MATCHING TALENT TO JOBS

READY TO GRADUATE – READY FOR WORK

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FUTURE SO BRIGHT

IT was hard to suppress a smile as I worked on our pages this week. The brevity of the articles that describe a multitude of programmes, campaigns and efforts that have been put in place to answer the many questions a young high school or university graduate may have, belies the depth of research and analysis that has been done to develop them.

Like working adults seeking to understand our career paths and opportunities, I believe the enthusiasm ignited by education needs to be kept alive by first having a good understanding of the strengths, capabilities and passion of young people, and then providing them the right tools and information to choose their next steps wisely.

People are sometimes led by divine guidance, and many a time this is through family, friends, teachers, coaches, professors and even resources on the internet. The programmes described throughout this instalment of our career guide reflect the concerted effort by employers, teaching institutions, organisations like TalentCorp and graduates themselves, to seek an efficient and effective way of matching the right talent with the right career (in the shortest time possible).

I applaud all efforts to get someone speedily to a career they are passionate with and aligned with their purpose.

It was a bit of a struggle for teenage-me to chart my destiny. My brother Ken knew engineering was for him, they are passionate with and aligned with their purpose. My brother Ken knew engineering was for him, they are passionate with and aligned with their purpose.

A good friend and I were chatting yesterday about how we were the young ones the first time we worked together on an animal sanctuary (to be called Neoh’s Ark!).

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We were still charged with that zeal to transform the world, and with us, a legion of (you read that right) we were still charged with that zeal to transform the world. (yes, more than a decade ago!), all ready to change the world.

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As we stood on the grass in the Leaderonomics office (to be called Neoh’s Ark!) all ready to change the world.

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Have a fantastic weekend all!

KAREN NEOH
Editor
leaderonomics.com

INTERVIEW TIPS

By SARAH TAN
sarah.tan@leaderonomics.com

FAST forward from your graduation. You’ve applied tirelessly for jobs, and finally got a response out of the many applications you sent. After the excitement of getting a reply wears off, the panic sets in. How are you going to prepare for the interview? Fret not. Here are a few interview tips shared by career experts, handpicked from an article by Robert Farrington on Forbes, titled 15 Career Experts The Best Interview Tips For College Graduates.

THE REVERSE INTERVIEW

Brian Fins, the CEO of Fins Consulting, personally enjoys seeing a genuine interest in his interviews.

Candidates who ‘interviewed’ in return gave the impression of being sincerely interested, thus gaining favour in their interviews.

There is a limit to how many questions we should ask in an interview, as you want to avoid irritating the interviewer. Keep well informed about the company, and ask questions at appropriate times.

THE 3/2 RULE

Kim Seeling Smith, human resources (HR) expert and CEO of Ignite Global, says that a great rule to have is to keep to a specific time limit in answering your questions.

Provide your answers within 30 seconds to two minutes, as less that would appear too rushed, and interviewers may not be able to pay attention for more than that.

DON’T SELF-DEPRECATE

Nick Salbatera, talent advocate of Hired, advises us not to attempt to be too humble, as we may sound as though we lack confidence instead.

If you do not seem to have confidence in yourself, your interviewer will definitely not have any either.

Don’t sing about your accomplishments, but don’t talk down your abilities. If you are asked about an achievement, explain clearly and honestly how you have achieved it and how you feel about it.

BE PASSIONATE

Eric Beecher, sales director for Hatch Staffing Services, looks for passion in his interviews. Nobody wants a skilled worker who has no interest in his/her job.

Feel free to speak about the things that you are passionate about, be it a hobby or a job. As a fresh graduate, your passion will definitely make up for your lack of experience, therefore attracting your interviewer.

Keep these tips in mind before going to your next interview. Remember: be confident, prepared, and passionate. All the best!

The opinions expressed in this career guide are those of the writers or the people they quoted and not necessarily those of Leaderonomics.

“Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, so most people don’t recognise them.” – Ann Landers

“Nothing is impossible, the word itself says ‘I’m possible’.” – Albert Einstein

“If you don’t like something, change it. If you can’t change it, change your attitude.” – Samual Ollie

“Whatever you think you can do, you can.” – Walt Disney

“You are educated. Your certification is in your degree. You may think of it as the ticket to the good life. Let me ask you to think of an alternative. Think of it as your ticket to change the world.” – Tom Brokaw

“Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, so most people don’t recognise them.” – Ann Landers

“The trouble with learning from experience is that you never graduate.” – Doug Larson

“You are educated. Your certification is in your degree. You may think of it as the ticket to the good life. Let me ask you to think of an alternative. Think of it as your ticket to change the world.” – Tom Brokaw

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Feng in action during the Women’s Singles Table Tennis gold medal match at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland.

By DAVID WEE
editor@leaderonomics.com

The first game against Feng Tianwei of Singapore. After winning the first game, she won the next six points of the second game before Feng could even respond. Ding went on to clinch it 11-3 — a whitewash!

Ding was on the brink of capturing the set that would ensure China’s 19-year reign as the most dominant women’s table tennis team. The Chinese supporters were delirious. The Singaporean fans subdued. Table tennis fans around the world can tell you what happened next. Feng got back in the game. She edged out the next two sets by the thinnest of margins, ending up the victor with scores 11-8 and 11-9.

In the final game of the match, Feng managed to pull through and beat Ding, much to the delight of Singaporean fans. Hours later Feng played against Liu Shiwen — the world No. 1 women’s table tennis player. Liu had beaten Feng in all three previous meetings, and she expected more of the same. Against the odds, Feng outplayed Liu in another thrilling match.

With that victory, she and the Singapore team were crowned world champions.

JOURNEY TO GREATNESS

Feng Tianwei was born in Harbin, Heilongjiang, China. She was the only daughter of Feng Qingzhi, a granary worker, and his wife Li Chunping, an employee of a department store. Feng’s love affair with table tennis started from a tender age. “I was only five when I picked up table tennis as a sport. I was so into it that I would paddle after school and even on weekends. My passion for the sport is what keeps me going from victory to victory.”

Feng’s parents knew she had potential and natural ability in table tennis. They also knew that without the opportunity to access the right coach, Feng would never realise her full potential. Thus, they lived frugally for years so that their daughter could be coached to play in competitive matches.

Feng’s father suffered from multiple sclerosis and died in 2002, just weeks before Feng tried out for China’s National B squad. Although Feng toppled the qualifying matches and was called up for the national team in 2003, it was said that she suffered from a long illness “because she missed her father too much.”

She was never quite the same player after the episode and was later told she was not good enough to be in the China team. Feng left China in 2005 to play in the Japanese professional league where she was spotted by Liu Guodong, then a coach with the Singapore Table Tennis Association. In 2007, Feng was invited to train in Singapore under the Foreign Sports Talent Scheme. She became a Singaporean citizen in January 2008.

Feng continued to win various international titles. In 2010, she led the Singapore team to the famous victory in Moscow. By the end of 2010, she was ranked No. 2 in the world.

Most recently, Feng was crowned champion at the Philippine and Australia ITTF Open and placed third at the China Open. During her journey, Feng faced many obstacles but managed to overcome all because she had the primary ingredients for success: passion, ability, and most importantly, the opportunity to realise them.

Both the China and Singapore team offered Feng the opportunity to be coached by the best. However, the Singapore team offered an intangible gift that its Chinese counterpart could not match: their unwavering belief that Feng would become world champion.

Because it believed that she would be a world champion, the Singapore team treated her like one. And Feng began to think and perform like one.

There are many lessons we can glean from Feng’s journey:

LESSON 1: HARNESs PASSION

When people love what they are doing, they go to work knowing that every day brings opportunities to fulfill their passion. They yearn to learn and do better because they want to be great at what they love. These individuals benefit immensely.

Companies also benefit as this drives higher productivity and results in delighted customers and business results. Imagine this scenario. People are in jobs they are dispassionate about, resulting in poor performance. They don’t like what they do and their bosses remind them that they are bad at doing it. Their morale dips and their belief that they can do better gets chipped away.

This brings productivity down, causing negative energy to permeate the workplace.

To stir up your people, allocate work that would evoke their passion. People are passionate about work when they:
- desire and enjoy doing it
- are motivated by what they do and hence work hard to do it better
- believe they can accomplish it

In summary, passion is about one’s desire, motivation and self-belief. When we understand this, then helping people find the right job that harnesses their passion becomes easier.

LESSON 2: GROW ABILITY

A powerful way of growing ability is to use a combination of training, learning by doing, and feedback, also known as the 70-20-10 development approach. Why integrate these three developmental approaches?

1. Training impacts skills and knowledge needed to accomplish a task.
2. Learning by doing provides practice and experience of mastering the skill.
3. Feedback ensures that the skill is practised correctly.

All this results in mastery, whereby you can apply the skill consistently and correctly.
The 70-20-10 approach to development is not new. Some 50 years ago, Robert Wood Johnson (ex-chairman and co-founder of Johnson & Johnson) wrote: “As valuable and necessary as this is (executive training), it is also true that a working executive seems to develop best when supervised and followed by a senior executive. This senior executive must see to it that he is given responsibility at a proper time and place; that he is occasionally, repeat occasionally, moved about so as not to develop a one-track mind; that he is criticised when criticism is due...”

There is a lot of research that validates Johnson's thinking about the importance of 70-20-10 development. In practice, many companies spend most of their development dollars on training programmes. Why? A key reason is that they have muddled learning key performance indicators (KPIs) for all employees will go through a minimum of five training days a year. 

Training departments scramble to add more programmes to meet this. Their goal is to get people into the class, whether they need training or not because that’s what a five-day training per employee KPI demanded. Companies which reward efforts in training solutions will get exactly what they ask for – a learning organisation that channels the majority of its time and money in an incomplete way of developing people.

The good news is that the solution is clear – use the 70-20-10 approach.

**Lesson 3: Provide Opportunities to Rise to the Top**

There are a few reasons why companies should fill positions from within.

Firstly, a 2012 Corporate Executive Board Asia survey indicates that the majority of executives are not confident their recent hires are a great fit for the job or company. In other words, there is no guarantee that an external candidate will perform better than an internal candidate. Secondly, companies assess their people for potential and performance. The chosen ones become members of a high-potential talent pool.

The selection process for the talent pool works when the assessment is accurate. Employees believe they have a fair shot at being chosen, and those not selected continue to be engaged, and get other opportunities to join the pool. However, not many companies get this right. Challenges, which include differentiating charisma from substance, accounting for bias, and forecasting the type of talent needed in an unpredictable operating landscape, mean that the selection process is not flawless.

Neither is it without cost – as dramatically highlighted by Feng’s move to the Singapore team. Thus, you can harness these by giving them the right job opportunities. One way is by providing platforms that offer all employees the opportunity to showcase their talent to senior leaders. In this way, everyone has a chance to rise to the top. While not every employee will or want to seize the opportunity to stand out, those who are especially ambitious, smart and driven are the ones most likely to take advantage of these opportunities. They are also likely to be the best.

**A Final Lesson: Adopt 90-10 Talent Management**

Feng is a star. Her performance was the difference between getting a gold or silver medal for her team. However, without the right team, her efforts would have been futile.

The team includes Feng’s teammates and the backroom staff comprising the team manager, coaches and physical therapists. Feng was only as good as her team. Here is a corporate world example that reinforces this point. In 1971, Robert Nardelli joined General Electric (GE) as an entry-level hire. He rose through the ranks quickly by producing sterling performances year after year.

In 1995, he was appointed president and CEO of GE Power System and was one of three candidates shortlisted to succeed Jack Welch. However, he came up short in the race and subsequently left GE. In December 2000, he took over the reins of Home Depot. Some years later, he resigned after the home improvement retailer struggled with slowing financial performance and complaints about his heavy-handed management style.

Why did he fail? There are many reasons but the one offered by Daryl Allen, ex-chairman and CEO of Aeroquip-Vickers, makes a lot of sense. “In my experience, former GE guys consistently understate how good the infrastructure was at GE and just assume it exists at the same quality in their new company,” said Allen. In other words, as good as Nardelli was, he needed the right team, culture and processes behind him.

While I am not advocating that stars are unimportant (because they are), the point is that for great people to perform, other factors like culture, people and processes are required. Hence companies must move away from the idea that only a handful of people have the talent which determines organisational success.

Instead, we need to embrace the belief that everyone has passion and ability that can be channelled for productive application. I call this approach 90-10 talent management because it is about getting 90% of the workforce to perform like the top 10%.

Companies like Toyota and many others have achieved this. These companies share the common belief that people are at their greatest when three things happen:

- **Passion.** They love what they are doing.
- **Ability.** They are great at what they do.
- **Opportunity.** They are in jobs that allow them to do what they love.

These companies do three things to bring together passion, ability and opportunity:

- Demand the best from people. Their performance standards are typically the highest in class.
- Excel in development. Their people meet the demand for top performance because they go through the world-class 70-20-10 development process.
- Provide opportunities to perform. Toyota’s lean production system provides all employees the empowerment and skills they need to make a difference to the workplace every single day.

**In Summary**

The unfortunate mathematical fact is that only 10% of your people are going to be in the top 10%. So, companies have a choice. They can chase the rare talent or they can do something more useful.

Build a company that makes it possible for 90% of employees to perform as if they were in the top 10%. Hence, these companies provide work that brings together this happy confluence of passion and ability. Their people are energised, they are curious, and they can’t wait to get to work because it is so much fun.

This energy charges across the entire company and is translated into positive employee engagement scores and sustainable business results.

Now isn’t this something really worth chasing after?
MATCHING TALENT TO JOBS

TRENDS IN GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

1. Main driver of graduate unemployment is skills mismatch between recent graduates and employers’ demands

Employers cite soft skills as key factors in hiring entry-level graduates, and graduates from Malaysian universities seem to be lacking in these areas. From Figure 1, 81% of respondents identified communication skills as the major deficit, followed by creative/critical thinking (56%), analytical (51%) and problem-solving competencies (49%).

Fresh graduates from local universities lack soft skills

Share of respondents citing skill deficits in fresh graduates, percent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Category</th>
<th>None of the above</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Numeracy skills</th>
<th>Literacy skills</th>
<th>Team working</th>
<th>Foreign language skills</th>
<th>Time management</th>
<th>Ability to work independently</th>
<th>Problem solving</th>
<th>Analytical skills</th>
<th>Creative/critical thinking</th>
<th>Communication skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the full survey findings, please refer to Matching Talent to Jobs pages 22–31 of the Malaysia Economic Monitor, World Bank June 2014

2. Even at the recruitment stage, companies and universities do not always cooperate in matching graduating students with entry-level opportunities

Thirty-four percent of respondents have never approached universities to recruit candidates, nor been approached by universities to place their graduates into entry-level positions (see Figure 2).

... nor do they always collaborate to recruit/place graduates into the workplace

Share of respondents, percent

- Recruit/placement of their graduates
- Curriculum design
- None of the above

3. Career services centres are underutilised and do not fully understand companies’ needs

In Malaysia, 53% of respondents said that they do not work with these centres. Engagement with career services centres is lowest among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) at 23%, followed by non-financial public enterprises (NFPEs) at 33% (see Figure 3).

"At Taylor’s University, we understand that it is the onus of the education institution to ensure that their students are able to meet the needs of industry. We bridge this by incorporating ‘Taylor’s Graduate Capabilities’ into our curriculum which includes sharpening students’ lifelong skills such as interpersonal, communication, problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.” — YBhg Professor Dato’ Dr Hassan Said, vice chancellor and president, Taylor’s University

4. Greater involvement of the private sector in training and producing high-quality graduates is likely to have significant payoffs

According to the TalentCorp-World Bank survey, only half of the companies that responded to the questionnaire offer structured internship programmes, which can help expose university students to a variety of career paths and help them develop requisite soft skills for any position.

"At Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS (UTP), we have in place the Student Industrial Internship Programme (SIIP), Student Mobility Programme (SMP) and the Adjunct Lecturer Programme which integrates industry experience and practices into the university curriculum to produce well-rounded and industry-ready graduates. The SIIP is a 28-week internship programme comprising 14 weeks of Student Industrial Training (SIT) focusing on soft skill competencies and work performance and 14 weeks of Student Industrial Project (SIP)” — YBhg Datuk Ir (Dr) Abdul Rahim Hashim, vice chancellor, UTP

5. Companies seem to be willing to pay for talent — when they find it

While pay levels could be relevant in specific sectors, many companies say they do pay premium wages for graduates with the right skills. About 75% of respondents have introduced premium graduate programmes to recruit top entry-level talent, in addition to their existing general graduate programmes.

According to the survey, 43% of companies paid “premium” entry-level graduates between RM3,000 and RM5,000 a month (see Figure 4).

Employers are willing to pay a premium for soft skills

Share of respondents according to salary, percent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Premium graduate programme</th>
<th>Other general graduate programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RM1,001-RM2,000</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM2,001-RM3,000</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM3,001-RM4,000</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM4,001-RM5,000</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM5,001-RM7,000</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM7,001+</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Malaysia has a number of programmes to support recent graduates who cannot find a job

The Government has implemented several training programmes to boost the chances of graduates in finding employment, with some success. The Graduate Employment Management Scheme (GEMS) has placed 12,000 unemployed graduates into the workforce since its inception in 2009.

7. Universities cannot produce graduates who are ready for the workforce unless they develop a clear, accurate understanding of what firms are looking for in entry-level employees and incorporate these requirements into the course curricula, teaching and assessment methods, or other means

The skills mismatch is exacerbated by the lack of communication between universities and firms on how to develop employable graduates. Less than 10% of employers surveyed have had experience developing curricular or joint programmes with universities.

An example of industry-academia collaboration is between Universiti Malaya Perlis (UnipMAP), Silterra Malaysia Sdn Bhd and the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA).

As a result of joint curriculum development, UnimAP is now one of the leading universities in microelectromechanical systems (MEMS) microfabrication and design research activities in Malaysia.
**OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND CAREER OPTIONS**

Due to the limited opportunities for undergraduates to get to know their potential employers as highlighted in the TalentCorp-WorldBank survey, students are not always aware of their career options.

To address this, TalentCorp and local universities initiated a collaborative effort called the Sector Focused Career Fair (SFCF) in 2012. Today, SFCF focuses on key sectors namely oil and gas, electrical and electronics, ICT (information and communication technology), telecommunications, biotechnology, finance, accounting, healthcare, tourism, FMCG (fast-moving consumer goods) and education.

**WHY SFCF?**

Both participating companies and universities gain from SFCF as it provides the opportunity for employers to reach out to undergraduates from specific sectors across various campuses.

The career fair also serves as an avenue for graduates to explore possibilities of internship or employment through direct engagement with employers. In return, companies have direct access to interviewing prospective talent, and to collate a database of student resumes. The greatest beneficiaries would be the undergraduates themselves who are part of the organising team for these events on campus.

To find out more, check out the upcoming SFCFs above, or visit www.facebook.com/sectorfocusedcareerfair

**VISIT READY4WORK.MY FOR:**
- Tips from HR practitioners from leading employers such as Accenture, Axista, Maxis, EY and PwC on job interviews and internships.
- Updates on relevant events like Sector Focused Career Fairs, Semester Break Programmes and Competitions.
- Internship options Career advice from senior corporate leaders
- Information on graduate programmes from leading employers
- Insights into key economic sectors such as Telecommunications, ICT and Shared Services
- Personality and Career Assessment Tests
- A Job Profiling Tool to learn more about job roles suited for you

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COMPETITIONS are organised in collaboration with employers to provide opportunities for young talent to engage with prominent industry leaders and to demonstrate their creative and technical ability. For companies, competitions provide access to a highly driven and creative talent pool.

Competitions which have been supported by TalentCorp include:

**INNOVATE MALAYSIA**

The Innovate Malaysia Design Competition is a multi-discipline engineering design competition open to all final year undergraduate engineering or computer science students in Malaysia. While aimed at promoting the culture to innovate among graduates, the competition also seeks to promote greater interest in engineering among graduates, the competition open to all final year undergraduate students to achieve meaningful work and for young talent to engage with prominent industry leaders and to demonstrate their creative and technical ability.

**THE ENACTUS MALAYSIA NATIONAL CUP**

Enactus is an international non-profit organisation that brings together student, academic and business leaders who are committed to using the power of entrepreneurial action to improve the quality of life and standard of living for disadvantaged populations. Student leaders of Enactus create and implement community empowerment projects throughout the world, with the help of academic advisers and business experts.

With participation from 34 universities, this year’s Enactus Malaysia National Cup 2014 was bagged by UUM with its projects “Back2Bag” and “4Nature”.

**EY YOUNG TAX PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR**

Launched by EY in nine countries in 2011, this competition is held internationally to allow students to compete in demonstrating their tax-related technical skills. Open to all Malaysian undergraduates—whether in local or foreign universities or colleges—the international rounds this year will be held in the Netherlands.


**ENACTUS MALAYSIA**

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**SEMINAR PROGRAMMES**

TALENTCORP has designed a series of Semester Break Programmes to give Malaysian students – both local and abroad – an inside look at key sectors. These are run in conjunction with long semester breaks, and include:

1. **Industry Inside:** takes students to visit and interact with industry players for basic level exposure to sectors including oil, gas and energy, biotechnology, and fast-moving consumer goods.
2. **Industry Bootcamp:** an accelerated and more intensive version of “Industry Inside.” bootcamps incorporate tasks and challenges to give participants more hands-on experience in industries including financial services and electrical and electronics.
3. **Breakfast with CEO:** targets those interested in getting insights from corporate and social leaders.

**COLLABORATIONS AND INCUBATION OF STUDENT-LED PROJECTS**

Programmes conceived and developed by students with support from TalentCorp, from a coaching perspective and sponsorships.

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**GRANT THORNTON**

Joining Grant Thornton as an intern will stretch a student’s analytical ability, while gaining an overview of a career in public accounting.

- Students work with seniors on multiple assignments thereby gaining significant experience and exposure of the range of activities throughout the audit life cycle.
- Interns are paired with a mentor who will facilitate their professional development and help acquaint them to the culture of the firm. Interns have the opportunity to interact with leaders and staff through:
  1. Grant Thornton onboarding induction programme
  2. Grant Thornton sponsored sports and recreational events
  3. Job shadow with staff
  4. Interactive session with client during off-site assignment

According to Datuk Narendra Kumar Jasani, country managing partner, Grant Thornton Malaysia, structured internship programmes have the power to prepare students for successful and fulfilling careers.

He adds that a meaningful internship experience promotes critical self-reflection – which drive them to discover gaps in their practical knowledge and identify their future career goals.

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**CROWE HOWARTH**

“WE are looking for SWANs – students who are Smart, Willing to work hard, Ambitious, Nice,” says Mok Wai Ling, Partner, Audit and Assurance, Crowe Howarth.

Crowe Howarth believes that through SIP’s initiative, a batch of independent-minded and skilled talent can be created. It believes that a good internship experience should develop effective interpersonal skills and in-depth knowledge of the formal functional activities of a field.

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**SEMESTER BREAK PROGRAMMES**

1. **Malaysian Public Policy Competition, Aug 22-24:** A programme by the International Council of Malaysian Scholars and Associates, this annual competition seeks to get students involved in understanding policy issues and contributing ideas towards improving Malaysia.
2. **Medicine in Malaysia Conference, Aug 16-17:** An inaugural conference by Malaysian Medics International established to encourage more medical students abroad to build linkages to Malaysia and understand the needs and future of Malaysia’s healthcare industry.
3. **Economic and Leadership Forum, Aug 9:** A programme by Malaysian students at the London School of Economics that aims to provide some exposure to key economic issues to Malaysian students aged 16-20 years.

You can RSVP for events at https://events.myworklife.my/ or check out the StudentsMY Facebook page at http://www.facebook.com/StudentsMY
Government Scholars Contributing to National Transformation

Talent Acquisition and Retention (STAR) Program

The STAR initiative provides a career option for JPA scholars not selected for public service to contribute to Malaysia’s economic transformation in the private sector.

Benefits to Scholars

- No policy nexus once approved by JPA
- A scholar is allowed to serve their bond term at the STAR company
- No policy nexus once approved by JPA
- A scholar is allowed to serve their bond term at the STAR company

Benefits to Companies

- Access to JPA scholars who are already working in the private sector
- No policy nexus once approved by JPA
- A scholar is allowed to serve their bond term at the STAR company
- Access to JPA scholars who are already working in the private sector
- No policy nexus once approved by JPA
- A scholar is allowed to serve their bond term at the STAR company

Applications are due by 9 August 2014.

For more information, visit www.tarjob.com.my.
ACK for the second year in a row, the gradamalaysia Graduate Recruitment Awards (GRA) has announced a new category to add to its existing three categories. An initiative by GTI Media, the GRA recognises and applauds the excellence of recruiters who carve a niche for themselves in attracting and hiring graduates. This initiative is carried out through four categories of awards, where each one focuses on a specific element in the recruitment process.

THE MECHANICS
Graduate employers from all sectors in Malaysia are eligible for this award. Organisations are not confined to participating in just one category. If an organisation qualifies for all four, they can submit an entry for all four categories.

All entries will be shortlisted and judged by a panel of impartial industry experts that comprises career advisors, work placement professionals and graduate recruitment media experts. Assessments will be made solely on the criteria set for each award.

HOW DO I ENTER?
Organisations may enter all four categories if they wish, by providing detailed reasons and supporting material as to why it should win in that category.

The four award categories

1. Best Management Trainee / Graduate Programme
This award seeks to highlight the employer who offers the best management training and personal development opportunities for graduates.

Criteria:
- Must display well-designed, well-planned and well-executed programmes beneficial to the participating individuals as well as the organisation
- Positive feedback from previous participating graduates
- Number of hours per week for “on-the-job” training and formal/professional training.
- Real business benefit and return on investment, including quantifiable results for both the business and/or graduates

2. Best Internship Experience
In search of the organisation providing internship programmes that meet its objectives and contributes to its marketing and attraction of undergraduates through recruitment programmes.

Criteria:
- Emphasis is given on the originality of a concept, measures taken on planning and execution as well as, if it garnered positive response from the target audience, the students.
- Evidence that the initiatives resulted in specific objectives being met (e.g. recruitment goals)

3. Best Innovation On Campus
Recognising marketing innovation and the importance of employer brand presence on campus.

Criteria:
- Innovation and creativity in design, planning and implementation of social media campaigns
- Demonstrate how the campaign transitions between online and offline activities, drives traffic to the job site, with clear and measurable outcomes and indicators of success

GRADAMALAYSIA GRADUATE RECRUITMENT AWARDS 2014

GRADAMALAYSIA GRADUATE RECRUITMENT AWARDS 2013 WINNERS AND FINALISTS

AWARD WINNER FINALIST FINALIST
Best Management Trainee / Graduate Programme
Maxis CIMB Group F&B Maybank
Best Internship Experience
KPMG CIMB Group GroupPN
gtimedia.asia
Best Innovation On Campus
Maybank CIMB Group

GRADUATE PROGRAMMES WITH LEADING EMPLOYERS

In the war for top graduate talents, the TalentCorp-World Bank survey finds that many leading graduate employers in Malaysia have introduced premium graduate programmes which pay a higher starting salary to source for fresh talent. 

Forty-three per cent of companies interviewed paid “premium” entry-level graduates between RM3,000 and RM5,000 a month.

These programmes aim to attract top graduate talent who can be groomed to be future leaders of the company. This article illustrates some examples of attractive career opportunities for Malaysian graduates which provide structured programmes for high potentials to develop their skills and gain exposure in organisations with a regional and international presence.

To find out more about graduate programmes and career tips from leading employers in Malaysia, log on to www.Ready4Work.my
How many hours are you prepared to work in your first job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>High Potentials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.7 hours</td>
<td>8.5 hours</td>
<td>8.6 hours</td>
<td>8.8 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What makes an employer attractive to you?

- Training and development
- Good career prospects
- Good work-life balance
- Good employer leadership style
- Personal development

What is a High Potential?

High Potentials are defined as students with:
- Outstanding academic achievement (top 40% of students)
- Participation in extra-curricular activities
- Experience related to their course
- Experience abroad (academic and/or work)
- Advanced English skills

How much do you expect to earn in your first job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>High Potentials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RM3,053 per month</td>
<td>RM2,775 per month</td>
<td>RM2,897 per month</td>
<td>RM3,139 per month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STANDARD CHARTERED BANK

STANDARD Chartered Bank, with its brand promise “Here for good”, recruits graduates for two main programmes:

INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE PROGRAMME (IGP)

During the programme of between 12 and 24 months, graduates are rotated through six different functions. They are given value-added work and ownership of the projects undertaken. Upon completion of the programme, graduates will be placed in a business unit and function that best suits their strengths and interests.

Selection requirements for both graduate programmes:
- Any academic degree
- Strong interest and passion in wanting to become a world-class banking professional
- Strong command of English
- Having other language skills is a strong advantage
- Ability to build relationships with people easily

The recruitment period for the IGP and Fast Track programme is from September to February. Intake date is in September.

CELCOM AXIATA BHD

Management Trainee - Curriculum

18-month Programme

Rotation 1: 6 Months
  - Module 1: Self-Preparatory
    - Learning agility
    - Competency
    - Understanding Development Areas
    - How to close gaps
  - Development Programme
    1) Transitional Programme
    2) Functional Training
  - January

Rotation 2: 6 Months
  - Module 2: Business Preparatory
    - Understanding Celcom Processes
  - Module 3: Leadership Preparatory
    - Being a young professional
    - Leadership traits
  - Development Programme
    1) Leadership Programme
    2) Functional Training
  - July

Rotation 3: 6 Months
  - Development Programme
    1) The Case Maker
    2) Functional Training
  - January the following year

YOUNG ENGINEERS PROGRAMME (YPE)

The YEP is a five-year programme that develops graduate engineers into project managers and construction managers, eventually leading the talent to become a project director. Once graduates have established a great career track record, they will be considered for senior management positions.

Engineering graduates’ career paths are mapped to the requirements of the board of Engineers in order for UEM YEPs to gain their P.E. (Professional Engineer) qualification.

YOUNG GRADUATE PROGRAMME (YGP)

The YGP is a three-year programme which recruits fresh graduates from various fields to build a talent pipeline for non-technical roles.

Non-technical roles are corporate affairs, human resources, finance, procurement, and information technology. As with YEP graduates will have a structured training programme which will develop and nurture technical and leadership skills. The YGP gives practical experience in the graduate’s chosen function and experienced seniors and professionals will also mentor throughout the three years.

With the YEP and YGP, graduates can expect:
- Three to four rotational assignments across UEM
- Formal training opportunities
- Structured development plan
- Ongoing personal and professional mentorship by experienced technical leaders
- Senior management interaction and visibility

CELCOM grows and develops its young graduate talents through its CAMT – Celcom Axia Management Trainee Programme. The programme was formerly known as the Axia Experiential Programme or AEP.

The purpose of the programme is to identify young talented individuals who have just graduated, and who, over time, can lead and take the Celcom business to new heights.

Once selected, Celcom Management Trainees (MTs) will embark on an 18-month programme designed to give talented exposure to the core of Celcom business from their first day of work.

The CAMT is divided into three stages. Each stage will run for a six-month period on a rotation basis.

The stages consist of three divisions – Sales strategy, brand management, device marketing and digital technology.

During each rotation, MTs will learn more about the function whilst accomplishing a specific role and a project. This role and project have real responsibilities, deadlines and KPIs.

MTs are placed in these three divisions in order to gain specific knowledge and the skills of Celcom’s core business areas.

Additionally, MTs will participate in learning workshops, CSR projects, and a mentorship programme.

As indicated above, upon completion of the full programme, MTs are given priority to be placed in the division that is best suited to their interests and career aspirations.

Celcom places huge emphasis on critical thinking, and this is just one of many learnings that Celcom wishes to enhance during the duration of the CAMT programme.

Other key learnings will be business and financial acumen, stakeholder management, skills in creating and presenting a business case, and leadership skills.

REQUIREMENTS:
- Bachelor’s degree
- Good command of English (written and spoken)
- Structured and creative thinking process
- Confident in presenting new ideas and proposals to the senior management team
- Ability to adapt and change to new working environments and circumstances

The recruitment period for CAMT is from March to October. Intake date is in January.

To apply for the CAMT programme, please log onto http://axiata.com/careers/join_young.htm

PREMIUM GRADUATE PROGRAMMES TO ATTRACT TOP GRADUATES

BASED on the Trendence Graduate Barometer study (Malaysian edition, 2013) which establishes the rankings for the Malaysian Top 100 Graduate Employers, graduates who are in the “High Potentials” category expect to earn more than RM1,000 per month and are also willing to work longer hours.

Source: Malaysia’s 100 leading graduate employers (2013) by GTI Media

http://axiata.com
HE Aspiring Accountant Programme (AAP) is a foundation course to provide students from non-accounting disciplines the preparatory accounting course as a first step to train and qualify as chartered accountants.

A fully-funded six-week accounting foundation course is followed by a training contract to complete a professional accounting qualification through the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) or the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales (ICAEW) while working in a leading professional services firm.

The participating firms include BDO, Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC. Applicants enjoy full-time employment and time off to complete additional classes and exams to obtain professional accounting qualifications.

THE EMPLOYERS’ PERSPECTIVE

Amy Chua, assistant manager, talent acquisition of KPMG says "KPMG chose to participate in the AAP in support of the Government’s Economic Transformation Programme (ETP). We feel that the AAP is a good initiative which provides opportunities for non-accounting graduates to train and qualify as Chartered Accountants. We will provide the necessary practical work experience, monetary support and study leave to these graduates in completing their professional accounting qualification."

With regard the qualities that KPMG looks for in non-accounting graduates, Chua explains, "We basically look for non-accounting graduates who are genuinely interested in business and commercial issues, highly numerate, and have the drive to succeed. These graduates will undergo our comprehensive training and development programmes and also gain practical work experience which will provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge to complete their professional accounting qualification."

Nur Melissa Ismail, Degree in Finance, EY, Assurance (Energy)

Nur Melissa had completed her training in AAP and is now employed in EY, shared that the main challenge was commitment. Catching up with an unfamiliar subject within six weeks was a major undertaking. However, with "good and competent lecturers at Sunway University", she managed to make it.

Tan Gim May, Degree in Science (Computational Mathematics) KPMG

Corporate Tax Before joining AAP, Tan Gim May, was at a loss as whether to pursue a Masters or work in a bank as a salesperson.

"Most people don’t really know what their future goals are, including me. Some people enrol in university involuntarily", she said.

Having majored in Computational Mathematics, her passion for mathematics spurred her on a path to become an accountant.

APPLICATION

Pathway for non-accounting graduates

1. Get in touch with or meet representatives from BDO, Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC at career fairs to find out more. Send your application to upskilling@talentcorp.com.my and please quote reference number *AA2014 in your cover letter.

2. Selections are based on the following criteria:
   1. Any degree discipline excluding Accounting/Finance
   2. Have a minimum of 2nd upper degree result
   3. Leadership and active involvement in extra-curricular activities
   4. A strong command of English

3. Programme commences

You will go through a fully-funded six-week accounting foundation course with Sunway TES which aims to provide you with the following:

1. Knowledge and understanding of financial statements
2. Basic auditing knowledge and skills

4. Professional accounting qualification

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be offered a training contract with leading professional services firms such as BDO, Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC. You will be pursuing and completing your professional accounting qualification via ACCA or ICAEW while working.

GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY MANAGEMENT SCHEME

ALTHOUGH some may graduate with a clear goal in mind, many undergraduates come out to the working world unprepared, uncertain of their options or requiring career guidance.

In addition, the current job market may pose significant challenges for graduates with degrees which are not in high demand. The main thrust of the Graduate Employability Management Scheme (GEMS) is to enhance graduate employability with the aim to reduce talent shortages in the key areas of economy.

GEMS 2.0 provides graduates with sector-specific training and exposure in Oil, Gas and Energy, Electrical and Electronics, ICT, Telecommunications, Biotechnology, FMCG, Hospitality, SME-focused/Entrepreneurship

OBJECTIVES OF GEMS

Provide unemployed graduates with career opportunities and job exposure

The programme is divided into three segments:

1. Segment 1: for those with technical degrees in Engineering, Science and Technology
2. Segment 2: for those planning to work in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), Hospitality, or Shared/Support services

Applicants who are selected will be provided placement at host companies and training (lasting eight to 12 months) for employment in the host company.

A degree is not enough to secure an entry-level position in the corporate world. Employers look for good interpersonal skills and confidence when they speak to graduates.

GEMS attempts to address this problem by inculcating students with traits employers find desirable.

"We notice that GEMS candidates always have better communication skills, show self-confidence during the interview and most importantly, prepare for the interview," said Jamaliah Ibrahim.

"There is an opportunity to prove oneself," said Nur Melissa. "The main challenge is to train in leading professional services organisations while acquiring new skills.

PROGRAMME COMMENCES

Programme commencement January and July/August, twice a year

Interested applicants may apply via email (including a detailed resume) to upskilling@talentcorp.com.my

EQUIPS UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES WITH INDUSTRY-RELEVANT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE VIA A PLACE-AND-TRAIN METHODOLOGY

The company has trained many fresh graduates to manage the operation of restaurants around Malaysia.

She said the willingness to take challenges, ability to work independently, interpersonal skills and creative thinking, in addition to the ability to adjust themselves within a team and leading the team to run a restaurant are desirable traits of a future manager.

For graduates who do not meet market expectations, on-the-job training through GEMS allows us to support the development of young graduates."

"For more information and updates on Upskilling and GEMS, please visit www.talentcorp.com.my or www.myexportal.com.my. You may also email us at upskilling@talentcorp.com.my."

"Nur Melissa is grateful that GEMS provided a viable pathway for their talents to be noticed. A final word of advice from Inani: “Give yourself a chance to test the waters. Don’t ever make your degree a limitation that prevents you from trying and exploring something new or different”.

"For more information and updates on Upskilling and GEMS, please visit www.talentcorp.com.my or www.myexportal.com.my. You may also email us at upskilling@talentcorp.com.my."
LEARNING FROM THE APES
LEADERSHIP STYLES OF CAESAR AND KOB

By JERMAINE BEE
jermaine.bee@leaderonomics.com

After watching the movie Dawn of the Planet of the Apes, I couldn’t help pondering the debate between theology and modern science about human evolution, a theory made famous by Charles Darwin.

In my humble opinion, humans may or may not have evolved from apes, but humans certainly do behave like them to a certain extent—at least from the psychological, behavioral and emotional standpoint. Both share the ability to reflect and learn from their experiences.

Despite being a movie mainly about apes, I must say that Caesar and Koba represent two possible human responses in the real world.

Koba portrays fear, mistrust and tribalism. Caesar, on the other hand, represents a leader of peace without compromising the safety of the tribe, and working towards forgiveness and understanding even when he has been offended or mistreated.

I must apologise in advance for there may be spoilers in this article.

Caesar helms a community of apes and exhibits much of the modern human leadership values. Koba, an adviser to Caesar, held on to grudges from being severely tortured by humans when he was a lab animal undergoing medical experiments.

The movie conveyed that while peace was the intention of mankind and apes, I must say that Caesar and Koba represent two possible human responses in the real world.

Koba holds a great philosophy of peace and love for one another. In fact, he led by the philosophy of “ape shall not kill ape” which proves that despite their barbaric nature, anyone of their own kind should not kill another. Instead, they should be looking out for each other.

However, it is a distressing fact that in this modern day, humans are often blinded by their misconception about leadership.

It’s also inevitable for anyone to crave power under great leadership. Koba portrayed an example of such. Despite having a great leader, Caesar, whom he admired, Koba’s hunger for power led him to shoot Caesar from afar, just so he could gain power to lead the community of apes into war with mankind.

Koba led the apes with values conflicting with that of his predecessor—he led with anger by instilling fear amongst the apes when he killed Ash, one of his kind. Truly, a great leader should instill love, not fear.

A leader should always strive to manage his/her emotions well to ensure objectives and wise decisions are made. If all else fails, a leader should always acknowledge the overall benefit of the community and act for the greater good, beyond his/her own interests.

A great leader always should be foresighted and look at a long-term goal for the community he/she leads. Some leaders declare hostility against another community to fulfill their personal ego for power.

The movie teaches us to think and behave like Caesar who embraces love and peace; it’s definitely not due to cowardice but for the greater benefit for the communities of apes and humans.

Personally, I believe it requires more courage to give up one’s ego than to feed it.

During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln had an occasion at an official reception to refer to the Southerners as erring human beings rather than enemies to be exterminated. An elderly woman, a fiery patriot, rebuked him for speaking kindly of his enemies when he ought to be thinking of destroying them.

“Why, madam,” said Abraham Lincoln, “Do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends?” It’s such a powerful quote and it truly manifests the real wisdom of a true leader.

The following is what I gathered from watching the movie:

1 BE A LEADER WHO EMBRACES GOOD VALUES
John David Rockefeller says, “Every right implies a responsibility, every opportunity an obligation, every possession a duty.”

By becoming a leader, one must realise that it is more of a calling than a personal agenda. It should be a calling to serve and lead the community, i.e. from bad to good, and good to better.

In the movie, Caesar understood that being a leader is about having the responsibility to watch over his growing nation of genetically-evolved apes and lead with great influence of good values.

Caesar holds a great philosophy of peace and love for another. He, in fact, led by the philosophy of “ape shall not kill ape” which proves that despite their barbaric nature, anyone of their own kind should not kill another. Instead, they should be looking out for each other.

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2 BE A LEADER WHO MANAGES EMOTIONS WELL
In the movie, Koba being the once-trusted ape of Caesar fell into the trap of anger because of his painful past with mankind; to the extent of being confronted by apes.

A true leader should not let his/her emotions take control from within. Emotion is often a vague feeling, influenced by environment, circumstances, experience, culture and perceptions.

In my opinion, a community needs a reliable leader who has an undeviating vision. A leader should have vision but should certainly stay away from depending on his/her emotions in a decision-making process.

A leader should always strive to manage his/her emotions well to ensure objectives and wise decisions are made. If all else fails, a leader should always acknowledge the overall benefit of the community and act for the greater good, beyond his/her own interests.

3 BE A LEADER WHO FOCUSES ON LONG-TERM GOALS
Caesar: “We should go to war with humans.”
Caesar: “We should not and this is our only chance to make peace for both parties.”

A great leader should always be foresighted and look at a long-term goal for the community he/she leads. Some leaders declare hostility against another community to fulfill their personal ego for power.

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“Why, madam,” said Abraham Lincoln, “Do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends?” It’s such a powerful quote and it truly manifests the real wisdom of a true leader.

4 BE A LEADER OF COURAGE
Nelson Mandela once said, “I learned that courage was not the absence of fear but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.”

A true leader should always act courageously, in spite of storms ahead because a leader always has a vision beyond the storm. Malcolm, the human counterpart to Caesar, persevered despite knowing the risks associated with repairing the dam that could potentially save mankind, and even after seeing the danger of being confronted by apes.

A true leader must always be ready to be confronted with failures, offences and resistance, but never give up on temporary failures or setbacks to achieve success.

5 BE A LEADER WHO FORGIVES AND MOVES ON
As simple as this may seem, a leader should have a forgiving heart to make peace and move on for greater advancement.

A true leader must appreciate the saying by Martin Luther King that “darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

“Humans won’t forgive,” Caesar claimed in one of the final scenes. The movie ended the same way it began.

The danger of unforgiveness is a never-ending war. Despite knowing this fact theoretically, leaders often indulge in prideful acts to prove a point or to dictate power.

Personally, I’ve learnt that it’s a cycle that will never end. Truly, the end always results in two parties suffering. So, when will they stop?

Let’s be leaders who will determine the outcome in a positive and harmonious way.

Jermaine heads the learning and development team in Leaderonomics and is passionate about leadership development. For programmes on leadership development and application in the workplace, email jermaine.bee@leaderonomics.com
From the moment I walked into the office, I was prepared for coffee-making and some menial tasks. Instead, I was greeted with warmth, hospitality and importance.

To provide some background, I finished my high school studies in the IGCSE syllabus in the middle of this year, and decided to take a friend’s advice and take a six-month period to work. As I was having difficulty in trying to pick which college to attend, the half-year break seemed ideal.

Thanks to the friend, I was encouraged to apply for an internship in Leaderonomics, which turned out to be one of the best decisions that I have made, despite initially feeling “slower” compared with my friends who have already entered college.

If you catch a glimpse of my work day, you would see me typing out new articles on the computer, managing a small section of the Leaderonomics website (do check out Leaderonomics.com), or nagging at my desk mate.

While my given tasks have helped in honing my skills and prepared me for my tertiary education, I have also learnt many great lessons from my work mates on accountability, love, and care – all of which are also equally important characteristics to have in life.

Moreover, the trust that I have been given to complete my work, and the sense of accomplishment I get when I finish it, has greatly developed my confidence. And as a teenager, such a boost is necessary.

Although I have only been working here for over a month, the experience that I have gained so far is completely unexpected, for which I am truly grateful.

I am also fully aware that Leaderonomics is not a run-of-the-mill company, and that not every company will treat its interns in the same way.

We should have a positive perspective in every situation that we face – there are always lessons to be learnt from every situation. I hope that this has encouraged you to consider going through an internship to prepare yourself in your career. Life is not a race, and the person who finishes first doesn’t necessarily gain more.

Sometimes, stopping to smell the roses allows you to spot hidden gems along the way. The “past” me would have never imagined that I would be where I currently am, and I am excited to bring the “future” me to places that the “current” me will never dream of, too.

Sarah knows that most roses don’t have much smell, but she hopes that you stop to take a whiff anyway. You can tell her about the gems that you have spotted at sarah.tan@leaderonomics.com.

THE TRUST THAT I HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO COMPLETE MY WORK, AND THE SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT I GET WHEN I FINISH IT, HAS GREATLY DEVELOPED MY CONFIDENCE, AND AS A TEENAGER, SUCH A BOOST IS NECESSARY.

TIPS FOR A GOOD INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE:

1. Take initiative to add value to your team and solve potential work-related challenges
2. Be humble and eager to learn new skills such as presentation skills
3. Be communicative through written and verbal means to connect with fellow co-workers and team members
4. Treat everyone with respect regardless of status and position
5. Be quick to think things creatively, and ask questions.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

Interested to know more stories from and about the youth of today? Look out for next week’s issue!

In conjunction with International Youth Day, we will be featuring stories of inspiring youths, young geniuses with inventions which are changing the world, stories from our very own DIODE campers, and many more career and leadership lessons!

Don’t forget to pick up your copy of our career guide next Saturday and check out http://leaderonomics.com/ to access this special edition!

International Youth Day was designated by the United Nations in 1999. It serves as an awareness day which focuses on cultural and legal issues surrounding youth.

International Youth Day is celebrated annually on Aug 12.
WHAT IS "BRAIN DRAIN"?

By FRANCOIS BOGACZ
editor@leaderonomics.com

Hence, I am not talking about mass migration of educated people from one country to another, but the cognitive capacity of an individual brain over time. Research shows that age takes a significant toll on our cognitive capacities in the long term. However, physical exercise, a proper diet and sustained social activities allow us to counteract those effects of time.

But, what about brain drain in the short term? Much more important than age is the daily type of “brain drain” we all experience, which is far more significant and affects all of us without being conscious of it. It’s called ego or decision depletion. Our brains need optimal levels of glucose and oxygen resources to function well cognitively—glucose being the fuel of our neurons, the fundamental units of the brain. Yet the brain’s ability to control or manage its use of these resources is limited, especially if we have to think hard as the day progresses.

Our cognitive skills decline as we deplete these basic resources, and if we do not refill, we lose our cognitive capacities and even our self-control. A paper shows the troubling news that what a judge had for breakfast, and what he/she had for lunch, and what he/she had for dinner, and what he/she had for a snack mid­afternoon definitely be negatively impacted, just like for the judges. What can we do about this?

Our natural tendency is to rush to check our emails, some of them bringing their lot of negative emotions that we have to sort your tasks in the morning, for instance?

Daily brain drain is a reality. Be aware of your personal cycle, make food/oxygen breaks and adapt your daily agenda accordingly.

Figure 1: Proportion of rulings in favor of the prisoners by ordinal position. Circled points indicate the first decision in each of the three decision sessions; tick marks on x axis denote every third case; dotted line denotes food break. Because unequal session lengths resulted in a low number of cases for some of the later ordinal positions, the graph is based on the first 95% of the data from each session.

By YEOH SHU WEN CASSANDRA
tarjob.com, Saturday 9 August 2014

WHAT TO DO DURING THE HOLIDAYS?

By YEOW SHU WEN CASSANDRA
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WE all love holidays! The anticipation of the holiday break would send tingles of joyful anticipation down our spine. It could be a semester break or transition to the next level of education.

Everyone will be given the same period of time; the question is whether you make use of it as a stepping stone for your career.

Few years down the road, the precious time of youth can never be brought back. To treasure your time, the following activities are highly recommended.

1. INTERNSHIP

Internship programmes are professional career hands-on training programmes which offer work experience which you just can’t get in the classroom. Throughout your internship, you can decide if it is the right career for you. In Malaysia, a typical internship lasts from six to 12 weeks. Therefore, you can “test out” your future career without committing too much time.

Although these positions may be paid or unpaid, the benefits of doing an internship go far beyond your pay cheque. An internship allows you to build networking opportunities. You get to meet people who might help you land a job and give you the contacts in the industry you’re trying to break into. As the saying goes, knowing people never hurts.

An internship can help build your confidence, while building your resume. During job interviews, when an interviewer asks you “What was the experience of doing something, your work experience, if relevant, would allow you to answer with confidence.

Many students know there is a high chance for interns to find permanent, paid employment with the organisations they interned with.

2. VOLUNTEER YOURSELF

Volunteering has a meaningful, positive impact on your community. Apart from developing new skills, did you know volunteering also boosts your career?

A survey carried out by TimeBank of 200 leading businesses in the UK shows:

• 75% of employers would recruit a candidate with volunteering experience over one without
• 94% of employers believe that volunteering can add to skills.

By volunteering, you’re certainly giving back to society the benefits it gave you. As certain groups of communities suffer due to social injustice, what better way can you bridge the expanding gap if not through volunteering?

Although no one can solve all of the world’s problems, making your little corner of the world a little better would have a big impact towards society.

And, you know what, volunteering brings together people from all walks of life. Everyone you get to meet from different backgrounds would be a rich source of inspiration in your life.

After meeting new people and gaining new knowledge, this could change your perception of life as well as leave a lasting impact on you.

3. FAMILY TIES

Family is where life begins and love never ends. There is no investment wiser than spending quality time with your family. I see my family as a gift, which lasts forever. As family stands for “Father And Mother I Love You”, holidays are definitely a good time to strengthen our bonds and renew relationships.

No matter how life changes, those who would love us unconditionally are our parents. As Jim Butcher puts it: “When everything goes to hell, the people who stand by you without flinching—they are your family.”

Not knowing when our loved ones would depart from us, the time to build a close-knit family should be treasured most.
VER play the game, “Would You Rather?” This party game is simple: everyone has to choose one out of two given options, and is not allowed to answer “neither” or “both.” Just like the game, Larry Smith plays a lot of interesting scenarios in our heads by putting many contrasting situations against each other.

In his 15-minute TED Talk, titled Why You Will Fail to Have a Great Career, Smith starts with a bold statement: “I want to discuss with you this afternoon why you’re going to fail to have a great career.”

Capturing the audience’s attention, as well as their laughter, he expresses his frustration with people not following their passions.

A professor of economics at the University of Waterloo, Smith also doubles as a mentor to many of his students, giving advice on career development. Initially giving the TED Talk on the request of his students, he never expected to garner over two million views.

In a later interview on Forbes, he comments: “I’ve heard the excuses so many times I can’t stand it anymore. Since the excuses were real, I think they resonated with people watching the TED talk because they recognise the excuses.”

A VARIETY OF EXCUSES

In his talk, Smith goes through a list of excuses he has heard throughout his career, given by those who are unwilling to do what they really need to do in order to have a great career.

IT’S A MATTER OF LUCK

Excuse No. 1: “Well, great careers are really and truly, for most people, just a matter of luck. I’m going to stand around, I’m going to try to be lucky, and if I’m lucky, I’ll have a great career. If not, I’ll have a good career.”

Countering the excuse, Smith says, “Those trying to have good careers are going to fail, because, really, good jobs are now disappearing. There are great jobs and great careers, and then there are the high-workload, high-stress, bloodsucking, soul-destroying kinds of jobs, and practically nothing in between.”

I’M NOT A GENIUS

“Yes, there are special people who pursue their passions, but they are geniuses. They are Steven J. I’m not a genius, but I’m professors have never beaten that idea out of my head long enough. I was a genius, but my professors have been patient out of my head long enough.”

Instead of claiming our title as geniuses, we call ourselves, “completely competent”, something that will not help us gain a great career.

“Passion is your greatest love. Passion is the thing that will help you create the highest expression of your talent. Passion, interest – it’s not the same thing,” he states.

“Using a romantic relationship as an analogy, Smith says, “Are you really going to go to your sweetheart and say, ‘Marry me! You’re interesting!’ Won’t happen. Won’t happen, and you will die alone.”

“What you want, is passion. It is beyond interest. You need 20 interests, and then one of them, one of them might grab you, one of them might engage you more than anything else, and then you may have found your greatest love in comparison to all the other things that interest you, and that’s what passion is.”

An interest is not what will propel you towards your great career. Passion is.

Playing out another “Would You Rather” scenario, Smith compares the tombstone of an engineer who invented Veroce, and the tombstone of the alternative life of that same engineer, saying: “Here lies the last Nobel Laureate in Physics, who formulated the Grand Unified Field Theory and demonstrated the practicality of warp drive.”

“One was a great career. One was a missed opportunity.”

EITHER, OR

Smith finally brings us to the last excuse on the list: those who make unnecessary sacrifices. “Yes, I would pursue a great career, but I value human relationships more than accomplishment. I want to be a great parent, I want to be a great friend. I want to be a great spouse. I want to be a great parent, and I will not sacrifice them on the altar of great accomplishment.”

Countering this excuse, he questions his audience. Do you really want to use your children as a shield? Giving another pair of situations, Smith paints our future.

One day, when our kid comes up to us and tells us of their dream of becoming a magician, how will we answer them? Will we be able to tell them to go for it, just like we did?

All these excuses stem from only one thing: fear.

“And that’s why you’re not going to have a great career, unless – unless, that most evocative of all English words – unless. But the ‘unless’ word is also attached to that other, most terrifying phrase, ‘If only I had...’”

I end this with a question for you: would you rather tell your future kids about the dreams that you have pursued, or the dreams that you have left behind?

Sarah chose the former option as her answer, and is determined to find her passion in order to make it come true. You can tell her your choice at sarah.tan@leaderonomics.com

NOT WEIRD ENOUGH?

“Well, I would do this, I would do this, but, but, well, after all, I’m not weird. Everybody knows that people who pursue their passions are somewhat obsessive.”

Commonly heard by those who are not ready to pursue their passion, people who come up with this excuse choose to substitute their pursuit with hard work instead.

Smith lets us in on a little secret: you are definitely bound to work hard. However, he doubts the choice of hard work without passion. “The world will give you the opportunity to work real, really, really, really hard, but are you so sure that that’s going to give you a great career when all the evidence is to the contrary?”

ONLY AN INTEREST

Moving forward, Smith brings us to the excuses of another kind of interest – those with only an interest.

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