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The year was 1997 and I had just met my host family, three remarkable people – a Chemistry professor, an artist and their wee daughter (not forgetting their black cats Rosie and Snowball).

At nine, she already showed clear leadership qualities and larger than life thoughtfulness for her wee friends. Years later I met Jenna again, just graduated, still self-assured and exuding the quiet care not just for family and friends, but for patients in her chosen profession.

In the past, my work also brought me face-to-face with young girls who were so unseparably abused that it still affects me today. Yet the same girls, coming out of their long process of recovery demonstrated their strength and determination to be more than just a statistic of childhood abuse.

It is Aug 12, International Youth Day 2014 as I write this. Nearly one-fifth of the global population is comprised of youth (14–24 years) and of these, approximately 20% experience a mental health condition each year.

According to the United Nations (UN) “Mental Health Matters Report 2014”, mental health conditions negatively impact youths’ development, quality of life and ability to fully participate in their communities.

Why have we dedicated an entire issue to youth? Every week we focus on people development, how to maximise our potential as adults. We stress that the start of the journey is always the most important.

But what if we did not have the luxury of basic education, a stable and nurturing childhood, good role models? What if we were crippled with a mental condition that suppressed our ability to live out our purpose in life?

This Saturday, we learn of youth who have stormed ahead and achieved heights that adults still dream of. Youth driven by their passion and compassion, coming in aid of other youth.

We also gain insights from people who have played significant and achieved heights that adults still dream of.

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5 Good Fruits To Savour

By Jeremy Tan
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As a Gen-Y, being good at what you do today is no longer enough in the eyes of the world. Instead, it’s a lot about being the best. However, in the process of getting there, it doesn’t mean that you should forsake good values.

I personally believe that by upholding certain core values, you will automatically stand out in a crowd as the best above the rest.

Using the analogy of a tree, it’s not the size of the tree that matters, but the fruit it produces. Now, let us feast on some good fruits prepared for you:

1. The Honeydew of Humility

At times, it’s hard to admit that you need help. It’s often due to our pride that we sometimes refuse to ask for it. Thus, it’s important to humble ourselves and realise that we don’t know it all. We should accept the reality that others may be better than us, and take the opportunity to learn from them.

“True humility is not thinking less of yourself, it is thinking of yourself less.”
– C.S. Lewis

2. The Tangerine of Tenacity

With Gen-Y being known as a highly-enthusiastic generation, it’s always important to know where one is channeling the energy.

Find out what excites and drives you. It’s not only vital to have goals that get you going for short-term gain, but continue to press on to ensure that these goals are for long-term as well.

3. The Fig of Flexibility

Given the privilege to lead a team in my college in the past, the one thing I’m grateful for was my team members accommodating spirit of flexibility.

They were able to pull off an all-nighter in college whenever there was an upcoming event, or whenever I needed them to run an errand at the very last minute.

Flexibility is definitely one value that is much appreciated, as many may not be so willing to sacrifice their time and effort in this arena.

4. The Voacanga of Virtue

In today’s society, the need to strive for the best in a competitive world is common.

In the race of life, we often forget about others and end up disregarding their well-being.

Therefore, it’s an important reminder that at the end of the day, it’s not about the survival of the fittest, but the measure of an individual’s worth by the act of helping others reach their potential.

5. The Avocado of Autonomy

Being a young person with a strong and positive belief system that is unsustainable shows great level of maturity in thinking. This does not mean that you are close-minded or stubborn.

On the contrary, it’s about being open-minded, yet having the ability to stand firm on your beliefs.

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

WHERE DO YOU GO FROM HERE?

1. Discover yourself
   - “Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power.” — Lao Tzu

   How well do you know yourself?
   Have you come to terms with who you really are? Do you recognise your talents and potential? What about your strengths and weaknesses?

   Self-awareness is an important journey everyone must undertake to envision himself or herself in the marketplace. And, it is often the most overlooked one.

   There is a variety of personality assessment tests out there to help you discover yourself, such as MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator), DISC (Dominance, Inducement, Submission and Compliance), and Gallup’s StrengthFinder 2.0 personality tests. In a Forbes article titled “Stop Worrying About Your Weaknesses. Focus On Your Strengths”, we stand greater chance of success if we build upon our authentic selves, i.e. who we already are, starting with our innate strengths.

   Thus, aligning your unique personality with your spoken or unspoken dream is vital to ensure you do not lose sight of your projected career path just because everyone else is heading towards a certain direction in their career.

2. Gaining exposure
   - Once you have discovered yourself, the next step is to work towards your envisioned career. At this stage, you would need to “get your hands dirty”.

   For example, if you see yourself as a comic artist, start arming yourself with story boards and doodle away! You may want to join a comic artist club in your school to share ideas and art works. Perhaps you can consider starting your own blog and make yourself “visible” in the comic art space.

   By networking and connecting with people of similar interests, you gain wider exposure and experience. Be ready to make mistakes but ensure that you learn from them and not give up.

   Also, always be open to seeking feedback from the people you look up to. By doing so, it helps to anchor your personal development in that present time and professional development in the near future.

   If you are still at the crossroads of your career path when you are already in college or university, fret not. Continue to discover yourself and be involved in various activities such as TalentCorp’s Sector Focused Career Fair.

   Seize every opportunity available during your campus life to improve your soft skills such as communication skills, critical thinking skills and analytical skills.

   In other words, activate the smart path in you because these will propel you further once you enter the workforce.

3. Equipping yourself
   - The path towards your envisioned career does not end after discovering your strengths and gaining more exposure. It needs to be complemented by equipping yourself with proper skills needed for the prospective job.

   This is the stage where you unlock the book smart in you by getting the proper paper qualifications. In the example of the comic artist wannabe, you might want to enroll in an illustration course with an art college to refine your drawing, colouring and lettering techniques.

   Of course, this is not to say that the previous two stages are mutually exclusive from this one. Far from that.

   In fact, they are interconnected with one another (see diagram).

   As you acquire formal education in the course you enrolled in, you might discover new skills you never knew about. At this stage, you may also continue to expose yourself to add to your skills. After all, learning never stops.

   CONCLUDING THOUGHTS
   Parents play an important role in helping their children discover themselves in school and activities. Of course, parents need to be mindful not to impose their own dream career on their children.

   For youths, continue to discover yourselves and envision your dream career so that you can start mapping, planning and working towards achieving your dreams by discovering, gaining exposure and equipping yourself.

   BOOK SMART
   > Analytical intelligence
   > Practical intelligence

   STREET SMART
   > Experiential intelligence
   > Environmental intelligence


   ‘By networking and connecting with people of similar interests, you gain wider exposure and experience. Be ready to make mistakes but ensure that you learn from them and not give up.’

   “Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power.” — Lao Tzu
had the opportunity to attend the Selangor Model United Nations (SMUN) early this month and it was an eye-opening experience, to say the least.

When I say “eye opening”, I am referring to the realisation that struck me – the disparity of opportunities available to youths between the Klang Valley and Penang, compared with other states.

My two biggest takeaways from SMUN are, firstly, that we should always seize good opportunities that arise, other than that, I learnt to never underestimate the value of starting young.

In case you don’t already know, Model United Nations (MUN) is a simulation of real life United Nations conferences, with students acting as “delegates” who represent various countries in various councils.

I represented Canada in the special summit on technology. Being a university student, I was really surprised to find that a sizeable chunk of the members in my council consisted of 13-year-old students.

I observed how they developed as MUN rookies on day one, into the well-informed and articulate individuals we were on day three.

Another highlight at SMUN was the roundtable with Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah (National Unity Consultative Council Law and Policy committee member), in which he engaged with the youth regarding national unity.

REFLECTIONS

It was then that I realised how fortunate these students were to have opportunities such as MUN in the Klang Valley (and Penang), and it made me a little sad about the lack of opportunities back home in Sarawak and other states.

Growing up, I was blessed to have the resources to fly around to participate in various competitions. Oftentimes, when I returned home, I would see myself edging over my peers in terms of experience and growth.

It made me wish that we had the same opportunities so that everyone else could grow, too. It would have made a world of difference if everyone could seize more opportunities.

For starters, MUN is a great platform to develop leadership skills, even more so when one starts young.

Imagine yourself as an ambassador of a country, determining its direction in the world on specific issues, ranging from nuclear disarmament to women empowerment.

You learn to walk in another (country’s) person’s shoes, harnessing the power of perspectives.

Seeing 13-year-old students in MUN debating policy caused me to ask myself: if someone can be this well-informed and well-exposed at that age, can you imagine how far they will go when they are 17?

Think of their growth, and all the impactful things they will be doing when they enter the workforce!

RECOMMENDATIONS

If you haven’t attended a MUN, I encourage you to go for it! It’s definitely an enriching experience.

If you’re not well-versed in foreign policy, worry not, as they provide delegates with starter kits to assist in the research. You will definitely grow, and most of all, you would have fun!

Cassandra is a Gen Y-er who believes “one should never underestimate the value of perspectives.”

I connected with other delegates with starter kits to assist in the research. You will definitely grow, and most of all, you would have fun!

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Governors started the first day with a bang (literally, the opening speaker got to hit the gavel).

Representing the South Korea in my committee, the World’s Conference on Women, I connected with other delegates to come up with a resolution to solve or improve a certain topic.

In my group, we issued a resolution for women empowerment.

We spent the rest of the conference collectively reviewing the submitted resolutions and discussing them.

We did this through debating to break and finalise our submitted resolutions. Although I only spent three days in SMUN, I have learnt more than I expected from it.

Here are three lessons that have impacted me most:

1. Expand your thinking

The discussions that went on in my committee room have definitely taught me to think on a more macro level, as well as develop a deeper appreciation for the UN delegates who are passionate about making our world a better place.

I was also further reminded that we cannot always zoom in on our country and its problems, but to consider other countries as well.

2. Jump out of your comfort zone

Although I was initially intimidated by everyone’s experience with MUN, the skills that I developed by the end of it were a pleasant surprise.

I never imagined that I would be able to improve my public speaking and confidence in such a short period of time.

As I reflected on the three-day conference, I’m thankful that I dived straight into an unfamiliar event despite my fear of the uncertainty that it brought.

Nevertheless, I came out of it with a “growth spurt” of sorts, and I undoubtedly do not regret it.

3. Do not underestimate your youth

SMUN proves just how intelligent and skilled the rising Generation Z is.

From being able to think on their feet, to knowing about the news of the world around them, the capability of our youth is greater than we think.

As parents, teachers, mentors and friends – let us help our community and society by building them up together.

Overall, these valuable lessons have taught me to be a better citizen of the world. It is our responsibility as future leaders to be kept informed about the events occurring around us, and contribute accordingly to the needs that arise from it.

Sarah looks forward to attending more MUN conferences in the future, and hopes that her schedule permits her to do so. You can contact her at sarah.tan@leaderonomics.com. Find out about more upcoming MUN conferences at https://www.facebook.com/groups/429515553765208/?
A SPARK OF MAGIC
LET PASSION DRIVE YOUR LIFE’S DIRECTION

By LIM LAY HSUAN
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WHETHER you are a child or an adult, I can safely conclude that magic never fails to awe. At the end of every magic show, we are most likely to ask each other, “How did he/she do that?”

Meet Zlwin Chew, who has successfully carved his name as an accomplished magician and mentalist, as he shares with us his humble magical journey from the local to international scene.

MEET THE MENTALIST
“A magician is generally someone who performs unbelievable feats. A mentalist is a magician who does mind magic such as thought control and mind-reading whereas an illusionist is one who does tricks with props to deceive the eye,” explained Chew when asked about the difference between the various terms used.

“No, I don’t read minds. I only use psychological subtleties and suggestions to get information I want from your audience,” quipped Chew, who has a background in psychology.

“My job scope as a mentalist is simple – to entertain people with sheer fun and enjoy myself while performing. I aim to suspend my audience’s belief, capture their imagination and lead them into a world whereby the impossible becomes possible,” said Chew.

When asked what a typical day is like as a mentalist, he described, “If I do not have a show, I will be busy scheduling meetings with potential clients to discuss new shows and magic projects.”

Being a mentalist, Chew’s stage repertoire showcases a mentalism show whereby he is able to correctly guess a random word a spectator is thinking of, impossibly bend metal and effortlessly break light bulbs by staring at them.

A LEAP OF FAITH
“At the young age of 18, I was shown very unforgettable card magic by a friend. I was left greatly fascinated. From that point on, I knew I wanted to perform magic for people. “Of course, I didn’t think that I’d end up with a career in magic. I guess I was just a young magician without professional experience,” said Chew.

When asked how he started his journey as a mentalist, Chew said, “I did my research, joined a magician’s club and learnt from YouTube.”

“I knew that performing magic at clubs was a common thing abroad, but it was something new in Malaysia. So, I took a radical step by sending out emails to 20-odd clubs in Malaysia, requesting a job as a magician. I was left greatly flabbergasted. From that point on, I knew I wanted to perform magic for people.”

In those years, he lived like a pauper. “When I started working there as their resident magician, people dared to believe in me. Thus, I started working for free or charging a minimal fee. Chew could have given up that day after being told in front of the club members he was not good enough, but he journeyed on. From his stint at Zouk, he learnt much from his mistakes and continued to improve his tricks.”

OPEN DOORS AND BREAKTHROUGHS
Along Chew’s journey to where he is today, he had to face many rejections but persevered through it all.

In his inspiring TEDxINTIIU talk in 2013, he spoke of a time when he had to leave a magician’s club, a club where he had bonded very closely with its members after learning and sharing the magic trade with each other.

The president of the club thought Chew was never good enough as a magician, even after he landed himself as one with Zouk.

This worked for me personally, though, and it was the only club which responded and invited me. From that point on, I knew I wanted to perform magic for people.”

“Zouk Club KL (Kuala Lumpur) was the only club he was good enough, but it was something new in Malaysia. So, I took a radical step by sending out emails to 20-odd clubs in Malaysia, requesting a job as a magician. I was left greatly flabbergasted. From that point on, I knew I wanted to perform magic for people.”

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BE MINDFUL THAT IN THIS LINE OF WORK, YOU CANNOT SIT AND WAIT FOR GOOD FORTUNE TO KNOCK ON YOUR DOOR. YOU WILL NEED TO BE PROACTIVE TO HUNT FOR OPPORTUNITIES OUT THERE.

To add another feather in his cap, Chew has even been acknowledged on his Twitter account by David Copperfield, the legendary master magician himself.

Chew was also one of the speakers in the Career Talk Series organised by Student Engagement Centre, a national platform that aims to connect Malaysian personalities who are living their passion and have achieved local or international recognition, to inspire students to excel beyond their academic responsibilities.

Early this year, Chew was invited by Intel Malaysia to address their internal staff to share his passion, journey, dreams and success.

WIZARD’S WISE WORDS
“Be mindful that in this line of work, you cannot sit and wait for good fortune to knock on your door. You will need to be proactive to hunt for opportunities out there. “For those who are interested in becoming a magician, be ready to rise and fall. Be bold and creative. Make room for failure, but allow yourself to be helped. Grow wings, leave the nest of comfort and be willing to take calculated risks,” said Chew.

“Most importantly, don’t put money above your passion. I always believe that if you pursue your passion wholeheartedly and sincerely, money will eventually come. And, of course, never give up!” concluded Chew, citing his faith, family and loved ones as his pillars of strength.

Lay Hsuan concurs that for “magical” moments of success to happen in life, it takes a lot of sacrifices, hard work and perseverance. Most importantly, it begins with that first step of courage. If you have similar stories such as Chew’s, share them with us at editor@leaderonomics.com
MY DIODE STORY
WE SPOKE TO SOME OF OUR PREVIOUS CAMPERS AND ASKED THEM TO SHARE THEIR DIODE EXPERIENCES

NAME: Naqwa Ramziyah
CAMP: YC
V/ Advanced Leadership Camp (ALC)

What is the one most valuable thing that you have learnt from DIODE?

A: One of the most valuable things that I learnt from DIODE was to accept myself for who I am, as we are all different and unique.

How has DIODE prepared you to become a better leader?

I believe that DIODE has prepared me to be a better leader through various projects, workshops, and activities that have been provided during the camp. I feel that DIODE has taught me to be confident, open-minded, and kind.

NAME: Noor Farzana Fatimah
CAMP: YC
V/ Advanced Leadership Camp (ALC)

What is the one most valuable thing that you have learnt from DIODE?

A: The one thing that I truly learned from DIODE is being confident and not being afraid of new opportunities.

How did DIODE prepare you to become a better leader?

I believe that DIODE has prepared me to be a better leader through the various activities and workshops that were provided during the camp. DIODE helped me to become more confident in myself and my abilities.

NAME: Youth Sheikham
CAMP: YC in 2013

What is the one most valuable thing that you have learnt from DIODE?

A: One thing I have learnt from DIODE is how to be confident and how to be a better leader.

How has DIODE prepared you to become a better leader?

DIODE has prepared me for leadership through various workshops, activities, and projects that were provided during the camp. DIODE has taught me how to be confident and how to be a better leader.

NAME: Naqwa Ramziyah
CAMP: YC
V/ Advanced Leadership Camp (ALC)

MICRO INSPIRING MOMENTS
Fast forward to present day, after 20 DIODE Camps, I now work in Leadership, a social enterprise that aims to bring out the best in our youths, which I owe to the feeling of excitement the moment I step into a camp hall.

It was all down to the micro moments, the small interactions, conversations I’ve been a part of as being an enabler and the youngest judge for national public speaking competitions. DIODE things do live up to their name.

NAME: Shu Wen
CAMP: YC
V/ Advanced Leadership Camp (ALC)

How has DIODE prepared you to become a better leader?

DIODE has prepared me to become a better leader through various projects, activities, and workshops that were provided during the camp. DIODE has taught me how to be confident, open-minded, and kind.

NAME: Ashwin Singh Tohwa
CAMP: YC
V/ Advanced Leadership Camp (ALC)

What is the one most valuable thing that you have learnt from DIODE?

A: The one most valuable thing that I have learnt from DIODE is being confident and not being afraid of new opportunities.

How has DIODE prepared you to become a better leader?

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NAME: Yasir Osman

How an Event Changed my Life

By Yasir Osman
Email: your.osman@leaderonomics.com

SOMETIMEs, every once in a while, there are times that have a profound impact on the most important days of your life. The day you are born and the day you died are obviously the two. For me, the first was 23rd July, 1986 and the second, 20th June, 2009. The day I was introduced to DIODE camps. My name is Yasir and here is the story of how DIODE changed my life.

As a child, DIODE Camp is a series of camps dedicated to helping leaders through inspirational, fun, and experimental learning. For me, it was a place where I found out who you are, what you can do, and who you want to become.

It is a combination of micro and macro moments that reveal around four aspects – empowerment, relationship, community and inspiration. Before I enrolled myself at the age of 9 in 2009 for a two-day event, I always knew that I had worked with young people. I have always known that I wanted to make a difference in other people’s lives.

DIODE Camp gave me that opportunity and empowers me to do so in the most fun-filled way it opened the doors to me to be part of something special, and in return, myself learned to be a leader.

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SAFE REFUGE
A PLACE FOR THE FORGOTTEN

By JEREMY TAN
jeremy.tan@leaderonomics.com

CELEBRATING their second anniversary on Sept 3, Refuge For The Refugees is a non-profit organisation established by 20-year-olds Heidy Quah and Andrea Prisha.

“Looking back at the two years that have passed, it’s amazing how the organisation grew and how it’s still growing at a tremendous rate,” said Quah.

It all started in 2012 when Quah and Prisha started volunteering at refugee centres. They began teaching refugee children in Malaysia following a syllabus provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with the vision of helping them to be able to receive the education they need in order to go further in life.

After one day of volunteering, they were told by the headmaster of the school that it would soon be closing down due to a lack of financial resources for rent, materials and other expenses.

HEARTS OF COMPASSION

Quah and Prisha then realised that something had to be done, and did not rest until they were able to fight for the children in that school. With passion in their hearts, they decided to start a project that could raise awareness of the refugee situation in Malaysia, as well as raise financial support that they could bless the school with.

Because of their project, the school was able to cover rent for another three months. Inspired by it, Quah and Prisha thought to themselves, “Why stop here?”, and decided to continue to support the school.

Not wanting to continue with different projects but to register as a more permanent establishment, the young women started a non-governmental organisation (NGO) named after their first project, which is what we now know as Refuge For The Refugees.

Though the journey has been amazing, there were many obstacles. One of their biggest ones was the lack of support from others. Being only a small group, people often questioned the authenticity of their organisation, and whether it was worth investing in, as they thought that Refuge For The Refugees to be just a passing phase, a lucky event and being ‘away’ with the fairies.

Despite the difficult obstacles, the two of them continued to persevere and overcome challenges with each other’s help. Through every moment of doubt, they would remember that the organisation was not for them but for a greater purpose – something which would always help re-align themselves and focus on the organisation’s purpose.

THE GOOD WORK CONTINUES

Fast forward from 2012 to the present. Refuge For The Refugees now receives donations and support not only from many other organisations, but also friends who share their vision. With obstacles in the past already overcome, they now face new challenges ranging from a lack of manpower to difficulty in finding committed individuals with a long-term vision to work in the organisation.

Though it is a struggle, the women always count their blessings. Quoting Quah in our interview, “We used to write to people, but now people are writing to us.”

The women were also blessed to receive awards of recognition and were given amazing opportunities in the years 2013 and 2014; one of them being given the opportunity to represent Refuge For The Refugees in the World CSR Congress in India.

Quah addressed CEOs of companies as well as founders of different movements and organisations, and was the award recipient for the congress, despite being the youngest speaker.

A couple other awards they received were the Laureate Here For Good Award (2014) and Digi Wowww Most Inspiring Internet For Good Award (2013).

DREAMING ON

Quah and Prisha’s dream for the future is to one day have their own school with an international syllabus for the refugee students.

With a vision that extends further than their current organisation, they wish to ensure that refugees can also obtain academic qualifications.

To that end, Quah hopes to establish a self-sustained community including a shelter home for homeless refugees, in order to help them get back on their feet again and earn a living.

The two determined young women are even in the midst of designing their own education syllabus for the children.

If you are interested to be part of Refuge for the Refugees, you can always volunteer. There is a need for manpower in the area of teaching the kids and in the organisation’s logistics, such as conducting roadshows.

If you are too busy, you are welcome to help by donating to Refuge For The Refugees. Giving goes a long way especially to those who are in desperate need, so no amount is too small. Remember, every organisation will appreciate the extra support, and there is never too little to be done. Find your cause and help it to be impactful and effective.

“In the midst of designing their own education syllabus for the children...”

Jeremy is an aspiring geriatrician and missionary who loves his grandma very much. He hopes to one day travel all over Asia while making an impact in needy societies. Share your passion with him at jeremy.tan@leaderonomics.com

In conjunction with the second anniversary of Refuge For The Refugees, the organisation will be conducting roadshows at different areas to raise awareness and funds.

If you would like to find out more, check out these places:

- Damansara Jaya Residents & Owners Association (DROA) Community Hall
  1A, Jalan SS22/26, Damansara Jaya on Aug 16, 8.00am–12.00pm
- One Utama (next to Juice Works) Sept 12–14, 10.00am–10.00pm
- Bangsar Village (opposite/Facing Village Grocer) Sept 20–21, 10.00am–10.00pm

Every organisation will appreciate the extra support, and there is never too little to be done. Find your cause and help it to be impactful and effective.

- “The purpose of life is a life of purpose.”
  – Robert Byrne

They would remember that the organisation was not for them but for a greater purpose – something which would always help re-align themselves and focus on the organisation’s purpose.

In reply, she simply said that the best option would be to support your local organisations. Every organisation will appreciate the extra support, and there is never too little to be done. Find your cause and help it to be impactful and effective.
By HYMA PILLAY
hyma.pillay@leaderonomics.com

It’s so easy to let people get in our way and work on our own most times, but this can leave us drained in the end. When you surround yourself with individuals who share the same vision, you will be able to achieve great things as a team.

The editorial team of Leaderonomics is a good advocate for this. We all have our own columns and pages we are each responsible of, but we always find ways to help each other in any way we can.

That is because we all share the same goal, which is to provide first-class leadership material to our readers.

So let’s all be the Captain Americas of our teams and our organisations, whenever the opportunity arises for us to take the lead.

“Whatever happens tomorrow you must promise me one thing. That you will stay who you are. Not a perfect soldier, but a good man.” — Abraham Erskine

1 IF YOU TRULY BELIEVE IN SOMETHING, DON’T LET ANYTHING GET IN YOUR WAY OF ACHIEVING IT

The first Captain America movie was set around World War II. There, we are introduced to a young, small and timid Rogers. It was a time where all young men were eagerly signing up for the army. Rogers, who was very passionate about fighting for his country, also tried to sign up.

However, because of his small build, Rogers wasn’t able to pass the physical exam, therefore his application was rejected. Rogers didn’t let that get him down.

He persisted and tried every time he had the chance, and even though he kept getting rejected and laughed at, it didn’t stop him.

Rogers’ passion and heart for his country is finally recognised by Abraham Erskine who recruits him for the “super soldier” treatment – thus creating Captain America.

Col. Chester Phillips: Our goal is to create the greatest army in history.
Steve Rogers: I should be going with you. Look, I know you don’t think I can do this...
Bucky: This isn’t a back alley, Steve. It’s war!
Col. Chester Phillips: But every army begins with one man.

I believe this is something most of us resonate with. We all have passions and dreams we strive to achieve.

Take a minute and ask yourself, how many times have you let go of something because you were told you couldn’t do it? I am personally guilty of this.

It’s so easy to let people get in our way and our dreams. Let’s take it from the Captain as if you set yourself up to achieve something, persevere until it becomes reality.

The only person who can decide whether you can or cannot do something, is yourself.

2 STEP UP AND LEAD, WHEN THERE IS A NEED

In The Avengers, Captain America takes on the role to lead the Avengers in battle against Loki’s destructive army.

Rogers doesn’t focus on himself to get all the glory. He understands the dynamics of his team, understands each of them for their different strengths, and uses it to the team’s advantage.

He delegates and sends each of them to take care of different things. Even though it was getting overwhelming as they were largely outnumbered, he didn’t let it get in the way, and pushed through till the end.

“Your mission is your friend... You’re my mission... Then finish it... because I’m with you till the end of the line.”

Captain America: “Hulk, Smash!”

Whether you are working or studying, you will be placed with different teams consisting of different types of people, and there will be times when there is a need for someone to take the reins.

Don’t be afraid to step into the leader’s shoes. Understand your team, how they work, and be the “Captain America” of your team.

3 ALWAYS STAY TRUE TO YOUR BELIEFS AND PRINCIPALS

In the second movie, our Captain is placed in a difficult situation when he realises that the person he is fighting is his best friend, Bucky.

Even though Bucky didn’t recognise Rogers, and was still determined to kill him, Rogers stood his ground and chose not to go against his friend.

Steve Rogers: You’re my friend...
Bucky: You’re my mission!
Steve Rogers: Then finish it...

We find distractions and obstacles at almost every corner, and they lead us away from our destinations.

There are also many negative elements which can be discouraging and cause us to give up our beliefs and principals.

If what you believe in is something good, then you should never let go, no matter how tough it gets. That’s what keeps us true to ourselves.

4 SURROUND YOURSELF WITH PEOPLE WHO SHARE THE SAME VISION

From his human soldier’s team in the first movie, to his superhuman Avengers team, to Falcon and Black Widow in The Winter Soldier, Rogers always manages to seek help from people with the same aim and vision.

Even with his superhuman abilities, he knows that he would have a better chance of winning if he had help from trusted people.”

It’s easy to feel alone and work on our own most times, but this can leave us drained in the end. When you surround yourself with individuals who share the same vision, you will be able to achieve great things as a team.

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1. **INVENTION: OCEAN CLEANUP ARRAY**
   **INVENTOR:** Bayan Slat
   **AGE:** 19

   This 19-year-old genius designed a device to clean plastic trash from the ocean. Slat’s “Ocean Cleanup Array” combines long floating booms with processing platforms that can collect and separate trash.

2. **INVENTION: CATALYST WHICH TURNS PLASTIC WASTE INTO BIOFUEL**
   **INVENTOR:** Azza Abdel Hamid Faiad
   **AGE:** 18

   This brilliant 16-year-old from Egypt discovered that we could use a cheap catalyst to create biofuel worth millions each year. Egypt’s plastic consumption is estimated to total one million tonnes per year, so Azza’s proposal could transform the country’s economy, allowing it to make money from recycled plastic.

3. **INVENTION: SUPERCAPACITOR WHICH CHARGES MOBILE PHONES IN 20 SECONDS**
   **INVENTOR:** Edsia Khare
   **AGE:** 19

   This young lady from California managed to invent a brilliant device, a supercapacitor which charges your phone in 20 seconds. Her research won her prize money in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair.

4. **INVENTION: HEAT-GENERATED FLASHLIGHT**
   **INVENTOR:** Ann Makosinski
   **AGE:** 16

   When 16-year-old Ann Makosinski who loved inventing things learned about her friend in the Philippines who was having difficulties studying because of the lack of electricity and light at night, this young genius started picking her brain and invented a “hollow flashlight”. This flashlight does not require batteries, toxic chemicals, or kinetic energy runs. It simply runs off the warmth of hands.

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**FOR THE MAN WHO MADE US ALL LAUGH**

**REMEMBERING**

**EDITOR’S NOTE**

Our thoughts and prayers are with all who have left us sooner than they should have, young and old, before the world had a chance to fully embrace the gift of their lives.

**By HYMA PILLAY**

hyma.pillay@leaderonomics.com

**OUR HEARTS ARE DEEPLY SADDENED BY THE RECENT PASSING OF ACTOR ROBIN WILLIAMS.**

He was an amazing actor, an excellent entertainer, and a wonderful individual. He was one of my favourite actors. I grew up laughing with him.

Williams has brought so many wonderful memories and moments through movies like Mrs. Doubtfire, Jumanji, Flubber, Peter Pan, Dead Poets Society and many, many more! He definitely added sunshine to my childhood.

As a special tribute to the man who made us laugh, here are 10 quotes from him and his movies.

1. “You’re only given one little spark of madness. You mustn’t lose it.”
2. “There is still a lot to learn and there is always great stuff out there. Even mistakes can be wonderful.”
3. “When you have a great audience, you can just keep going and finding new things.”
4. “No matter what people tell you, words and ideas can change the world.” – from the movie Dead Poets Society
5. “You will have bad times, but they will always wake you up to the stuff you weren’t paying attention to.” – from the movie Good Will Hunting
6. “What’s right is what’s left if you do everything else wrong.”
7. “You treat a disease, you win, you lose. You treat a person, I’ll guarantee you’ll win.”
   – from the movie Patch Adams
8. “Carpe diem, seize the day boys, make your lives extraordinary!” – from the movie Dead Poets Society
9. “Real loss is possible only when you love something more than you love yourself.”
   – from the movie Good Will Hunting
10. “There’s a time for daring, and there’s a time for caution, and a wise man understands which is called for.” – from the movie Dead Poets Society
HOPE PREVAILS
ALL IS NOT LOST

WHAT’S AFTER SPM?

By ADILA KHAIUL ANUAR

M OST stories are focused on heroes. Heroes have it all. They’re brave, smart, kind and beautiful. Great and wonderful things happen to them. But of little mention in these stories are the side characters. There is the gardener, the servant, the little girl, etc. They too complete the story.

In the metaphorical theatre of a high school drama, I would be Student No. 5. She sits at the back, frequently sleeping. She talks like a dreamer and reads storybooks hidden under the desk. She hangs out with Anita, the artsy brash one, and Student No. 22. So what happens to her when the play ends? Does she end up doing anything? Does she go overseas? Does she disappear into a puff of smoke? (Who cares what happens to Student No. 5 anyway?) In reality, Student No. 5 never thinks of him or herself as the main character. Everyone is entitled to their own story. And everyone has his or her own ambitions.

MY STORY

I, like any modern girl, wanted to be more. I wanted to study at an Ivy League school. I wanted to do great things. I was going to be someone brilliant. But at the time, SPM (Malaysian high school exams Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia) was miles away and I was content with just being the quiet girl who read books. Idleness became a habit as I thought the future could always be determined later. It did not help that I liked a lot of things. Nothing seemed disagreeable then.

Above all, I wanted to be able to read all day, for I thought that books were beautiful (and still do). Thus, I knew that my heart’s deepest desire was to do English. However, I had to consider parental advice. They wanted the best for me and desired that I become a doctor or something that would pay well.

Since I liked physics and science, I thought I would at least make an effort for their sake. Time flew by and when SPM arrived, I became frantic. I had not pushed myself hard enough and was not ready for the challenges ahead. I received mediocre results and before I realised it, the time had come to apply for colleges. Life at that time was depressing. My family earned a moderate income and there was no way I could have gone overseas without a scholarship.

I only had my dreams, and even those seemed to be crumbling before my very eyes.

I did try my best, but by then it was already too late. Perhaps I had not tried hard enough.

STUCK IN HOME COUNTRY?

The best option I had was to get into the foundation programme in Universiti Malaya. And so I did – after all, you reap what you sow. I slowly began to accept where I was and the path I had taken, although I still watched enviously as my friends flew off, one by one, to other countries and other adventures that I could only dream of.

ADILA TODAY...

As I was writing this, four years ago, I still had hope within me. I knew that if I just worked hard enough, I would be able to succeed as well. The lesson was to know what you want at an early stage and work at it. On a side note, the experience garnered from studying locally is definitely different from what you would get overseas.

There are some wonderful things here that you will never get elsewhere, like good Malaysian food, a trip back home every weekend, and the warm sunshine. Ultimately, it does not matter where you are. Your potential to be great is and always will be there. Success does not come easy and there is no use waiting until the last moment only to end up with regrets. For my short tale did not end there – indeed, it had only just begun.

Opportunities are what you make of a situation. I’m not sure who I would have been if I studied elsewhere, but I like who I am now. Despite the drawbacks of local university life, I’m still better than I would have been without it.

One of the biggest influences in my career is my internship at Microsoft. It felt like someone had given me a chance, for the first time, and believed that I could be great. I’ve kept that with me. I have high expectations for myself. And that pushes me not to cover when I confront the falls and tough situations. I will still make something of myself, despite the bad days.

People don’t live in personal bubbles. Even if they want to (I’m talking to you introverts). Some of the people I admire most are my friends.

Not only are they fun to be around but they’re also my support group, i.e just someone to listen and offer advice, if not offer to help out right. And when we work together, we can accomplish so much more.

My friends are also smart and ambitious people in their own right. When they aim high, I think about where I want to land myself. And when they work hard, I am motivated to work just as hard.

It’s as if we are building our individual dreams together. I’m also proud to say my friends are multi-cultural. I start to understand, bit by bit, why people of different races are the way they are.

I think I’m living the Malaysian dream. I’ve graduated and I’m currently working in Avanade as an analyst (which is the baby step towards becoming a consultant). It sounds boring unless you like getting your hands (figuratively) dirty in technology and making significant changes to big companies.

I’ve tried lots of strange things – theatre, chocolate avocado milk-shakes, water balloon fights, design thinking workshops and the like.

I’ve only started traveling around the region. I’ve been to Indonesia, the Philippines, and to Malaysia over the sea – Sabah! And I am looking forward to doing more of all that.

Adila Khairul Anuar is an aspiring technology consultant with an itch for the arts (and by art, she means writing, sketching and photography). She is also a regular haunter of coffee shops despite not really being a fan of coffee (you can always talk to her about books). Email her at editor@leaderonomics.com
In HR Talk, we pick one human resources (HR) related topic each week, and gather a few HR experts to share their opinions on it. If you have any questions about the HR industry, send them to us at editor@leaderonomics.com and we will get our panel of experts to answer them.

TOPIC OF THE WEEK

There has been much focus on Gen-Ys recently. They have been generally labelled as unproductive at work, too demanding, and lazy. What is your take on the Gen-Y of Malaysia, and what advice would you give them?

LILY LAU
CEO - Culture Dynamics DCI (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd
Trainer, speaker, facilitator, consultant

Typically, these are common complaints in many organisations regarding Gen-Y senior management and bosses often find them not as productive as others, and some do not meet their expectations. Why are Gen-Ys so different? Why are they getting so much attention? I remember when I started work as a junior during my time. I had my own expectations and hope. I wanted to prove my capability and be successful. I liked it when I was praised for doing well. I learnt when I was corrected for making mistakes.

Thankfully, I have never made serious mistakes; only those that were big enough to nurture and strengthen my character. I don’t think I was much different then compared to the Gen-Y’s now. However, why are they labelled in such a way and why do they need to be treated differently?

Looking back, I believe all generations have the same vital instinct. All humans want to be successful. As values evolve due to varied upbringing, education and technology, the expectation of how things are evaluated are not the same anymore. Let’s take success and how it is measured in our Malaysian society.

Twenty years ago, a successful person would have wanted to have his/her office to be well-furnished, with trophies and certificates displayed on a shelf, a library of books, and a cabinet of files arranged neatly. Our Gen-Y will probably despise this fashion as their image of success may instead be someone who is able to dress casually to work, not confined to staying at the office, and has the flexibility to work anytime and anywhere.

They may be admired by the latest gadgets they carry and by their posts on social media. In brief, the values of each generation are different and cannot be compared. The characteristics and personality traits of the majority of Gen-Y are due to the Baby Boomers and Gen-X parents who just wanted to give the best to their children. The parents “taught” them to be expressive, and may have over-protected them in their formative years. Some may have even crafted their own path of success. You are as smart, if not smarter, and more capable. I believe in you, Gen-Ys!

Take it, do it and apply it in our current tech-savvy times to find your own path of success. You are as smart, if not smarter, and more capable. I believe in you, Gen-Ys!

Another realisation that we had was on how important feedback is (though of course not making the same mistake twice). We created an environment where they could speak their mind, pull resources together and have no fear of making mistakes (though of course not making the same mistake twice). Another realisation that we had was on how important feedback is to them. The Gen-Ys appreciated knowing how they did, and how their involvement impacted their roles and the organisation. They also wanted to know how these translated to their rewards and recognition.

I hope by now you have some ideas on how organisations can leverage on their traits to drive the growth of the business. What we experienced when we applied these ‘formula’ was a good traction of enthusiasm and involvement from them.

The feedback that we got from them on an employee engagement survey also indicated to us that we should continue with the environment that we had, and allow them to be part of driving business initiatives. Gen-Y can bring much more positivity to organisations.

SURIAHNI ABDUL HAMID
HR advisor for Industry Partnerships division TalentCorp

The topic of Gen-Y has been on a hike for a few years. A lot has been said and written about them – their attributes, the positives, and the challenges that Gen-Y has posed to organisations.

The question is, now that we have a much better understanding of their traits, what can organisations do to leverage on them and maximise productivity?

Let me touch on a couple of areas where organisations can achieve this. I recall a time when I was working with organisations.

Because nearly half of their employees were Gen-Y workers, we had to pay more attention to employee engagement for those organisations. One thing that we realised was that when we start to involve them in initiatives that demand their thoughts and creativity in providing solutions to business issues, they were geared to give their best.

We gave them the space to explore and experiment new ideas on how we can do better in our business. We created an environment where they could speak their mind, pull resources together and have no fear of making mistakes (though of course not making the same mistake twice). Another realisation that we had was on how important feedback is to them. The Gen-Ys appreciated knowing how they did, and how their involvement impacted their roles and the organisation.

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