PREDICTING THE FUTURE
A HARD LOOK AT GRAYING POPULATIONS
PAGES 6-7
THE JOURNEY

There was a social experiment floating around the interweb whereby the researcher had dressed individuals as homeless people and positioned them on street corners along the path their own friends and family would regularly take. Majority of their loved ones just walked past even though, had they taken a minute to look, they would have recognised them immediately.

It made me sad – and I wondered if I have, on occasion, blinked myself to those right in front of me. This week, we focus on the graying population in Asia.

Like Prof Khairuddin Yusof, who takes issue with the label “ageing”, I believe that a retirement age is an arbitrary cut-off and that a person’s value really should not be tied purely to how much he/she contributes to a country’s national income. Prof talks about how the “lines in the sand” drawn by societal conventions should not hold us back regardless of where we are in our lives or careers.

In trying to see where I will be in my golden years, it has been important to be able to clarify my guiding principles and to live them every day. In Be A Leader, I share some great insights I have learnt along the way.

Raymond Phoon presents the trends and implications of a graying population, and proposes strategies to mitigate the projected challenges – from the point of view of organisations, leaders and employees.

Our guest on The Leaderonomics Show this week is Chris Ernst, a researcher, author and senior faculty member of Centre for Creative Leadership. Ernst talks about what it means to span boundaries, and how we should go about working effectively across boundaries.

We also had the opportunity to connect with the senior leaders at Tisander Investment Bhd on their commitment to and plans for talent development.

In her debut article, Adeline Tay debunks the oft shared myth that we only use 10% of our brains. A good read, with brain-boosting tips to boot.

In starting Young, Hyma Pillay announces SPARK, an exciting new initiative born from the partnership of three organisations intent on building leaders, through an innovative leadership programme for youth from across our country.

The last article is a first for Lim Lay Huan, who expertly brings to light the deeper meaning of the simultaneously sad and upliftOfTypeing movie Up, in our column Movie Wisdom – sharing the journey of discovery with the unlikely trio of an elderly gentleman, a young wilderness explorer and a golden retriever.

On how we should live our lives and stay connected with our families old and young, I think we have heard it all. This weekend, let’s just savour the moments and remind everyone just how special they are.

Have a fantastic weekend!

KAREN NEOH
Editor
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A SILVER LINING IN THE GRAY CLOUDS

By LIM LAY HSUAN
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ADMIT it. At the sign of gray strands of hair, most of us will freak out. Yes, we can try to hide physical signs of ageing as much as we can, but the fact remains that we cannot really fight this natural process.

On a serious note, the global ageing workforce phenomenon is one of the many challenges organisations are facing now, as a result of mass exodus of Baby Boomers when they retire from the workforce.

In “The Economist”, an article entitled “A Billion Shades of Grey” reported that over the next 20 years, the global population of those aged 65 and above will almost double, from 600 million to 1.1 billion. Despite the ageing trend and increasing signs of socio-economic impact on different countries and industries worldwide, how are we responding to this trend?

‘RETIRING’ RETIREMENT

In my humble opinion, as long as an individual is healthy enough to contribute to the country’s economy way beyond his/her retirement years, we really should encourage these mature workers to remain in the paid workforce.

After all, studies have shown that working until 65 and beyond can possibly delay the onset of dementia and Alzheimer’s disease. The reason being that work keeps people physically active, mentally stimulated and socially connected.

As such, perhaps organisations should look beyond their physical signs of ageing and start looking up to them for their many WISE ways in the marketplace – Wisdom, Insights, Skills and Experience.

In particular, a greater focus on coaching and mentoring involving these mature workers can help an organisation bridge critical knowledge and talent gaps, while providing younger workers with valuable insights that can accelerate their careers.

At the same time, it is also vital for organisations to continue to provide opportunities and training for mature workers to keep them engaged and diversify their skills.

THE GOLDEN YEARS

On the home front, I guess more needs to be done to accommodate the graying workforce. The Government ought to have the political will to consider enacting the “Silver Collar” employment legislation, as shared by Carol Yip, founder of Abacus for Money.

According to Yip, this re-employment legislation for retired people is meant to provide appropriate guidelines and regulate employers who want to employ retired persons for different kinds of industries. Meanwhile, employers must be ready to make substantial changes to workplace and human resources policies.

As we cannot fight the ageing process, all we can do is embrace global agerism boldly and start making conscious effort to embark on this journey together. Till then, here is a song excerpt by Fleetwood Mac, called Landslide, which randomly popped into my head while writing this:

“... But time makes you bolder, even children get older, I’m getting older too...”
A PURPOSE-DRIVEN LIFE

5 VALUES TO LIVE BY

By KAREN NEOH

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I have to admit that when I was younger, I couldn’t imagine what I would be doing in my golden years. In a way, I’m very fortunate to have discovered my purpose in life very early on. However, it has taken a bit longer figuring out exactly how I would achieve it — still learning and discovering every day.

I can attribute it only to divine intervention that I have found at least two organisations with values that mirror the principles that guide my path and allow me to remain true to my life purpose.

Today, I would like to delve into everyday people, and heroes of today who have shown me how to live by these five principles:

1. EMPowering

Bona fide heroes Datuk Dr Kim Tan of Springhill Management Ltd (UK), Professor William Hsiao of the Harvard School of Public Health and Professor Datuk Dr Khaireuddin Yusof of our page five fame (do check out his story) all have one thing in common. They have shared their knowledge, experiences and visions with such zeal that it didn’t matter that we mere mortals in their presence were decades younger.

We were swept up in their ideas and in the dream that each one of us could make a real difference in this world.

Dr Kim mobilises captains of industry like himself to use their skills and business acumen to form viable and impactful social enterprises in all corners of the globe.

Being a health economist, Prof Hsiao transforms healthcare delivery systems — having an impact on millions of lives worldwide.

And Prof Khaireuddin’s love of life and people has remained undiminished in the past 13 years I have known him.

Takeaway: Over the years, I have worked on this aspect — trying to dial back the tendency to micro-manage, equipping people with the tools they need in order to accomplish what they need to, and letting go so they can fly solo.

Like my heroes, I think the last impression I want to leave is to ignite that drive to keep pushing the events of the day.

2. CONNECTing

My biggest hero, a senior leader in an American conglomerate who counts among the few to have everyone — from driver, factory worker, union leader to the senior leadership team — pay their last respects on the day he left us, and purveyor of warm smiles, Mr PA always said, “If you want to help people, don’t have to wait till you’re older or have finished your studies.”

Like my heroes, he knew (possibly before I did), that all I wanted to do in life was to help people who needed support. Here was a man who could connect with anybody, and in any space of time.

You could always see the expression on a waiter, or petrol pump attendant change from trepidation, “Oh dear, is he going to complain?”, to relief and happiness that someone recognised their work, their presence and was genuinely interested in knowing how their day had been.

We can all be sitting in the same office, even sharing the same corporate culture — but every day we can learn from our colleagues.

At Leaderonomics, even though I have been an animal lover all my life, I learn pretty bizarre things from my friend Millie — who can look at a bug or mole rat — and find a leadership lesson.

Takeaway: This point is related to the next — the act of connecting with people can be in itself exhilarating, but every single interaction is an opportunity to learn.

It calls to mind that movie Taxi Driver made me think about the events of the day.

3. GROWTH

To illustrate a point, another leader I have worked with in the past was somewhat less open to learning than my heroes above.

Haying taken on a business he was unfamiliar with, he ruled it the same way he had ruled the core business.

As successful as it was, the core business was built on a vastly different environment or in your community, you can play a part in moulding the future.

We can build young leaders by sharing our own folly in our younger days, and steering them on a path to building a just, free and caring world.

Karen Neoh is bombarded with ideas and plans every day (mostly from herself!), and retreats to the solace of a swimming pool to think things through... only to get distracted with more ideas. To connect, just email her at karen.neoh@leaderonomics.com and for more leadership content, do visit www.leaderonomics.com
WE ONLY USE 10% OF OUR BRAIN – NOT!

EXPOSING THE MYTH

THEORY NO. 1: A GAME OF CHINESE WHISPERS
In the early 20th century, American philosopher and psychologist William James wrote The Energies of Men. In that book, resides the following statement which some claimed to be the origin of the 10% brain myth.

“We are making use of only a small part of our possible mental and physical resources.” (p. 12).

James was optimistic that people could achieve more, but he was not referring to brain volume or quantity of cells, nor does he give a specific percentage.

This statement has been misinterpreted and has more or less formed the basis for the myth. Lowell Thomas later popularised the 10% figure in a foreword to the 1936 edition of Dale Carnegie’s How to Win Friends and Influence People, which made the following statement:

“Professor William James of Harvard used to say that the average man develops only 10% of his latent mental ability.”

In summary, both found that there were large areas of the brain which were “inactive”. These “inactive” areas of the brain were coined as the “silent cortex”. Fortunately, today’s research in neuroscience is much more advanced and we have a much better understanding of our brains as compared to those times.

Brain imaging scans clearly show that almost all regions of the brain are active during even fairly routine tasks such as talking, walking, and listening to music.

It was found that there is not a single area of the brain that can be damaged without resulting in some sort of consequence.

Furthermore, brain-mapping research has yet to find any region of the brain that does not serve a function, and detailed probing of the brain has failed to identify the “inactive” 90%.

THEORY NO. 2: THE SILENT CORTEX
Another contributor for the 10% myth dates back to the early days of neuroscience research.

Though there were a number of early studies which contributed to the myth, two of the more prominent and popularised studies were conducted by Karl Lashley and Wilder Penfield in the 1920s and 1930s. Behaviourist psychologist Lashley attempted an experiment in which he trained rats to run a maze as he chopped away increasing amounts of their cortex.

Penfield, a pioneering neurosurgeon, probed the brains of his patients with an electrode while operating on them for epilepsy.

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THEORY NO. 3: I WANT PSYCHIC POWERS!
Some New Age proponents promoted the 10% myth by asserting that the “unused” 90% of the human brain is capable of exhibiting psychic powers and can be trained to perform psycho-kinesis and extra-sensory perception.

This notion of gaining extraor- dinary powers is so alluring that the entertainment industry is milking it for all its worth.

To be sure, the lure of the possi- bility that you might have psy- chic powers is tempting indeed. I mean, how cool would it be to be able to read minds and control objects like Professor Xavier of X-Men?

Unfortunately, for those who fantasise about manipulating objects with their minds, there is no scientifically verified body of evidence supporting the exist- ence of such powers.

By ADeline Tay
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“OUR MINDS are capable of remarkable, incredible feats, yet we don’t use them to their full capacity. In fact, most of us only use about 10% of our brains, if that.

The other 90% is full of untapped potential and undiscovered abilities, which means our minds are only operating in a very limited way instead of at full stretch.

I believe that we once had full power over our minds. We had to, in order to survive, but as our world has become more sophisticated and complex we have forgotten many of the abilities we once had.”

The above statement has the power to ignite something within us: the desire to achieve more. It makes us realise how little of our brain we are “using”, and how if we can tap into the 90% of our brain where our “undiscovered abilities” are, we could achieve much more than what we can now.

I am sure that at some point in your life, you have come across the “70% brain myth” – either from a peer, parent, movie, or your own teacher. According to Richard Cytowic, an American neurologist, two-thirds of the public and nearly half of science teachers mistakenly believe the 10% myth.

Well-intentioned people such as motivational speakers often cite the 10% myth as a way to demonstrate that all people should strive to live up to their full potential.

Meanwhile, others have used the myth to promote and sell products and services that they claim will unlock the brain’s hidden abilities. Regardless of the motive, it remains a fact that the claim is false.

So who started this myth and if this is a true false statement, why has it prevailed over the ages?

Adeline is part of the Learning and Development team as well as the Campus team in Leaderonomics. To engage with her, email editor@leaderonomics.com. For more brain bulletins, articles, visit www.leaderonomics.com

BASIC BRAIN-BOOSTING TIPS – FOR REAL!

1. EXERCISE REGULARLY
It’s time to get up from your chair/bed and move your body! Physical exercise is not only important for your body’s health, it also helps your brain to stay sharp.

Physical exercise increases oxygen to your brain, reduces the risk for disorders that lead to memory loss, and has shown to have positive benefits for the hippocampus (i.e. a brain structure that is important for learning and memory).

According to a study conducted by the Department of Exercise Science at the University of Georgia, even briefly exercising for 20 minutes facilitates information processing and memory functions.

2. SLEEP WELL
I cannot stress this enough: Sleep is critical for our brains as it is during this time that our memories are consolidated.

Studies have shown that people who don’t sleep enough have more trouble learning new information, while sleeping well after learning something new helps the brain effectively put that information into long-term memory.

Though sleep requirements vary slightly from person to person, most healthy adults need between 7½ and nine hours of sleep per night to function at their best.

3. EAT RIGHT
It’s amazing what a healthy diet can do for you. There are a number of foods that contain nutrients which promote a healthy and active brain.

Some examples include blueberries, cruciferous vegetables and dark leafy greens, fatty fish, nuts and seeds, wine, avocado, and my personal favorite, dark chocolates.

If you truly want to boost your brainpower, forget about all those “brain games” for now and start by focusing on achieving the following basics first.
MIND OVER MATTER

THE SECRETS TO GRACEFUL ‘AGEING’

By SARAH TAN
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LAST week, I had the opportunity to interview Professor Datuk Dr Khairuddin Yusof, whom we in the editorial team affectionately call Prof. An intelligent man and one of the youngest people I know, he’s very much full of life. I recall how my first time meeting him ended up with the whole team dancing and singing in his house!

Prof comes from a professional background in obstetrics and gynaecology. Apart from that, he has also done research in various subjects and has wide corporate experience.

After having lunch and chatting with his lovely wife and brother, we got down to business and started the interview. Prof openly shared with us about his life, his family, and even read a few excerpts from his book, Aging: A Beautiful Journey, aloud to us.

PREPARATION
Sharing on how to prepare for a journey towards retirement, Prof mentioned that there are two sides to the potential problems that it may cause.

Looking at retirement practically, there is a hard side, in which financial issues may occur, and something we need to prepare ourselves for.

At the same time, on the personal side, there is the factor of the human body and, in his words, “the poverty of the flesh”.

Nevertheless, in Prof’s eyes, the ageing process is nonsensical — saying that people should no longer be working or active and healthy past a certain age is limiting, and sets boundaries to the things that we can do.

Agreeing, our editor phrased it aptly: “it’s a self-fulfilling prophecy”.

COUNTERING THE ‘PROPHECY’

So how do we counter this “prophecy”? Also sharing his life principles with us, he spoke about how he dealt with the passing of his first wife, whom he lost to breast cancer.

“I said to myself, you know, I can’t deal with this depression this way. I’m going to deal with this by turning all the negative energy into something positive.

So, how could I use this energy as something positive? Easy. In the 1970s, I just put on my shoes — my leather shoes! — and I ran. Five km. And every day I kept on running, until the depression started to become more controllable, you know?

“And then, after that, of course, I bought new shoes,” he joked.

With having a strong belief in turning negative energy into positive energy, it was easy to see that Prof had “mastered” the term mind over matter.

Apart from emotional situations, this can also be applied to physical fitness and ability. Using it in a different context, “age is but a number.”

TRANSLATING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION
Unlike many people, and even some doctors, Prof ensures that his knowledge translates into action.

Bad habits such as smoking and a lack of exercise are not even considered.

With a general love for anything that gets his body going, he encourages everyone to a healthy dosage of exercise — age isn’t an excuse to him.

In his book, he writes not only about his personal ageing journey, but also shares practical health and exercise tips.

Practising what he preaches, he has participated in many activities, ranging from mountaineering, joining marathons and triathlons, cycling from Melbourne to Adelaide, and even taking part in Powerman and Ironman competitions.

“Once you’re able to control your brain, then you’re off. You’ll discover a whole new boundary opened to you — a whole new boundary. If not, how do you think I can sing La Traviata in Italian?” he said, reminiscing of a time in which he won a singing competition on a cruise.

After facing some negative remarks during the cruise, Prof turned it around and decided to join a singing competition. He ended up winning first place.

“Over time it really gets easier to tell your brain to stop bothering you,” he stated.

PARTING ADVICE
When asked about any advice he would give to the younger people, Prof said, “The most important thing is the discovery that your brain is telling certain standards which have never been proven, or have been passed on from generation to generation, and it applies to almost anything. Like ageing, for instance — I mean, what is ageing?” he scoffed.

“The second thing which I discovered is actually negativity. There are two ways in which you can deal with it. One of course, is to use the energy. The other, is to neutralise it,” he said.

Having since remarried, and using his wife Datin Khairiah Khairuddin Yusof as an example, he mentioned how he used to get irritated over trivial things. Fighting such thoughts, he interestingly dealt with it by giving his wife the title “She Who Can Do No Wrong”.

After that, the negative thoughts toward her disappeared.

“Now when I look at her, she looks like an angel,” he smiled. Of course, we don’t doubt that she didn’t before this! “Once you give the title like that to someone, you then have to obey it. You cannot break the law,” he said, bringing us back to the fact that mind really is over matter.

Once we have the ability to allow our thoughts to control our emotions and actions, and not vice versa, we can control our perspective in life — something that I personally find very important.

INSPIRED
Writing this reminded me of a quote by Benjamin Disraeli, “Circumstances are beyond human control, but our conduct is in our own power.”

Prof teaches us that our circumstances don’t define us, but how we view and act on it. Seeing through this his life, he did not let his age restrict him from doing the activities that he wanted to do, nor allow his first wife’s death to restrict him from moving forward in life.

Truly an inspiring man, I believe that there are many things that we can learn from Prof. As we study the growing population on this issue, I understand more clearly how important it is that we should not let ageing dictate us, but dictate ageing instead.

Whether we can work or play does not rest upon a set age standard — it rests upon our own abilities and thoughts.

It is not that we cannot run a marathon at the age of 50, it is that we tell ourselves that we cannot.

At the same time, to a certain extent, we should also have an understanding of when we have to stop.

As Prof is pushing his boundaries and discovering more and more things that he can do, we wish him all the best and hope that the same can be said of us.

Sarah believes that pushing your boundaries should start from a young age. You can contact her at editor@leaderonomics.com. For more articles by Sarah, visit www.leaderonomics.com.
PREDICTING THE FUTURE

IMPACT AND STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH AGEISM

GLOBAL AGEISM

While this study was conducted in Europe, the results and insights of the research would be meaningful to every organisation in Asia. Population ageing is unprecedented, with the average life expectancy at birth now surpassing 75 years in 160 countries. In 2011, the United Nations identified “Global Ageing” as one of the top three socio-economic issues facing the world today — the other two key issues being “global warming” and “global inequality”. One of its reports entitled “World Population Ageing: 2010–2050” the UN emphasised that:

- Population ageing is unprecedented, with only a few countries in human history. The 21st century will witness more workers and citizens of older age.
- Population ageing is permanent, a global phenomenon affecting every country at any stage in the life of the world. Organisations will be facing the fact of global ageing and will need to be well-equipped in terms of a workforce, experience and relational connections that would be necessary to respond and face this reality.

Some of the significant impact on the workplace include:

- Loss of expertise in industry
- Big groups of experienced employees leaving firms, and the skills and experience that they bring will not return to the company
- Failure of training and development programmes
- Difficulty in recruiting young talent

TYPICAL RETIREMENT AGE MAY NOT BE SUITABLE ANYMORE

In the workplace, the corporate retirement age has been around 65 to 66. It was also assumed that retirement means that work no longer does not live past that age.

However, even though modern science and health of employees have improved, the trend of extending the life expectancy significantly, the overall retirement trend has not moved to match the pace of the population, as people are living longer.

This is despite the fact that most employees are leaving at a considerably younger age due to retirement. The reason that work does not follow the same pace. This would be a significant loss to the organisation, in terms of talent, major project, expertise and innovation. This is why the trend of normal retirement has not moved to match the pace of the population.

As a result, organisations are more likely to see a need for new skills and expertise to support their workforce for the next 20 to 25 years more past the retirement age.

SHORTAGE OF RENEWABLE TALENTS

With declining births, organisations will find it almost impossible to find a renew pool of talents to replenish the outgoing senior workforce.

The fact of the matter is that is not easy to bring the older employee back to the workforce because there are fewer incentives for them to return to the workforce.

CHANGE IN EXPECTATIONS

Generation Y and later generations are generally no longer interested in typical corporate jobs. They are more inclined to pursue their entrepreneurship goals. With a strong entrepreneurial spirit, they are seeking a fulfilling path to success.

Basics are the concept of “more time for myself doing something I love and don’t have to necessarily get in touch with others, as long as I feel right about what I’m doing.”

For the leader

- To ensure training programmes that are effective and aligned with business outcomes.
- To focus on the quality of work experience beyond just a pay or a three-year training programme.
- To leverage on the Six Disciplines of Breakthrough Learning methodologies for a long-term training outcomes.

For organisations (Human resources, organisation development, etc.)

- To implement a culture of coaching that productivity and employee contribution is well-balanced, that is empowering a leadership-enriched organisation where employees are encouraged to pursue excellence.
- To target your successor(s), build relationships, mentor and groom them by empowering them in the new roles.
- To make sure your employees are aligned with the organisation’s vision and mission and are well-enriched.
- To engage with him, write to editor@leaderonomics.com. You can read more articles at www.leaderonomics.com. You can read more articles at www.leaderonomics.com.
SPANNING BOUNDARIES
THE THEORY AND ITS BENEFIT TO ORGANISATIONS

BY MAJURA PERASHOT
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EVERYONE has the potential to be a boundary spanner.
All of us try to bridge the distinctly separate facets of life in order to improve the way we live. This bridging of the different parts in our lives is called boundary spanning, and it is important that this can be applied in a corporate setting.
This is because it can help in moving the organisation ahead by connecting organisational borders or constraints, on top of enabling the organisation to achieve higher shared visions and goals.
Chris Ernst, a researcher, author, as well as a senior faculty member in the Centre for Creative Leadership (CCL), spent the last 14 years of his life spanning boundaries, with the past couple of years advising leaders and leading corporations to guide them in using the idea of boundary spanning to enhance their organisations.
According to Ernst, there are five types of boundaries in an organisation that challenge all leaders to work in a new way. These boundaries include vertical, horizontal, demographic, geographic, and stakeholder boundaries.
Out of the five main boundaries, Ernst and his team of researchers discovered that the horizontal boundaries are the biggest chokepoint in an organisation today.
The world, he said, has changed from vertical to horizontal, and thus, leaders who can navigate between the horizontal boundaries are bound to be more successful.
It is also important for leaders to master the skills to span across boundaries because he believes that in three to five years, the stakeholder, demographic, and geographic boundaries will increase in importance – more than they already have right now.
Nonetheless, he warned that boundary spanning is not going to be easy, as leaders would need to tackle multiple boundaries at the same time.

NECESSARY PRACTICES

In order to work effectively across boundaries, Ernst has listed six necessary practices that happen at the nexus between groups.
These practices are buffering, reflecting, connecting, mobilising, weaving and transforming.
Buffering is simply trying to obtain a clearer clarification of the boundary before “conquering” or spanning any of it.
“What we learnt is, if your goal is to span a boundary, to bridge a boundary, you actually have to begin by strengthening and defining it,” Ernst said.
The next practice is reflecting, which can be done by better facilitating knowledge and perspective exchange, as well as best practice sharing across boundaries.
“Connecting is about linking and integrating the boundaries. So, it’s about making one-to-one connections, building networks of leader relationships across boundaries,” he explained.
Next, mobilising is mainly about reframing boundaries in order to create a larger vision. Both connecting and mobilising help to forge common grounds for different people in the organisation, and as a result, bring them together.
“I love the definition of innovation,” Ernst said. “It’s simply the combination of two previously disconnected things, ideas, people, and resources.”
This is possible through the practice of weaving. When an organisation fuses different functions or knowledge together, they will be able to create breakthrough innovation.
Applying this to a real workplace situation, he gives an example of a time when he and his team took a group of General Electric executives to the Olympic training headquarters in the United States.
After meeting different athletes, coaches, and the heads of sports, they came to realise that there is more than meets the eye. There is a lot more going on “behind the scenes” apart from the athlete who receives his or her medal for everyone to see.
Throughout this, they learnt the importance of collaboration, networks, and spanning boundaries – all of which are necessary to make a successful athlete.
“That’s very much the truth for what it takes to make a successful business, too,” he added.
Lastly, it is essential to transform in order to discover new frontiers. Though it was not mentioned in the video, transforming will help in enabling reinvention in the organisation.
Ernst affirmed that once leaders figure out how to span boundaries, they can actually apply it in many areas of their business.
“All of us today, whether we’re in corporations or in the government, whether we’re trying to be social entrepreneurs, we’re all having to work across boundaries to be able to help move our work and move the world ahead,” he stated, after agreeing with Roshan Thiran, the host, that spanning boundaries can even transcend cultures.

EXPERIENCES ARE NOT THE MAIN THING THAT THEY SHOULD FOCUS ON, BUT RATHER THE MEANING OF EACH EXPERIENCE WHICH MATTERS

PARTING ADVICE

When asked, his advice to upcoming CEOs is to “give a little less attention to vertical command and communication and spend more time on how you can help foster better communication and interaction across the organisation”.
As for young graduates who have just finished their studies, Ernst proposes an accelerated way to pick up this set of skills, which is to hold on to the curiosity that they possess and use it to keep challenging oneself to continuously look for new and diverse intriguing experiences.
However, he also reminded that experiences are not the main thing that they should focus on, but rather the meaning of each experience.
Keep on asking questions like “What do I want to learn?”, “What do I hope to be able to do differently?”, and these reflections after each action will then help in making the most out of those experiences.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Ernst adds that boundaries produce borders and limits. Nevertheless, there is an alternative definition to it, which is “frontier”, and it carries the meaning “a location of new opportunities”.
Therefore, his small piece of advice to the many leaders out there is: “Think about how you can begin to transform today’s borders into tomorrow’s frontiers to solve problems, to drive innovation, and to move your organisation”.

To access the full interview and to access other videos of inspirational personalities, visit http://www.leaderonomics.tv/the-leaderonomics-show/video.
Send your thoughts at editor@leaderonomics.com
AGE IS JUST A NUMBER
EMBRACING THE NATURAL PROCESS

By WENDY LEE
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T was a night of glitz and glamour where successful women entrepreneurs from all over Asia were honoured and celebrated at The Palace of The Golden Horses, Mines Resort City in Seri Kembangan. I happened to be one of the recipients of the Golden Phoenix Award. It was stated in the invitation card “gown or formal attire”, but due to time constraints, I didn’t put much thought into what I was going to wear and had opted to go for something formal.

Upon arrival, my jaw dropped upon seeing the other ladies – they were like phoenices, literally! Granted that it was for women entrepreneurs, the majority of them were in their 40s and above. Some were the epitome of grace and style, beautifully garbed in evening gowns. Some could have done better.

Age is just a number – so says the optimist. However, there is no doubt that mirrors don’t lie too. We can’t stop time, of course, but do we have a choice to look good no matter how many candles there are to blow on the cake. And there are some do’s and don’ts that we really can consider.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS ON HOW TO LOOK FABULOUS AFTER 50!

- **CROWNING GLORY**
  Styles change and so do our faces. One easy guide to follow to take some years off is to keep your hair length between your chin and your shoulders, and consider adding layers. It gives your hair volume and instantly lifts up your face. Adding a soft fringe of bangs can do wonders if you want to cover a wrinkled forehead intentionally.
  If you are thinking of visiting a hairstylist, a great tip is to wear your best youthful clothes. By doing so, chances are you will get a hairstyle that matches your youthfulness!

- **GRAY AREAS**
  Whilst a great platinum mane shows a gutsy and mature you, some of us may prefer more colour. Strands of white or gray hair may indicate that you are not young anymore.
  If you plan to colour your hair, try brown, dark brown or mahogany, which help to lighten your face and de-emphasise fine lines and wrinkles.
  Such colours help exude the youthfulness and modernity in you.

- **WINDOWS TO OUR SOUL**
  Gone are the days of applying heavy makeup. Soft, subtle and au naturel is the way to go.
  With fine lines and wrinkles, frosty or shimmering makeup will show up in your creases.

  Instead, accentuate your eyes with a little mascara. Also, groom your eyebrows, and opt for creamy blushes and eye shadows to “plump” up your skin.

- **ELONGATE YOUR NECK**
  An opening that visually elongates your neck and pulls the eyes to your face can visibly take years off your age.
  Steer clear of blouses and t-shirts that sit at the collarbone. V-necks or plunging necklines are always better than high collars and turtle necks. Another great option is a wrap top with V-neck, which slims you down instantly. A chunky necklace also helps to fill in the bareness and make you look fabulous!

- **AVOID SMALL OR OVERLY BIG FLORALS**
  Florals, especially the tiny little ones, can make you look frumpy. Opt instead for simple lines or subtle abstract prints. And keep it simple. Avoid the frills and frounces and anything you’d expect to find on a little girl.

- **ONE LOOSE GARMENT AT A TIME**
  The older we get, the more obsessed we are with comfort. If you pick too many loose outfits, beware – clothes that are too big will make us look old and unsophisticated.
  So, go for wide over narrow or narrow over wide. In other words, pair a loose top with a slim bottom, or slim top with a more voluminous bottom.

- **PICK SEMI-FITTED OVER FITTED**
  Even if you are in your 40s or 50s and haven’t gained a kilogramme since your 30s, parts of our bodies will begin to deteriorate and undergo the ageing process.
  If you are still wearing the same outfits you wore 20 years ago, then it’s definitely time for a wardrobe update.
  Rule of thumb: dressing younger won’t guarantee you will look younger.

So, pick semi-fitted over skin-tight outfits. The aim is to look ravishing and elegant.

- **AVOID MUDGY COLOURS**
  Clean colours are pure hues without being mixed with much gray to muddy it up. Muddying that visually elongates your neck and pulls the eyes to your face can visibly take years off your age.
  Black is slimming, but it will emphasise shadows, double chins and wrinkles. So, consider brighter, richer colours near your face to give you that glow.

- **ADD SPICE WITH YOUR BLING**
  Don’t go too plain in your dressing up. You need a focal point to add some “oomph” in your overall look.
  As you grow older, it is important to become a little bolder and more confident in your accessories. So get yourself some statement necklaces, earrings or brooches to amp it up!

- **GO FOR FLATTERING SHOES**
  Shoes that are all about comfort but lack any style is a sure way to make you look old instantly. Shoes with chunky heels and high vamp usually shorten you.
  Pick instead a low-heel slingback, kitten heels or platform soles for protection and stability. If you must go flat, then go for a pair of chic ballet shoes.

So, for those who are stuck in a style rut, it’s probably time to do a wardrobe overhaul! Give yourself an overall makeover because you are worth it, and get yourself ready to stage your comeback!

Wendy Lee is president of Mabic (Malaysian Association of Brand & Image Consultants) and a director of Bili (Brand Image International Institute). She is a firm believer that with style, there must be substance! For more articles related to image, visit www.leaderonomics.com.

GIVE YOURSELF AN OVERALL MAKEOVER BECAUSE YOU ARE WORTH IT, AND GET YOURSELF READY TO STAGE YOUR COMEBACK!
A young and progressive organisation Iskandar Investment Bhd (IIB) is serious in its commitment towards employee and talent growth, especially so with the rapid development of Iskandar Malaysia.

To ensure that employees are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to be ahead of the game, IIB recently launched the first two of its flagship employee development programmes – the Junior Management Development Programme (JMDP) and Middle Management Development Programme (MMDP), at the Persada Johor International Convention Centre.

The programmes are designed to complement IIB’s core values – TRIPP: Teamwork, Respect, Integrity, Innovation, Progressive and Passion – which have been supporting the company to mould its dynamic culture and its people, the Iskandarians.

In his speech Datuk Syed Mohamed Syed Ibrahim, president and CEO of IIB, said, “We want Iskandarians who are not just committed and embracing all the core values as enshrined in TRIPP but also possess the core competencies.

“We also want them to be able to think analytically and continuously contribute towards raising the performance and achievements of the company.”

As IIB moves up the value chain in its development and transformation of its stakeholders and ensuring sustainable and profitable company growth, as well as spearheading the Iskandar Malaysia into a livable city, there is a need to develop leaders who are able to navigate the team and the company towards realising this.

Thus, two more tailored programmes – Senior Management Development Programmes (SMDP 1 and 2) will follow suit for senior management and senior management team.

“We are serious about developing and preparing you as the future leaders. Your own success rests on your shoulders,” stressed Syed Mohamed.

IIB has a history of hiring some of the most talented individuals in this country as it attempts to be the “agent of change” in driving development and growth in the Iskandar Malaysia region in Johor.

AGENTS OF CHANGE

In mid-2005, plans were set in motion to transform 550,000 acres of land, roughly three times the size of Singapore, into a regional metropolis of international standing within 20 years.

The land was initially referenced as South Johor Economic Region (SIER). In late 2006, Iskandar Investment, then named the South Johor Investment Corp, was incorporated as the commercial investment holding company created to oversee and encourage regional development within a 8,900 acre landbank at the heart of the region.

Iskandar Investment’s first major task was to oversee infrastructure planning and master planning of Eduloc, which at 600 acres was Malaysia’s first multi-campus education cluster, and Medini, a 2,230 acre landbank intended to be the CBD of Nusajaya, the city at the heart of Iskandar Malaysia.

Today, the talented IIB team has built and developed a world-class infrastructure there, including the upgrade of major roads leading to Johor, the creation of connector roads, state-of-the-art utility pipes, sewerage systems and security networks.

IIB and its talented workforce will continue to play a ‘catalytic’ role in the transformation of the region and IIB is committed to ensuring its talent are world-class. Talent has always been a key priority in IIB’s radar. “It is our aim to see IIB to be a model and a benchmark in all aspects namely financial, operational and also a highly preferred company to work with. We also want IIB to be ranked in the top rung of the most admired companies in the region,” Syed Mohamed added in his speech to employees at the launch.

GROWTH PAINS IN BECOMING LEADERS

Roshan Thiran, CEO of Leaderonomics Sdn Bhd briefed some 90 participants who would be going through the JMDP and MMDP programmes on the importance of leadership.

“Leadership is a critical asset that many organisations lament and mourn that they lack, yet don’t take steps to develop. Leadership is the key element that determines the success or failure of your project, organisation and even the nation,” stated Thiran.

Thiran went on to brief the participants that learning to become leaders is hard work and very painful. It is a slow process that requires significant amount of practice, coupled with learning from failure. Nobody becomes a leader overnight.

Leadership can only be developed through failures and successes. One cannot send a person to a three-day classroom programme on swimming and expect him/her to become a great swimmer. To learn to swim, one needs to practise in the pool.

No matter how much you listen, read or watch about swimming, without pool practice, you won’t be able to swim. Similar to the swimming analogy, Thiran made a point that real learning happens when applied in the workplace, and not by attending class. Based on that, the JMDP and MMDP programmes have been structured to ensure that it is not just classroom-based. It incorporates elements of context, experiential learning and application in the workplace.

Although the programmes were challenging, the participants were very excited and expect him/her to become a great leader overnight.

HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

According to Mohd Nordin Jamaludin, the head of Human Capital Management (HCM) at IIB, “These programmes have been painstakingly customised based on IIB’s Competency Framework, Core Values and observations from the Talent Assessment Centre exercises conducted in 2012 and 2013 respectively.

The modular management development programmes are developed to produce quality leaders who will take IIB to greater heights. The company is now entering its second phase of its business model, focusing more on value creation whilst still upholding its mission of being a catalyst of change.

“The HCM department recognises the significance of developing IIB’s human capability to reach its maximum potential and has been planning strategic programmes to imbue growth in performance, soft skills and competencies.”

He added that participants under stood that going through pain was critical for their growth and development and look forward to gain knowledge from this to become better leaders and contribute towards transforming the nation.

IIB’s continuous pursuit in human capital development has not gone without recognition. Recently, it was awarded the Best Companies to Work for in Asia Awards 2014. IIB stood tall among only 40 selected organisations from Malaysia.

The awards, organised by HR Asia, a leading publication for human resources professionals in Asia, saw 220 companies vying for the best workplace in Malaysia and Asia title. The award is based on a proprietary survey developed by HR Asia in collaboration with Mercer (knowledge partner) and encompasses employees’ feedback and input, and management comments and presentation.

In total, 6,000 Malaysian employees were surveyed to determine their intention and motivation, emotional engagement and advocacy of their respective employers.

Karen Neoh is editor of leaderonomics.com. She is reminded that the most painful experiences that she went through had a significant impact on shaping her to become the leader she is today. She is glad that organisations like IIB are encouraging their employees to embrace the pain of learning and growth. To access this article online, go to www.leaderonomics.com

By KAREN NEOH

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Launching Ceremony – The Junior and Middle Management Development Programmes: Competency Advancement
IGNITING THE SPARK

ORGANISATIONS JOIN HANDS FOR MALAYSIAN YOUTH

School can be a daunting place for children. Whether it’s about making friends or excelling in class, the pressure to succeed has never been more persistent.

This is why one of the most important lessons a child can receive in early education is a sense of empowerment; that they each have the ability and opportunity towards a bright future.

Through our DIODE Kids Programmes, these young ones are exposed to activities that will provide them with the basic tools to encourage them to think creatively and confidently.

We understand that as they are at a crucial point of their development, lots of positive encouragement on their strengths would go a long way towards their future.

They will have the opportunity to meet and interact with other children from various backgrounds and social creeds.

Superhero Academy is a one-day leadership programme which would help kids to discover their true “super-power” and how they can use it to build themselves to be great leaders.

We have fun games, activities and experiential learning lined up for this event!

Superhero Academy will take place as detailed below:

DATE : Nov 27, 2014 (Thu)
TIME : 9am–5pm
VENUE : Dewan Utama Bangunan Bakri Siti Hazimah, 6, Cangkat Abang Haji Openg, Taman Tun Dr. Ismail, 60000, Kuala Lumpur.
PRICE : RM200

Lunch and tea breaks will be provided

If you’re interested in signing up your child or would like to register someone you know, go to http://leaderonomics.org/youth/diode-leadership-camp/diode-kids/

Present to announce the partnership between ECM Libra Foundation, Epsom College Malaysia and Leaderonomics was ECM Libra Foundation chairman Datuk Seri Kalimullah Masheerul Hassan.

Present at the press conference were from left) Epsom College Malaysia headmaster Martin George; Roshan Thiran and ECM Libra Foundation chairman Datuk Seri Kalimullah Masheerul Hassan.

“Children just need someone to believe in them.” — Martin George

DIODE KIDS PRESENTS — SUPERHERO ACADEMY!

By HYMA PILLAY

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CM Libra Foundation, Leaderonomics and Epsom College in Malaysia partner together to run a leadership programme called SPARK Leadership Programme (SPARK) for under-privileged Malaysian youth across the country.

The partnership was announced at a press conference on Oct 14, 2014 by ECM Libra Foundation chairman Datuk Seri Kalimullah bin Masheerul Hassan, the Leaderonomics CEO Roshan Thiran, and Martin George the headmaster of Epsom College Malaysia.

“A lot of kids need to be inspired, to try to be greater, to achieve things in life,” said Datuk Seri Kalimullah during the press conference.

Developed by Leaderonomics, the programme will be experiential in nature. This includes projects, game-based learning, field trips, sports activities, engagement sessions, and leadership sharing by prominent Malaysian leaders, including Tan Sri Tony Fernandes of AirAsia. There are numerous growth and development opportunities for the participants.

SPARK aims to achieve the following:

• to provide an opportunity to deserving students from all over the country to discover their true leadership potential
• to enable Malaysian youth to learn and practise leadership
• to inspire future leaders amongst Malaysian youth by challenging them to apply their newly learnt leadership skills to community projects that will make a difference in their communities
• to encourage the active sharing of ideas on issues and challenges of shared concern and interest, and work on impacting their community with the guidance of selected mentors

LEAD CHALLENGE

The LEAD Challenge will be an integral part of the leadership programme. Here, the participants will be divided into teams, with each team allocated

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communication, and confidence through the LEAD Challenge.

“How do we ignite a spark in these children so that they can go out and make a difference in the community that they live in? That is what SPARK is about,” said Thiran.

George added that throughout the duration of this programme, the participants will be living together as a community in the boarding houses of the Epsom College Malaysia.

Epsom College has a state-of-the-art premise, with sports facilities, a swimming pool, a dance studio, and a fitness centre.

This is where they will learn to live together and get along with people from different backgrounds and also learn to stretch their own expectations through developing skills, communicating and solving problems together.

Through SPARK, these three partners aim to show children that it is possible for them to achieve great things in life.

“SPARK aims to help the participants develop their attitude, self-awareness, critical and creative thinking, communication, and confidence through the LEAD Challenge.” — Martin George

The SPARK Leadership Programme will run from Dec 14–23, 2014 at Epsom College Malaysia. The programme will be open to 100 participants, comprised of Malaysian youth aged 13–16, selected from all over Malaysia. Participants of SPARK will be fully sponsored. For more information on SPARK, you may contact Marcus Lim at marcus.lim@leaderonomics.com

Leadership Academy of Character for Educators (LEAD) was established to inspire future leaders amongst Malaysian youth by challenging them to apply the things they have learnt during the duration of the programme.

LEAD Challenge will be an integral part of the leadership programme. Here, the participants will be divided into teams, each team allocated
UP, UP AND AWAY! A LIFE OF ADVENTURES

By LIM LAY HSUAN
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We are concentrating on the gray-population theme this week, and I have finally had the chance to watch Up, after being coaxed many times to watch this Pixar animation by our gregarious intern Sarah.

The story revolves around a senior citizen named Carl Fredricksen. Indeed, it is a beautiful story touching the very core of humanity about aging, grief, loss, a generational gap and redemption. Any spoilers in this article will not matter anymore (I hope) because by now, I think most people have watched Up already.

If you have forgotten the story, I hope this article will make you want to watch it again.

Here are several takeaways from this heartwarming 2009 animation.

**STEER TOWARDS YOUR DREAMS**

Many of our dreams may lie dormant because of circumstances in life, but it is never too late to start fulfilling them. After receiving news that they can never have children, Fredricksen and Ellie refuse to save enough money to move their house to Paradise Falls, their lifelong dream since young.

However, the money they saved in a jar was always used for household emergencies. Fredricksen then relinked that dream after Ellie’s passing and when he was advised to register himself at a retirement home.

The key here is to continue believing in your dreams and not to give up fulfilling them one by one. On a related note, perhaps it is the vision you want your organisation to have.

Your organisation may have been sidetracked by the many obstacles that come along the way, and a refocus is needed to help you stay on course of its core vision and mission.

**COMPLEMENT ONE OTHER**

We know that no man is an island. Even Bono of U2 sang it in Sometimes You Can’t Make It On Your Own. In Up, we see how a lone journey by Fredricksen to Paradise Falls was made more eventful with the accidental and colourful characters of Russell the young wilderness explorer, Dug the golden retriever and Kevin the mysterious giant bird.

Even though Fredricksen was initially hesitant to accept them as part of his personal journey, he eventually found himself developing a connection with his new-found friends, thereby helping and protecting each other.

At the end of the day, Russell and Fredricksen found themselves working together to complement one another. Russell received his final “help the elderly” merit badge and Fredricksen was able to start a new adventure in his life with Russell and Dug.

Likewise, in an organisation, we leverage on each other’s strengths to accomplish a task. We learn to complement one another by developing relationships and a sense of trust to achieve a common goal.

**RISE UP IN HUMILITY**

Now, a special mention to Dug who may be considered a misfit to others, but was genuinely sincere in fulfilling his purpose. Being different from the rest, Dug was sent away on a false mission by his leader, Alpha, even though Dug naively didn’t realise Alpha’s intention to get rid of him.

Dug remained obedient to Alpha’s instructions to find the mysterious bird and eventually succeeded in doing so. Dug rose up in humility when he defeated Alpha’s intention to get rid of him. He remained obedient to Alpha’s instructions to find the mysterious bird and eventually succeeded in doing so. Dug rose up in humility when he defeated Alpha’s intention to get rid of him.

**LET GO AND MOVE ON**

There’s always something special about the act of releasing balloons, isn’t it? In Up, I see the balloons as something Fredricksen held onto dearly after the demise of his beloved wife. He was obviously still grieving Ellie’s death and lamenting a promise he didn’t full-fill— for her to visit Paradise Falls.

Eventually, Fredricksen learnt to let go. He started a new adventure in his life with Kevin and the mysterious bird. He started to move on. He released his house with all the remaining balloons after saving his other three friends from the clutches of hero-to-zero Muntz.

**STAY TRUE TO WHAT IS RIGHT**

Fredricksen had always idolised Charles Muntz, a famous explorer, since he was a child, and we can only imagine the childlike excitement in Fredricksen when he actually met his hero in his golden years in Paradise Falls.

Thus, it takes courage to stay true to what is right when Fredricksen recognises the danger Kevin was in when his hero spoke about his life mission to find the mysterious bird, no matter what it cost.

In an organisation that may be going down a crooked path, would you stand your ground to blow the whistle and question senior leaders about certain wrong judgments they may be making? Or would you just follow their instructions blindly?

Would you be a “Sheron Watkins” to warn your leader about the organisation’s irregularities, as in the case of Enron? Of course in doing so, you must be prepared for potential consequences, as Fredricksen found that he and his friends had to literally run for their lives from Muntz.

**TRUTH AND FALSITY**

I quote what Ellie wrote in her scrapbook for Fredricksen before she passed on: “Thanks for the adventure – now go have a new one!”

Russell: Sorry about your house, Mr. Fredrickson.
Fredricksen: You know, it’s just a house.

No matter the setbacks you have encountered personally and in your workplace, keep in mind that things happen for a season and for a reason. Perhaps you’ve recently been made redundant because of an organisational restructure. In this case, stop asking “why” it happened, but ask “how” to move on from here.

By releasing the “baggage” that’s holding you back, you become “lighter” and things become clearer for you to move on to the next adventure in your career.

I quote what Ellie wrote in her scrapbook for Fredricksen before she passed on: “Thanks for the adventure – now go have a new one!”

Honestly, Lay Hsuan cannot remember the last movie she actually watched in the cinema. She will try to catch up on good movies soon. For more reel lessons, visit www.leaderonomics.com

Also next week

- Working and studying?
- A finance director’s journey with CIMA
- Smart investing with Robert Levitt
- Building people through employee engagement

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