ragsdale bought naseba back and de-listed it from the exchange, a move that has paid off.

Currently, naseba’s business is focused on the emerging markets. Having successfully grown naseba to what it is today, this endurance triathlete shares how a poster on his wall, depicting a man on the top of a mountain, motivates him in his business journey. “I thought to myself, ‘The man at the top of the mountain didn’t falter.’”

1. Focus on the immediate task at hand and do not focus on the negatives.

“For the past 10 years of my life, I have tried to be as positive as possible, even when my best friend betrayed me and stole US$1mil cash from me. Instead of spending the rest of my life thinking what had happened, I reflected on the lesson I gained from this experience and how this can make me stronger to ensure that it never happens again.”

2. There is no short cut to success

“A lot of people strive for immediate success, but do not realise there is a progression of sorts and it takes a lot of hard work. I look back on those times I have fallen and suddenly something bad happens and I fail, I tell myself I have to get back up and keep going.”

“Always remember that you will have bad days. At the end of the day, just focus on the positives and don’t let anything get into the way.”

3. Stay motivated

Ragsdale attributes his success to his motivated personality and believes that is what makes him unique. “I’m a salesman who likes to do things to the best of my ability,” he explains.

“Instead of spending the rest of my life thinking about politics,” he adds. “Instead of spending the rest of my life thinking about politics,” he adds.

“For me, it’s about passion, it’s about authenticity.”

“If you’re a fresh graduate and the world is your oyster, he advises matter-of-factly – “Do not live on Facebook!”

Ragsdale observes how the whole world is living on Facebook and is amazed how decisions are made based on the number of “Likes” something or someone is getting. He insists that Facebook-ing is a complete waste of time.

Despite his exemplary achievements, he insists he’s an average guy-next-door. “As I joke with my friends – ‘I’m just a white guy trying to survive,” Ragsdale chuckles.

I’D LIKE TO SEE OUR MILLENIUM COME INTO ITS OWN AND I HOPE THAT THE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE TRIED TO BE AS POSITIVE AS POSSIBLE, EVEN WHEN THEIR BEST FRIENDS BETRAY THEM, WILL BE INSPIRED TO STAND UP.

“Instead of focusing on the negatives, or I could say – I was wrong and there is a lesson to learn.”

“We would also call upon other organisations to support us, to pay attention to the millions of people who have tried to be as positive as possible, even when their best friends betray them, and to support us. We would like to see our millennium come into its own and I hope that the millions of people who have tried to be as positive as possible, even when their best friends betray them, will be inspired to stand up.”

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INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

MALAKOFF LAUNCHES MUTAP TO GROOM UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

MUTAP (Malakoff University Talent Acceleration Programme) is a sponsored leadership development programme for high potential French engineering and IT undergraduates.

Twenty-four students in their penultimate and final year of studies have been selected to take part. The six-month programme incorporates experiential training workshops, project execution, assessments and networking.

Bani Zainal Azmian, senior vice-president of Malakoff’s corporate services division says, “We invest in the development of our own people, and want to do the same for students. We also recruit a lot of graduates from UNITEN, and many have successful careers with us. We hope to continue to do so, and what better way to ensure this than investing in them before they leave university.”

The programme aims to produce well-rounded, versatile individuals, with strong skills in leadership, social interaction and communication.

There is experiential learning along the way, and we want to ensure that these students step out of university, they are ready to face the world.

“This is not just about producing exemplary graduates for Malakoff, but for the industry in general. If this programme is a success, we would like to incorporate even more companies and include participants from various universities.”

“We would also call upon other organisations to be a part of this and get involved in grooming future talent,” he says.

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The Leaderonomics Show

Scott Ragsdale is a Dubai-based American businessman, author and entrepreneur. He co-founded Naseba – a global business services company and was made the managing director for Greater China.

A WORLD WHERE EVERYONE’S A VICTIM

The multi-lingual Ragsdale shares about a period of his life 13 years ago “where I made a lot of money, but became arrogant, spoilt and lazy, and thought too highly of myself.”

“As I was not only the No.1 performer in sales, but also the No.3 trainer of the sales team, I thought I knew everything – more than my boss and chairman.”

His career inadvertently took a downturn after his promotion to CEO of Asia right after he kept fit. “After falling out with the chairman, I quit as I became too uncontrollable,” he discloses. “That period had a profound impact on his life and taught him valuable lessons.

“Reflection is very important in our world today. Unfortunately, everyone thinks of themselves as the victim and no one is reflecting. It is never a case of ‘it’s my fault’. People would make mistakes and blame others for it.”

Ragsdale realised that his actions and attitude had caused the predicament that he was facing. “I reflected on that and learned,” he says. “I could focus on the negatives, or I could say – I was wrong and there is a lesson to be learned.”

“By complete chance and because I was angry at my previous employer, I decided to start naseba together with Sophie Le Ray.”

1. Focus on the immediate task at hand and do not focus on the negatives.

Scott Ragsdale, chairman of naseba.

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By CINDY YAP
mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

Mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

COTT Ragsdale has achieved what many people can only dream of. He swam across the English Channel on his 39th birthday, climbed Mt Kilimanjaro, completed the seven-day long Marathon des Sables (a race in the Sahara, which has the reputation of being the most difficult race in the world), and is the only person to have completed seven iron-distance triathlons across the seven United Arab Emirates in seven consecutive days.

In between all that, Ragsdale, a Dubai-based American businessman, author and entrepreneur, has co-founded Naseba – a global business services company and was made the managing director for Greater China.

“With 230 employees, we are not superstar successful. I believe we are doing something right, but we are far from the summit and have a long way to go,” he says.

With many firsts to his credit in endurance sports, Ragsdale became the first Dubai-based man to swim the English Channel in 2010, a 50km journey. “After reading that English Channel has less than 30% success rate, I wanted if I was able to do it.”

Furthermore, Ragsdale claims that his stepdaughter had a couple of ‘loser’ friends in her life during that period. “I took up the challenge not only to prove life to its fullest, but also to inspire my friends, my clients as employees to just not sit around and think about what they are going to do, but instead seize life, and go out there to make their goals happen.”

Ragsdale recalls: “Over the year prior to that, I had some setbacks – both personal and business. Having successfully grown Naseba to what it is today, this endurance triathlete shares how a poster on his wall, depicting a man on the top of a mountain, motivates him in his business journey. ‘I thought to myself, ‘The man at the top of the mountain didn’t falter.’”

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1. Focus on the immediate task at hand and do not focus on the negatives.

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The tourism industry is a major economic activity in Malaysia and generates substantial employment per unit of input, both in the short and medium terms. The tourism industry’s direct contribution to Malaysia’s economy accounted for about 5% of national GNP (RM87.6bn) in 2011. Substantial employment opportunities in the tourism sector are provided by various types of services offered by hotels, travel agencies, airlines and other passenger transportation services, as well as activities of restaurants and leisure industries that depend directly on tourism.

## Malaysia’s Human Capital for the Tourism Industry

Tourism is one of the key growth sectors in Malaysia, contributing significantly to the country’s economic growth and development. The tourism sector has been identified as a priority area for development, as it offers opportunities for employment and skill development.

### Malaysia’s Human Capital for the Tourism Industry

Tourism is a critical sector for Malaysia’s economic growth, bringing in a Gross National Income (GNI) of RM57.6bn in 2011. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Malaysia is the sixth most visited country in the world. The country welcomed 24.7 million tourists in 2011 and received a total of 24.9 million overnight visitors, making it the fourth most visited destination in Southeast Asia. Regionally, Malaysia’s travel and tourism economic value is the second highest in the Asia-Pacific region behind Cambodia, and the third highest in the world.

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WIN-WIN FOR ALL IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

By PREMA JAYABALAN
prema.jayabalan@leaderonics.com

SUSTAINABLE tourism is a subset from tourism that is gaining momentum in Malaysia. It is “tourism that respects both local people and the environment,” says Dr Vikneswaran Nair, professor who is also the vice-president of the Malaysian Ecotourism Association (MEA).

One of the three pillars of sustainability includes ‘ecotourism’. A career in sustainable tourism can be classified into four main areas: 1. Assessing and developing sustainable tourism destinations; 2. Managing ecotourism destinations; 3. Marketing; and 4. Cultivating global partnerships.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Generally, a career in sustainable tourism can be classified into four main areas:

1. Assessing and developing sustainable tourism destinations:
   - Tourism development specialists
   - Sustainable tourism business development managers
   - Sustainable development consultants
   - Ecosystem management and development, tourism and human resources advisors

2. Managing ecotourism destinations sustainability:
   - Directors - parks and recreation areas, reserves, eco-tours
   - Managers - ecotourism, rainforest parks, eco-lodge, cultural tourism project facilities, sustainable consumption and conservation, conservation projects
   - Conservation expedition country coordinators, nature tourism rangers, wildlife centres advisors, naturalist programmers
   - Officers – heritage tourism, rural tourism, coastal tourism and conservation programmes

3. Marketing:
   - Managers – tourism communications, adventure travel promotions, tourism marketing
   - Guided writers, protected areas communications officers

4. Cultivating global partnerships:
   - Public health advisors
   - Human resource specialists
   - Translators and community organizers
   - Proposal and grant writers
   - Regional recruiters
   - Communications specialists
   - Artisan product and business specialists
   - Teachers, tutors

“Tourism developmentspecialists
Sustainabletourism business development
Sustainabledevelopmentconsultants
Public health advisors
Artisan product and business specialists

and multi-ethnic groups to enjoy music and dance while learning and appreciating the culture of the region.”

The Sector Focused Career Fair (SFCF) is a series of career fairs in collaboration with local universities focusing on the 12 sectors of the NEKA. Its main objective is to educate and raise awareness among the public, particularly students, on the choices of career pathways available. Taylor’s University is the first and only university in the country to achieve the highly coveted “Tier 6: Outstanding Rating” in the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education’s Discipline-Based Rating System (D-SETARA) in the hospitality and tourism discipline. TalentCorp, pleased to jointly organise “SFCF Taylor’s”, which will focus on the Hospitality & Tourism; FMCG; Shared Services; and IT&Bussiness services sectors.

Activities to look forward to at SFCF Taylor’s include job fairs, interviews, SPARC C-Talk, TalentCorp C-Talk Series, coach corner, IQ quiz, mini competitions, GEMS: SME and Entrepreneurship Track Pitching Session and many more.

“Berjaya Group is looking forward to participating at TalentCorp’s Sector Focused Career Fair to raise awareness of our internship and management trainee programmes. We invest in grooming young talents in the hospitality sector to build the leading pipeline for our leading hotels in the region.”

Grace Chan, general manager, group human resource & administration, Berjaya Corporation Bhd

“Park and Mulu National Park are reserves. The Kinabalu National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the oldest in Malaysia. Hence, effective management and effective preservation of these heritage sites are important in tourism and economic principles, offers a way to maximise ecological impact, benefit local communities and reduce poverty.”

The Kinabalu National Park is the only one in the world to have a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the country. It is “tourism that respects both local people and the environment,” says Dr Vikneswaran Nair, professor who is also the vice-president of the Malaysian Ecotourism Association (MEA).

“Such standards and monitoring procedures can distinguish valid sustainability and responsible tourism projects from other enterprises that have appropriated the sustainability label without commitment to its principles.”

The associate professor comments that such measurements are also necessary to help honest organisations to their performances and move closer to the ideal of sustainability. "The investment in such facilities is underpinned by a commitment to its principles." says Dr Vikneswaran.
TYPICAL DAY

Yap’s morning on a typical working day starts early as she has a 10-month-old daughter. She gets ready and has a good breakfast fast before leaving for work.

“At about 11am, I leave Hospis Malaysia for the clinic. For me, it is part of my daily routine. I have to complete the clinical assessment that takes place on a daily basis. The nurses provide updates on their patients’ condition and share valuable experiences which may be helpful to their colleagues.

Doubts and questions are also discussed in the meeting and the doctor is briefed on the status of the patients. The meeting ends at 10am. After the meeting, I go back at her desk to do paperwork. She goes through the list of patients that need to be visited for the day and prepares herself with the necessities. This time is also used for follow-up calls to patients and their caregivers on their well-being.

At about 11am, I leave Hospis Malaysia for my visitations. The areas I cover are part of the country where I resided for five years. As a result, patients may be unaware of Hospis Malaysia’s services and do not know that they exist. This can only be bestowed by someone who is compassionate and genuine.

“Some of them ask me the details of the sick patient. I listen, provide the best emotional support that I can and help ease their burden,” explains the nurse.

“They simply are the ones who care for the patients,” Yap says. “People are not only those who need physical care, but they are those who need emotional and moral support too. This can only be bestowed by some-one who is compassionate and genuine.”

Snip shot for a day in the life video with Yap

RELIANCE PROVIDER

BEING COMPASSIONATE IS PARAMOUNT IN PALLIATIVE CARE

By PREMA JAYABALAN
prema.jayabalanieaderonomics.com

PALLIATIVE care is a type of medical care provided to people who are diagnosed with life threatening or life limiting illnesses.

One might think that this is associated only with the elderly, but that is certainly not the case. Out of a number of children and adults under palliative care as well. These life limiting diseases comprise mainly of cancer and organ failure conditions with kidney and heart failures being the most common ailments.

It is in this field that Emily Yap Lee Peng has chosen to channel her passion.

A TRUE CALLING

From the age of 17, Yap was firm about building a career in the nursing line. She rejected an offer to further her studies in STPM and chose the Tun Tan Cheng Lock Nursing School to make her dream a reality.

This Kuala Lumpur-born lass was then attached with Assunta Hospital for five years before joining Hospis Malaysia as a palliative care nurse.

“I had a feel of palliative care when I attended a workshop in Hospipal, Kuching. I later on decided to know more about this field. I was truly attracted to this form of care when I attended a work- shop at Assunta Hospital.”

“I guess that it was a calling as I was given training and education on this form of care when I attended a workshop at Assunta Hospital for five years,” Yap adds.

“I am trained in skills to assess patients from physical pain and emotional stress.”

“I have learnt that some patients voice their concerns and fears while others tell me of their wishes on how they want to be handled. There is a calling as I was given training and education on this form of care when I attended a workshop at Assunta Hospital.”

In Switzerland I had the opportu-nity to visit Hospis Malaysia. I was given an opportunity to visit the Olympic Museum in Lausanne. The museum is interesting and after I left, a thought lingered in my brain. Let me put it to you as a question:

Can you name the winner of the very first gold medal awarded at the modern Olympic Games?

It’s not either. It was James Connolly for the triple jump. The first gold medal. Sorry Connolly, we forgave your name.

The above observation serves to remind us of an important aspect of how the brain works. Thinking is a process of electrical and chemical reactions that take place across a tiny fraction of connections in the brain. In other words, thinking is a physical process. One of the great recent discoveries about the brain is that most of the neural messaging originates in the limbic system.

This is the emotional part of your brain. Not that many messages come back the other way from the cortex, or the rational part of your brain. Our brains remember what touches us emotionally. I hear a lot of talk these days about leaving a legacy. So many times lead- ers, teachers, parents - all of us - get it wrong.

The following is the philosophy of Charles Schulz, the creator of the “Peanuts” comic strip. You don’t have to actually answer the questions. Just read straight through, and your brain will see the pattern.

1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the five last Heisman Trophy winners.
3. Name the five last winners of the Miss America pageant.
4. Name 10 people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize.
5. Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress.
6. Name the last decade’s worth of World Series winners.

How did you do? The point is, none of us remember the headliners of yesterday. These are no second-rate achievers. They are the best in their fields. But the applause dies. Awards tarnish. Achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Here’s another quiz. See how you do on this one.

1. List a few teachers who aided you in your childhood.
2. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.

Easier? The lesson: The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They simply are the ones who care the most. They were just there. Pass this on to those people who have made a difference in your life, like I just did. And remember who you are. Be yourself. Everyone else is taken.

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

Always remember: “You are a genius!” Enjoy your brain.

BY TERRY SMALL
myStarjob@leaderonomics.com

THE CHARLES SCHULZ PHILOSOPHY

WHAT really matters to most people?

On a recent speaking engagement in Switzerland I had the opportu-nity to visit the Olympic Museum in Lausanne. The museum is interesting and after I left, a thought lingered in my brain. Let me put it to you as a question:

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Terry Small is a brain expert who resides in Canada and believes that anyone can learn how to learn easier, better, faster, and that learning is the most important skill a person can acquire. To interest with Small or engage him for your organisation, email mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

1. Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.
2. Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.
WHY YOU NEED TO HIRE INTERNS

BY SU ANN CHENG
mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

WHEN it comes to internships, the discussion is usually skewed to how they benefit the interns, indeed, interns gain invaluable knowledge and experience, giving them a competitive advantage which may very well catapult them ahead of their peers in the workplace.

Nevertheless, what many employers fail to realise is that interns can very much be an added advantage to their businesses as well.

THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF UNDER (OR OVER) USING INTERNS

Many tend to hire interns simply to perform tasks that no one else wants to do. If you want someone to merely staple papers, make coffee or carry boxes, hire the right worker for such duties.

Interns are worth more than this. They not only offer an extra pair of hands, but also bring fresh perspectives as novices. As they learn the ropes in a field of their dreams, interns are out to impress. Naturally, this enthusiasm motivates them to make the best of tasks, be creative and productive.

On the other hand, an intern who is underutilised or overutilised may have a more damaging effect on an organisation than the employment of a babysitter.

A negative perception among graduates will affect the organisation's image, especially when it comes to hiring young, new recruits as well as its ability to stay relevant with the future workplace.

UPPING THE EMPLOYABILITY FACTOR

With Asia's robust economic growth, organisations who offer internship programmes may reap the benefits of the long run. The International Herald Tribune recently reported that foreign interns are flocking to Asia, particularly Beijing and Hong Kong, for internship programmes.

Interns have said that the companies they were attached with gave them big responsibilities, took them seriously and regarded them as assets.

In Malaysia, following the 2012 budget announcement, TalentCorp issued the structured internship programme tax incentive guidelines in hopes of generating more employable graduates by providing industry-relevant internships to tertiary students.

The key here is to provide an enriching experience for interns. The employers' role goes much further than the mere perception that they are allowing interns a trial run before the training wheels come off. Of course, the fundamental concept of internships means that employers should be prepared to do quite a bit of handholding. However, if done right and managed well, employers - and organisations - can gain a lot from interns.

Here are a few ways to ensure that you maximise the positive effect that interns can have for your organisation:

1. Magnify the internship experience

With Asia's robust economic growth, organisations who offer internship programmes may reap the benefits of the long run. The International Herald Tribune recently reported that foreign interns are flocking to Asia, particularly Beijing and Hong Kong, for internship programmes.

2. Let them think out of the box

In a focus group discussion of young interns, they have said that the companies they were attached with gave them big responsibilities, took them seriously and regarded them as assets. In Malaysia, following the 2012 budget announcement, TalentCorp issued the structured internship programme tax incentive guidelines in hopes of generating more employable graduates by providing industry-relevant internships to tertiary students.

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Here are a few ways to ensure that you maximise the positive effect that interns can have for your organisation:

1. Plot your fixed points

Plot all your meetings in your calendar including the tasks that will help you discharge during the week. Treat tasks as appointments. For example, if you believe preparing a report would take two hours, you should also plot it on your calendar to make sure you allocate enough time for it.

2. Establish benchmarks

Know how much time and calories a type of exercise would take. For example: running on a treadmill could consume 250 to 350 calories per 30 minutes. Focus on cardiovascular exercises if you are trying to lose or maintain weight.

3. Divide up tasks when necessary

Divide your body into four major sections: legs and glutes, trunk (abs, obliques and lower-back), chest and upper back and shoulders and arms. Working out by section, you should only take about 15 minutes for a basic strength-building regimen.

4. Fill in the gaps

Once you’ve plotted all of your appointments and tasks into your calendar, you will realise that you would have gaps between schedules. Use this time wisely to try and burn off excess calories. I was able to burn off an average of three hours a week with this simple strategy.

WHY YOU NEED TO HIRE INTERNS

BY JOHN WALTER S. BAYBAY
mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

HAVING returned after a month-long project in Kuala Lumpur, I was shocked to find that I had actually lost 2kg when I thought I had gained at least 4.5kg. The corporate executive’s lifestyle is usually not a healthy one. These are five ways that work is killing you slowly and surely:

1. Stress and anxiety
2. Long work hours and lack of sleep
3. Physical inactivity
4. Unhealthy diet
5. Alcohol and tobacco

Besides the physical toll on the executive, the mental impact also affects relationships at work and home. While some claim to separate work from personal issues, they’re obviously bringing the same person to the office and back home. With this vicious cycle, it’s a mystery how one can stay effective at work or at home. The most effective way of breaking a vicious cycle is to identify one or two strong leverage points that balance the system.

Focus on things you can do something about immediately. In this case, changing physical activity and balancing work between home and the office. The most effective way of doing this is to make sure you are doing something every day.indrical means of progress over time. Other things mentioned may not be as easily done since they will already be part of your life.

Simply by watching what you eat and how many hours of exercise you carry out, a week could have positive effects in shorter amounts of time than you think.

While in KL amidst the hustle and bustle of the office, I was able to do so by carrying out four sections: legs and glutes, trunk (abs, obliques and lower-back), chest and upper back and shoulders and arms. Working out by section, I found out that it only takes about 15 minutes for a basic strength-building regimen.

The employers’ role goes much further than the mere perception that they are helping identify career impediments. Whether they are working for a multinational, a regional or a local company, young interns need to work towards an end goal. Employers should also be able to encourage people who are positively affecting the organisation, which can accomplish projects in ways that employers may not otherwise have had the resources to pursue.

The more the merrier

Employers should consider bringing in more than just one intern. These young people may feel out of place when thrown into a corporate environment. They may not all have the same skills, but the notion of safety in numbers allows them to adjust to the office setting more smoothly.

In fact, this may even create healthy competition among themselves, which means every one of them is just as eager to get the job done as perfectly as possible.

Empower and entrust

Give interns tasks that they can own and complete from beginning to end. Start small, but allowing them to take ownership will challenge them to produce best results, be accountable and learn fast. Emphasise on the importance of their work and show them how they are positively affecting the organisation.

Let them think out of the box

In a 2007 University of Georgia study of 1,300 executives earning more than US$100,000, 75% of the executives interviewed said that good physical fitness is “critical for career success at the executive level” and that being overweight is a “serious career impediment”.

Perhaps you’re still on your way up to the corporate ladder but perhaps now would be the best time to start faking it until you finally make it. If you want to be an effective executive, you might as well start practising. I’d rather say that everyone is “fit for work”, but obviously I have to run! I am an empirical believer that we assimilate well within an organisation, young interns need mentors who can be trusted with their learning path.

While internships are relatively short, the experiences are often memorable and professional connections with mentors have a profound effect on their career development. In addition, assigning mentors is always a great way in honing leadership among employees too.

EMPLOYERS REAP WHAT THEY SOW

By cultivating an environment where interns are able to thrive in and continue to challenge themselves, employers, too, will stand to gain. An enriching internship experience also helps in acquiring confidence, apply theory to practice, learn about corporate culture and subsequently develop one’s own career path.

Internships are definitively an approach to consider in assessing talent and may prove to be a cost-effective recruitment strategy for a permanent engagement.

It is a win-win situation if employers look beyond the idea of interns as cheap – or free – labour and seize the opportunity to gain insight into the future workplace.
I wouldn’t be truthful if I said that I looked forward to writing about truthfulness. There is nothing more truthful than to admit that writing about truthfulness requires a certain degree of transparency and vulnerability on my part, something which I’m not overly eager to bare, naturally.

Benjamin Franklin once remarked, “Half the truth is often a great lie.” I recall a time during high school when my mum asked me over dinner what I had been doing at a friend’s house after school that day. I told her we were studying for exams, but I conveniently left out the fact that we had, in fact, spent the rest of the afternoon watching TV.

This got me wondering how much about truthfulness is really about negotiating with our fears. Like the fear of being found out for not having studied and that we had, in fact, spent the entire afternoon watching TV. This is a one-stop portal to enhance employability content from top employers, Ready4Work.my.

By CHONG KEAT LIM
keatlim.chong@leaderonomics.com

Truth be told, exercising honesty with myself has mostly been a painful affair for as long as I can remember. From failed relationships to a receding hairline, locking eyes with the cold stare of truth sometimes means fighting and holding at bay a torrent that threatens to crush my self-esteem and bury me under a spiral of self-doubt. It’s strenuous. And hurtful.

The Zulu saying expresses it best: “All truth is bitter.” Eventually when the dodging no longer helps, I have to face up the reality of the situation and step up to take responsibility for it. Only that’s not the end of it. Something amazing often happens after that, the emergence of a beautiful side of truthfulness.

I realised that while it appears like a party crasher at first, the intrinsic characteristic of truthfulness actually breaks open spaces for redemption, a sort of restorative truth for me.

I still remember the aftermath of my breakup with my then girlfriend. I thought the world had come to an end. I was foolish and immature. Anyone who has wrestled with his or her identity, worth and pride would understand the emotional wreck I was in.

But after the initial rebuke and subsequent long journey of coming to terms to accepting my part of accountability of the relationship (which was messy), I was surprised to find myself in a strange place of healing. It was a long process—I confess, it felt like eternity—but in the end, truthfulness somehow freed me to accept the facts for what they say and draw the conclusion that is true, however uncomfortable it may be.

And at this point I’m made aware that truthfulness is about being honest to oneself and others without sounding like a righteous jerk. It’s often too easy to become one. Just like if I say that I personally abhor people who think they are more righteous than others because they care more about being right than doing what is right.

Such is the irony and trap. In a recent post the writer Don Miller warns that, “People who care about the truth understand they are capable of self-deception and surround themselves with accountability”. So no doubt the truth is partial to no one, yet it is not enough to just represent the truth. Looking back at my own experiences I dare say that the manner of delivery and the intentions that ushered its entrance, is as important if not more, to ensure its success.

Ultimately, like swimsuits I believe the power of truthfulness lies as much in the revealing as in the concealing of it. I’m reminded of an advice of how truth has to be given in riddles.

It is believed people can’t take truth if it comes charging at them like a bull—the bull is always killed. But if truth is hidden in a riddle people will go looking for it and find it, and that way they learn to live with it. As I now prepare to wrap up this piece of writing, I’m suddenly being made aware of a weightier revelation:

that truthfulness is not so much an obligation to the truth but the conviction that telling the truth is right, whether or not we have to face its vindication.

I, Chong Keat Lim is currently VP of the youth division in Leaderonomics. His passion lies in helping young people discover their identity and role in their community and participate in the world about them. To find out about how he and his team can help you or your child be a better leader, email keatlim.chong@leaderonomics.com

Conduct a self-assessment

Be honest with your answers. There is no right or wrong.

Want to do a more thorough appraisal of yourself? Use this guide to answer the important questions!

This exercise will help you identify the qualities you already have that will be relevant in your working life. It will help you think thoroughly and objectively about yourself. Remember—be honest with your answers! There is no right or wrong. Use this profile whenever you are hunting for a job or going for an interview to remind yourself what’s important to you.

Your personal goals
1. The things that I want more in my life are...
2. In five to 10 years time, I expect to be...

Your values
1. The most important reward to me in a career is...
2. Work to me is all about...

Your interests
1. I am interested in...
2. I would like to develop an interest in...
3. My strongest work-related interest is...

Your attributes
1. I value these attributes...
2. The attributes that will help me get a job are...
3. I would like to strengthen these attributes...

Your skills
1. I am very good at...
2. My language and communication skills are...
3. I would like to improve on...
4. The skills that are most relevant to my career interests are...

Your self-assessment profile
1. Careers that seem to be compatible with my profile are...
2. To get the job that I want, I must improve in...
3. I believe I have the following skills to land me a job...

Adapted from Ready4Work.my. Driven by content from top employers, Ready4Work.my is a one-stop portal to enhance employability of young talents entering the job market.
Dear Diana,

Kudos to you for gaining the trust to take a young graduate under your wing. You can consider this experience as the first step in your journey to becoming a team leader. Here are some suggestions on how you can make this a win-win relationship:

**LEARNING ON THE JOB**

You’re concerned that you’re spending considerable amount of time training her. Rather than focusing on “training”, take a step back and ask yourself whether there are other methods to get her up to speed.

You may have come across the 70:20:10 principle in adult learning which has been adopted by many leading organisations. There’s a simple explanation in Wikipedia to describe this learning model, which is:

- **70%** from **tough jobs**
- **20%** from **people**
- **10%** from **courses and reading**

With this learning principle in mind, you can assign some stretch assignments that you need help with, or tasks which you’re already familiar with, so that she can move on to do other things.

Agree with your boss on the time you are to spend coaching her, in addition to your key deliverables. Ask her to source for relevant information and provide suggestions. She may be resourceful and find some of these solutions by simply watching YouTube, including learning about basic computer skills or industry knowledge which you mentioned, which brings me to my next point.

**LEVERAGING ON THE “C GENERATION”**

At a recent visit to the new Google office, the Google CEO spoke about “Generation C” or the “YouTube Generation” to describe the likes of your young graduate in your team. They are constantly connected, they can be very creative and they are also good brand ambassadors. Given that you’re in digital media, I would encourage you to think about ways to leverage on her strengths for new insights, content and connections.

I’ve worked with many fresh graduates who’ve come up with interesting ideas and I’ve seen some successful nationwide campaigns on social media driven by interns and young graduates. You may have come across highly successful young entrepreneurs like Khai Lee, the co-founder of Groupsmore and Sates.com, who started to build websites at the age of 15 (do visit the “Ready4Work!” YouTube channel if you’re interested to know his story).

**LEADING THE WAY**

Coaching an inexperienced graduate may seem a chore at this juncture. However, as you gain experience and take on bigger roles, you’ll have to do your work through managing others. Your challenge will be to grow your team and give them the self-belief to realise their full potential.

One of my favourite quotes on leadership is from Jack Welch of General Electric, who said “Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others.”

On a lighter note, my CEO who’s a fan of Star Wars prefers to use the analogy of a Jedi Council to describe the 70:20:10 learning principles. The Jedi Council provides their young Jedi padawan with diverse experiential learning opportunities; and the Jedi Knight would not be able to become a Jedi Master until his padawan or trainee successfully graduates to become a Jedi Knight.

Whether you’re a fan of Jack Welch or Star Wars, I can assure you that leading and coaching others can be very rewarding, so seize this opportunity to grow as a leader and I wish you all the best in grooming your first padawan!

**SALIKA SUKSUWAN**

Dear Diana,

Congratulations on getting a new role! I can understand the dilemma and frustration you are in. It is indeed a very challenging situation for you. On the one hand, despite your three years experience in branding, digital media is a totally new arena that you have to learn, which means that you have a steep learning curve to embark on.

On the other hand, you have been tasked to train and coach a junior who is not very independent and highly reliant on you. Don’t we all wish we had more time to grow in the world! However, given that time is limited, you are faced with a decision on how to split your time wisely and not let your own performance slip (especially in the first few months where you are trying to learn the ropes and show that you can perform in this new role).

The only advice I can give is to strategically plan out how to split your time and how to prioritise the time you spend on yourself and the fresh graduate. Here are a few tips:

1. For the first few months, as you are also grappling and enhancing your competencies, focus on yourself and your first padawan!
2. Allocating more time to yourself to get up to speed
   - This means you have to analyse your workload and your fresh graduate’s workscope in detail.
   - Pick out all the easy, routine, instruction based, administrative, easy-to-train tasks and assign those to the fresh graduate to handle well.

It will require some effort and time to train her on those tasks upfront, but you can be assured that those can be handled routinely by her for the next few months so you can become familiar with your role first.

Be clear and fair. Once you are well versed in your role, allocate more time to train her.

2. Training can be done in many ways. It is of course faster to just teach someone what he or she doesn’t know.
   - Sometimes, learn to throw back the “I don’t know” to the fresh grad. Get her to do her own homework and find out how to do certain things.
   - Challenge her and you might be amazed at how resourceful she can be if you don’t feed her whenever she says she doesn’t know.

3. Lay out your training plan somewhat to the fresh graduate so she understands how this is going to work. Then, communicate this to your boss as well.

   - This is to ensure that everyone is aligned and you have your boss’ understanding as well.
   - Otherwise, it might end up being a complaint point that “you” are not willing to teach the fresh graduate. Hope this helps.

**SALIKA SUKSUWAN**

For advertising and adversitments, contact ian.lee@leaderonomics.com - 016 974 7087

**ANG HUI MING**

We have experts on career management, HR and office issues who will address your questions weekly. We refer to them as careerromers – experts in career matters who will help you in your career journey. So if you have burning questions, send them to dearcareerromers@leaderonomics.com and we will get the panel to answer your questions.

This week, we have Sallie Suksuwan, GM of special projects at TalentCorp (on secondment from PwC where she was head of recruitment); and Ang Hui Ming, co-founder of Leaderonomics, to answer Diana’s question.

DEAR CAREERROMERS,

I recently transitioned from branding to digital media in a new advertising agency. My colleagues are a really good bunch of people to work with and the workplace environment is very conducive to learning and challenging oneself to take on greater things.

Although I have three years’ working experience, I know I need to invest a lot in developing competencies and knowledge for this new job.

A fresh graduate joined our team around the same time that I did, and my boss has put me in charge of training and guiding her. I find myself investing a lot of time to train her in many areas, from basic computer skills to industry knowledge.

We are a lean team and I am torn between training this freshie, my daily duties and finding time to expand my own competencies.

I’ve discussed this with my boss on several occasions but as he is constantly travelling, he is not aware of what is happening in the office. There is no one else who can share the responsibility of training this fresh graduate as she needs a lot of hand-holding. What should I do?

**DIANA**

**Also next week**

- All you need to know about the Shared Services sector in Malaysia
- Moments of isolation and discomfort can be great platforms for growth
- Learning from Books summarises “When a billion Chinese jump”
- Strategising is one thing, execution is something else altogether

**If you have any suggestions or feedback on our content, get in touch with the Leaderonomics team at mystarjob@leaderonomics.com.**

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