STAYING ON TOP

EVER wonder how you would explain your role and contribution to society to an extra-terrestrial being?
Well, it was something I thought about after watching my first sci-fi movie. Though it has morphed into a more grown-up version, knowing my role and purpose in my community and being able to communicate that (on the off chance I actually meet ET), still keeps parts of my brain occupied.

And while I stop short at saying our careers should define who we are, I do think that something we are actively engaged in for the bulk of our waking hours is important enough to guide life decisions.

So it is with no small measure of awe and excitement that I read story after story of how organisations have evolved to create environments that nurture their people, investing time and energy in understanding what is important to them, and introducing measures that set the stage for bigger and better things for both individuals and the organisation.

We are talking, of course, about the movers and shakers who won accolades in Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers Awards 2014 and the Graduate Recruitment Awards 2014 – several of which we feature in this week’s pullout.

In our column, Be a Leader, Roshan Thiran zeroes in on the key factor which separates the winners from (and I struggle to find a euphemism) those who do not win. Of all the leaders he has spoken to, be it chief executive officers or athletes at the top of their game, perseverance was a clear commonality.

Indeed, “perseverance” should be the middle name of Jamie Andrew, who not only survived great adversity but has transformed himself and the tragedy that befell him into something positive, and has since made an impact on the lives of many. Elisa Dass brings to light the delicate balance that companies need to maintain in employee retention – stressing on the importance of knowing why employees go or stay, and perhaps equally so, giving due consideration to those who stay even when there is misalignment of employee and company goals.

On employee activism, Lim Lay Hsuan takes a step further on how a disengaged employee may turn to different channels to vent, while organisations also realise that engaged employees bring out the best in their organisations.

Lastly, always remembering our future leaders, we take a look at how effectively have we shaped our students to be one of the more important things to strive for, how “unrealistic” it may be dubbed.

However, just like eating a large serving of food, take a small bite at a time. Don’t bite off more than you can chew, lest you choke! Remember to break your big goal into small, achievable goals, as you get on your way to your dreams.

2. ADOPT POSITIVE THINKING

Many athletes credit mental toughness to be one of the more important things to have when doing what they do.

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Many athletes credit mental toughness to be one of the more important things to have when doing what they do.

To be a winner, we have to protect ourselves from thinking that will potentially pull us down.

Developing a positive outlook can help you see the best in everything, thus bringing you to spotting more opportunities around you.

Let’s be honest – almost every goal that you seek to achieve can’t be achieved purely by your own self. The success of one winner doesn’t always mean that all the hard work was done by the same person alone.

Behind every successful athlete, there’s a coach; behind every scholar, there’s a teacher.

Shift your mindset of “self” and focus on working cohesive with those around you instead. Establish a support system made of people whom you trust and respect; whom you can go to for advice and encouragements. All the best in your preparation to be the best in the world.

You’re a winner, and you better believe it!

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

THINK LIKE A WINNER

BY SARAH TAN
sarah.tan@leaderonomics.com

EVERYBODY wants to win; it is said that nobody plays to lose. However, is everyone prepared to win?

“Most people have the will to win, few have the will to prepare to win.” – Bobby Knight, American basketball coach.

As we celebrate the winners of this year’s Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers, let’s have a closer look at what it takes to be a winner.

The winning mindset:

1. DREAM BIG

Ever heard of the term, “dress for the job that you want, not the job that you have”? Applying that slightly differently, don’t be afraid to dream big, no matter how “unrealistic” it may be dubbed.

Don’t limit yourself with the things that you know you can do – go out and grab for your larger dreams.

However, just like eating a large serving of food, take a small bite at a time. Don’t bite off more than you can chew, lest you choke! Remember to break your big goal into small, achievable goals, as you get on your way to your dreams.

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QUOTABLE QUOTES BY HEE KIM FAH, CEO OF GTI MEDIA

01 “Have goals, targets or milestones for achievement.”
02 “You can get to any destination with enough determination.”
03 “The only impossible things in the world lie in the human mind.”
04 “Every task is easier once there’s positivity involved!”
05 “The people who are successful in their careers are those with the “I can” spirit.”
06 “The biggest killer of your career is the fear of taking on new, better, or bigger things.”

DID YOU KNOW?

THE CONVERSATIONS WITH Roshan Thiran

“Many people have the will to win, and yet few are willing to prepare to win.” – Bobby Knight, American basketball coach.
A few weeks ago, our football team Leaderonomics FC played its final division one league game in the GSL League.

The GSL has two divisions – the bottom three teams in division one get relegated whilst the top three teams from division two get promoted.

Leaderonomics FC has been an ever present in the league from its early years. However, throughout the past few years, we had never gotten relegated nor had we ever won the league.

Each year, we work and play hard to improve our team, and every year we keep improving. From fifth place to fourth, then to third and second places in the past few seasons, but never winning the title.

And then came 2014. At the final kick of this season’s final game, we were officially declared GSL division one champions.

As we pondered our much-awaited title victory, a thought came to me. I started recalling the numerous interviews with great leaders on the Leaderonomics Show, and noticed that almost all “winners” had to overcome tremendous challenges before they saw “victory”.

Whether it is in sports or in business, every winner had to sacrifice significant suffering endured in training and learning, and go through exhausting moments before walking up to the podium as winners.

And success took time. It was never overnight, even for the likes of Google overnight, even for the likes of Google.

Every winner had to sacrifice significant suffering endured in training and learning, and go through exhausting moments before walking up to the podium as winners.

All triumph is a result of significant suffering. Every winner had to sacrifice significant suffering endured in training and learning, and go through exhausting moments before walking up to the podium as winners.

The biggest issue with perseverance is that most of us associate it with agony and pain. It could have been very easy to give up after a few unsuccessful attempts. However, most great leaders never do. They tirelessly overcome setbacks, keep pushing and almost never throw in the towel on their long-term goals.

PERSEVERANCE – THE DIFFERENTIATOR

I believe that the differentiator is perseverance. Perseverance separates the winners from the losers in both sports and in business. Yet, perseverance is not easy.

Angela Lee Duckworth, an expert in grit, claims that perseverance “requires not just motivation but also volition – not just resolving to achieve something important but also protecting that resolution when tempted to reverse the decision; not just committing to our goals but, more difficult than that, translating intentions into actions; not just starting things but finishing what we begin; not just zeal, but also the capacity for hard work; not just want but also will.”

REFRAMING PERSEVERANCE

The biggest issue with perseverance is that most of us associate it with agony and pain. And it is hard to “enjoy” perseverance when we are hard-wired for pleasure.

So, how do we reframe the act of perseverance into a joyful one?

SETTING GOALS

One lesson I have learnt personally is that we cannot develop this “bliss-like” perseverance instantly. Like a muscle in our body, it requires sustained development. What does this mean?

We need to start slowly. The best way to learn perseverance is to start with short and easy-to-achieve goals. Work on those, and when you are successful, you will get a “dopamine rush.” Dopamine is the “reward” chemical our body produces when we succeed.

This success pattern then becomes part of our experience and we will start craving more goals. For example, get your 10-year-old to complete a household chore and then praise him or her when he or she does a great job, and soon the child will habitually do these chores.

Once you have achieved a few short-term goals, set longer-term ones like “losing weight” or “learning a new skill.”

Your initial attempts at the long-term goal may be painful, but your memory reminds you that at the end of your accomplishment, there will be a dopamine rush which will spur you towards the finish line.

It is important to break your long-term goal into smaller short-term goals. This enables you to get continuous “highs” on your journey to your long-term goal.

Personally, I love starting my morning with a list of “to-dos.” Every time I finish a task and tick it off from the list, I get pumped up to keep going and finishing the rest.

DISCIPLINE and SELF-CONTROL

Perseverance requires discipline and self-control. Both traits are highly synchronised by our emotions.

Having negative emotions can thus derail our efforts to persevere and achieve our long-term goals by pushing us to give up.

It becomes even more critical to reframe significant obstacles into opportunities when faced with them.

This is easier said than done. Start by never giving negativity a foothold in your life.

According to research on PhD students, the No. 1 reason why doctoral students complete their programme is not because they are brilliant. It is because of their perseverance and grit.

If you explore the obstacles faced by these students, the biggest issues crop up after the second year. The ones that complete their programme are able to focus on the end goal (their doctorate) but also able to break down their obstacles into smaller chunks and plough through them, one small victory at a time.

Finally, learn to be your own cheerleader. Don’t wait for others to praise you when you accomplish your goals as not many people really care about your goals.

Sometimes, when long-term goals leave you feeling defeated and depressed, learn to break it down to smaller goals and celebrate your personal victories with self-congratulations too.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Back to Leaderonomics FC. We could have given up and moved to a less competitive league. Yet, we persevered and celebrated today.

All triumph is a result of significant perseverance. The expression “Rome wasn’t built in a day” is meant to remind us that achieving results takes time and effort.

In conclusion, perseverance is a key trait that differentiates winners from losers. Yet, it is a learnt trait and can be developed. Start developing it today!

Roshan Thiran is CEO of Leaderonomics, a social enterprise passionate about transforming the nation through leadership development. He believes that everyone can develop the ability to persevere and has seen it first-hand amongst the DOSE Challengers who attend the Leaderonomics holiday programmes. For more information on how Leaderonomics can help your organisation unleash the power of perseverance in your employees, email people@leaderonomics.com or login to www.leaderonomics.org
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By KAREN NEOH

AWARDS NIGHT

The Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers Awards Night 2014 was the latest in the annual gathering of the Who’s Who of graduate employers in Malaysia.

The guest of honour was Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department, with Hee Kim Fai, CEO of GTI Media Asia, Johan Merican, CEO of TalentCorp, Prof Madya Dr Arham, industrial relations director, Ministry of Education, Ng Wan Peng, CEO of MDec, Richard Mosley, EVP of TMP Worldwide, Mark Blythe, founder, Group GTI, and Diego Sanson, EVP of TMP Worldwide also present.

The awards night was the culmination of work by GTI Media to identify the most outstanding graduate employers in Malaysia, including the most sought-after employers in their respective sectors.

"All in all, we gathered the opinions and demands of more than 14,000 graduates and students across Malaysia. This massive undertaking took our team months to fulfill, with frequent visits to university campuses in the country," said Chan.

Maybank took the stage and the award as Graduate Employer of the Year was presented by Hee Kim Fai, CEO of GTI Media (far left), Johan Merican, CEO of TalentCorp Malaysia (second from left), Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office (centre) and Mark Blythe, co-founder of GTI Media UK (far right)

Graduate Employer of the Year winner Maybank posing for photos with 1st Runner-up AirAsia and 2nd Runner-up CIMB Group with Hee Kim Fah, CEO of GTI Media Asia, Johan Merican, CEO of TalentCorp Malaysia, Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office and Mark Blythe, co-founder of GTI Media UK posing with the winners of the Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers and gradmalaysia Graduate Recruitment Awards.

Graduate Employer of the Year winner Maybank posing for photos with 1st Runner-up AirAsia and 2nd Runner-up CIMB Group with Hee Kim Fai, CEO of GTI Media Asia, Johan Merican, CEO of TalentCorp Malaysia, Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office and Mark Blythe, co-founder of GTI Media UK (far right)

Apart from forming a league table of attractive employers, the Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers also pinpointed the latest graduate recruitment trends amongst students and fresh graduates. Jaideep Patel, publisher of GTI Media Asia, presented several key findings of the survey at the awards night.

"We continue to see changes in the trends every year, but the biggest surprise this year was the graduate’s willingness to stay in their first job. They were prepared to work for 4.6 years in their first job, which is remarkably the same result as 2013. "Although we discovered that graduates expect to earn more and work fewer hours in 2014, they appear to have the same degree of loyalty. I definitely see this as good news for recruiters," he explained.

The Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers Conference 2014 was held in the days leading up to the awards night.

In his speech, CEO of GTI Media Hee Kim Fai said: “Records are meant to be broken. Whether it is an individual effort, or a team endeavour, we strive each day to be better than the day before. To do more than what we have done thus far. This year, I am proud to say that we have all done our part to break a record, which is for the highest number of votes gathered for the Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers survey.”

Graduate Employer of the Year winner Maybank posing for photos with 1st Runner-up AirAsia and 2nd Runner-up CIMB Group with Hee Kim Fai, CEO of GTI Media Asia, Johan Merican, CEO of TalentCorp Malaysia, Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office and Mark Blythe, co-founder of GTI Media UK posing with the winners of the Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers and gradmalaysia Graduate Recruitment Awards.

Accounting and Professional Services: EY (Ernst & Young)

Banking and Financial Services: Malayan Banking Bhd

Broadcasting/Media: Media Prima Group

Consulting: EY (Ernst & Young)

Education: Taylor’s Education Group

Energy/Oil and Gas/Utilities: Petronial Nasional Bhd

FMCG Retail: Nestle

Government-linked Companies: Permodalan Nasional Bhd

IKT and Multimedia: IBM Malaysia

Insurance: Great Eastern Life Assurance

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WHAT MAKES AN EXCITING WORKPLACE

**MEET THE TEAM:**

**M**axis is in the business of connecting people wherever they are, and through its latest 4G technology, connecting them with high speed Internet.

Our ambition is clear—we want to deliver the best internet experience to our customers and give them unmatched customer experience.

**EVERYTHING ELSE IS DETAILS...**

Maxis believes a great brand requires a great culture to deliver it. Creating that culture is job No. 1.

Adzhar Ibrahim, head of people and organisation, says, “We can only succeed in creating a great culture if we are positive, passionate and collaborative.”

Maxis is also currently upgrading its work environment to reflect this new culture. The new office environment is open and collaborative. It’s keeping me on my toes—maybe I need a massage too!

“Great culture is job No.1,” says Adzhar.

“This is a place that is fun, modern and vibrant with energy. People in Maxis come from different backgrounds and diverse experiences, locally and abroad. Let’s explore this through the eyes of five Maxis employees on a recent work day.”

**Mid morning:**

Laura Jane Sta Maria
Prepaid product manager

I was at our KLCC Maxis Centre for a prize giving ceremony for the recent contest that I worked on. We gave out RM50,000 in cash prizes to winners today. A contest winner travelled all the way from Johor. She was so excited—she said she had never won anything in her life! Now I am preparing for my trip to London tomorrow—chaperoning another group of winners from the previous Hotlink Live Life Loud contest.

I am excited—can’t wait to be with the contest winners, some of whom are visiting London for the first time. I have just completed the management trainee programme. I am a mechanical engineer by training yet here I am in marketing! We have talents from all backgrounds in Maxis—that’s what makes us more fun!

**Mid afternoon:**

Laura Jane Sta Maria
Prepaid product manager

Earlier today, I met with our Enterprise Business colleagues on next year’s Formula 1 race. We have been providing network support for the F1 teams every year during the race days.

I am really into high performance cars, so this is a particularly exciting challenge for me! I am really into high performance cars, so this is a particularly exciting challenge for me!

I am now meeting my team to discuss recent network updates as well as design architecture on how we can extend beyond LTE (Long Term Evolution) 4G technologies in the future.

We promised our customers an “always on” and “feel free” experience, and we will deliver! The results of the network test by our employees are in, and they look good. As the chief network guy for Maxis I feel very happy. But I am up to the challenge—because tomorrow it must be better!

**Early afternoon:**

Zurina Rusly
Employee engagement lead

I have to get over 1,000 employees in the Klang Valley, Penang, Johor Bharu and Kuantan ready to test our network and engage with customers. They’ll be surprised to find more than 90 masseuses ready to help them rejuvenate. I am glad people are excited about our modernised network and happy to take on activities beyond their daily job.

The task of keeping our employees engaged is critical in such a value-driven company as Maxis. It’s keeping me on my toes—maybe I need a massage too!

**Late afternoon:**

Abdul Karim Ali
Head of network

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I am in marketing! We have talents from all backgrounds in Maxis—that’s what makes us more fun!

**For more information on a career with Maxis, write to talent@maxis.com.my or visit www.maxis.com.my/careers**
With its booming education industry, Malaysia is set to be the fastest growing education hub in South-East Asia. The education sector is no longer considered a secondary industry but has become a driver for social and economic growth of the nation, allowing space for organisations in this industry to move up in terms of importance.

Taylor’s Education Group is well known for its top-notch standards in private education. The Group owns and operates some of Malaysia’s premier institutions – namely Taylor’s University, Taylor’s College, Garden International School, Australian International School Malaysia, Nexus International School Putrajaya and Taylor’s International School.

This year, as the Group emerged winner of Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers (M100) in the education sector, we delve into this organisation, and to understand what a career in Taylor’s Education Group is.

Group CEO Datuk Loy Teik Ngan says: “The private education industry has undergone phenomenal change in the last decade. Being an education group that is both progressive and responsive to change in the education landscape, we continuously place an emphasis on our people. Winning the M100 award is a great recognition and a significant milestone for us. It validates our efforts in making Taylor’s a great place to work.”

CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT

Taylor’s Education Group achieved a high score of 82% in the recent employee engagement survey, positioning the Group competitively in the global education industry.

So, what makes Taylor’s Education Group a top employer? One of the secrets lies in the alignment of heart and minds of all employees to its core purpose, which is “To educate the youth of the world to take their productive place as leaders in the global community.”

The other differentiator is its strong culture around the core values of T.E.C.L.U.P.E.

They believe in:

- Respecting and Caring for Each Other
- Being Dedicated to a Culture of Excellence
- Openness in Communication
- Acting with Integrity
- Being Passionate in What We Do
- Creating Enjoyable Environments

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Committed to building an enjoyable environment as well as a great workplace for their people, the Group has also initiated Flexi-Hour and Shift Swapping work arrangements, making certain that employees have a healthy amount of work-life balance.

Punithavathi Muruthambahi of the purchasing department said: “The flexible hours offered at Taylor’s help me a lot especially as I have a child who is still in school. I am not only able to leave work early to spend more time with my son and family, but I am also able to beat the traffic going back to Kajang. In fact, I have gained more time after my work hours to focus on my personal needs. I am very happy, that’s for sure!”

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME… WHAT MAKES IT DIFFERENT?

The Taylor’s Education Group Internship Programme offers a great opportunity for students who are eager to experience the education industry. The key differentiating factor lies in the structure of the programme. Interns will learn to become responsible citizens through a structured community service assignment, thus earning a more holistic learning experience.

In addition, interns of the Group will immerse themselves into the organisation’s culture through a structured orientation and on-the-job guidance. They will also be given the opportunity to present their learning outcome to the Group CEO and the senior management team.

Darren Cheong, a former public relations and communications intern, described his experience as “unconventional, dynamic, and engaging”. He said: “You’re immersed into a real-life workplace environment that develops critical soft skills sought after by employers of the future.”

Another former intern, Carmen Loh, who worked in the HR department, highlighted her positive experience on the community service assignment.

“The service learning has allowed me to participate in community outreach, which is rarely a part of most companies’ internship programmes,” she said.

They are groomed and equipped with the skills they need to take the helm and become leaders of the organisation. Our people are groomed and equipped with the skills they need to take the helm and become leaders of tomorrow,” said Loy.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Apart from that, the Group also supports its employees in pursuing their career development path. This is accomplished by helping them structure a pathway which acts as a guide for how employees can advance within the company, whilst leveraging on their diverse capabilities and skills.

“We constantly seek to train and develop our employees to meet their personal goals as well as the needs of the organisation. Our people are groomed and equipped with the skills they need to take the helm and become leaders of tomorrow,” said Loy.

Taylor’s Education Group does not only develop its employees to be professionally competent, but it also continuously emphasises the emotional well-being of its people. This in turn, brings its core values to life.

Dr Caroline Chua
Lecturer, school of biosciences, Taylor’s University

“As a fresh PhD holder from Melbourne, I joined Taylor’s University soon after graduation as I wanted to pursue a career in lecturing and research. I was very impressed with the facilities and support offered; I was furnished with various training courses to help me adapt to the teaching environment. From a young academician with little teaching experience, I have now coordinated two new modules at the school of biosciences and I am also a co-researcher in a research project funded by the Taylor’s Research Grant Scheme.”

Shemiera Iman Mohd Afandi
Marketing executive, business development, Taylor’s University

“My career began with the Taylor’s Internship Programme where I was given the opportunity to drive my own project. This exposure has helped me build confidence and enhanced my communication skills. Furthermore, it has broadened my perspective of the education industry. The programme has led me to a permanent position in the business development team at Taylor’s University. I love the challenges of my role as well as the travelling that comes with the job.”

For more information on a career with Taylor’s Education Group, write to career@taylors.edu.my

taylorsworldclassteacher@taylors.edu.my

TAYLOR’S WORLD CLASS TEACHER’S SCHEME

“As a scholarship recipient of Taylor’s World Class Teacher’s Scheme (TWCTS), I was given an opportunity to teach at Taylor’s International School (TIS). This is a meaningful experience for me as I am able to transform theories into practice. The enriched academic modules incorporate both in-class lectures and experiential learning in TIS. In addition to being assigned to a mentor for guidance, I am also privileged to observe the classroom management techniques, and the different approaches to lesson planning that facilitates students’ learning. With all that I have gained through TWCTS, I am looking forward to securing my job placement at TIS upon graduation.”

Tan Vee Yen,
Second year student, school of education, Taylor’s University

CAREER WITH A PURPOSE: TAYLOR’S EDUCATION GROUP

A career in the education industry may not appear to be a first or obvious choice for many, especially if their background is not in teaching or academic research. However, according to the senior vice-president of group human resources (HR) Janet Lui, “There are career paths mapped out for professional and corporate roles as well as for academics.

“So whether you are a teacher, lecturer or a specialist in the areas of HR, finance, IT (information technology) or marketing, there are opportunities both on-the-job and through development interventions, to help you grow your career with us.”

She adds, “There is a growing number of us who not only want to build a great career – but also apply our skills and contribute towards a meaningful purpose. Here in Taylor’s, this can be achieved.”

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCES

Taylor’s Education Group Leadership CSR retreat Homebuild 2013

myStarJob.com, Saturday 22 November 2014
Over a year ago, EY launched its purpose of building a better working world for its people, clients and communities. Driven by this purpose, EY has since been accelerating ahead and chalking up results. At the recent Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers Awards, EY emerged winner in two sectors – Accounting and Professional Services, and Consulting.

Elaborating on EY’s purpose, Datuk Abdul Rauf Rashid, country managing partner of EY Malaysia says, “Every day, EY people are part of building a better working world. We believe that everything we do – every audit, every tax return, every advisory opportunity, every interaction with a client or colleague – should make the working world better than it was before. However, we can’t do it without the right people. We need high-performing teams; exceptional people who want to work with the best, develop their skills as leaders and create positive change,” continues Datuk Rauf.

So how does EY attract and retain such talents? “By caring about our people’s success,” responds Lee Soo Fern, talent leader of EY Malaysia. “We make it our goal to help our people achieve their goals. Why? It’s simple – because our success depends on it.”

“We make it our goal to help our people achieve their goals. Why? It’s simple – because our success depends on it.”

– Lee Soo Fern, Talent Leader of EY Malaysia

EY has a proud history spanning over 150 years. To continue to grow and be relevant in the future, it believes it is vital to collaborate to bring about positive and meaningful change in the communities in which it operates. “We believe that through working with others who share our vision, our combined influence can be greater than if we act individually. So we look forward to working with different parties – whether our people, our clients or our communities – to help build a better working world,” concludes Datuk Rauf.

Ready to join us to build a better working world? Visit ey.com/my/careers

EY new partners from around the world meet in Istanbul

Friendly competition at the inter-department games

Coming together for festive celebrations

Group trip – fun on the beach

EXPERIENCES AND RELATIONSHIPS THAT LAST A LIFETIME

Working with school students in a community programme

GROUP TRIP — FUN ON THE BEACH
CREATING FUTURE GLOBAL LEADERS

By PREMA JAYABALAN
prema.jayabalan@leaderonomics.com

S INCE its humble beginnings in 1969, Samsung Electronics has come a long way and today, it stands proud as one of the world’s renowned conglomerates. With more than 286,000 employees worldwide and more than 4,000 employees in Malaysia, Samsung Electronics has created a niche for itself as the pioneer in digital media and digital convergence technologies.

At the recently held Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers Awards Night, Samsung Electronics emerged winner for the most popular graduate employer in the electronics sector for the second consecutive year. It was also a finalist for the Retail and ICT Multimedia sector.

Besides this, Samsung Electronics was also ranked the seventh World’s Most Valuable Brands in 2014 and was awarded Brand Electronics was also ranked the seventh World’s Most Valuable Brands in 2014 and was awarded Brand of the Year by Putra Brand Awards in 2013.

SAMSUNG PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

AT THE HEART’S CORE

A firm believer of values being the epitome of a good business, all decisions made by the organisation adheres to its core values. These comprise:

- People
  We value our people with a strong foundation in the “A company it’s people” philosophy and will provide opportunities for them to perform to their full potential.

- Excellence
  We give our best effort with endless passion and a challenging spirit to become the world’s best in every way.

- Change
  With the mentality that “survival is impossible without change,” we execute change and innovation with speed and initiative.

- Integrity
  We, as Samsung People, uphold honour and dignity and follow standards and principles with justice in all we do.

- Co-prosperity
  As a global citizen living together with society, we strive for the co-prosperity of the community, nation and humankind.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

With its commitment to cultivate a culture of true global leadership imbued in a creative yet passionate working environment, Samsung Electronics is always offering opportunities for young graduates to embark on a fulfilling career with global exposure.

One such way is through the Samsung Asia Elite (SAE) Programme. This is a fast-track two-year international programme which is meticulously crafted with an abundance of coaching opportunities that develop functional and leadership competencies.

Samsung also emphasises on hiring the best and brightest local interns through its rigorous, structured internship programme. It is part of the talent pipeline to start early and mould these talents well before absorbing them into the mainstream hiring process.

“At Samsung, we are permanently committed to creating a truly global leadership culture that is as diverse and vibrant as the markets we serve, and the products we make. Only with our unique breadth and massive global reach can we bring joy to people through our products and services that help improve lives. We aim to spread the education and healthcare that we offer to people all over the world,” says Lim Chee Gay, human resources director of Samsung Malaysia Electronics.

Our belief and investment in our people have nurtured positive and professional working relationships. This has been clearly reflected by the annual 2014 Samsung Culture Index (SCI).”

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CO-PROSPERITY

With its constant innovation and ability to predict the next big wave, Samsung Electronics is an organisation that will put you in touch with the future. A career with this organisation ensures the opportunity to be a part of tomorrow’s growing technology.

Samsung Electronics is constantly on the lookout for outstanding local and global talents who have the desire to evolve into dynamic future leaders. The organisation welcomes individuals with the following core skills.

CORE SKILLS

- Pace of change; can-do attitude; delivering more than expected.
- Strongly fact-based; optimum moment of choice.
- Understanding of company culture; navigate through complex networks.
- Capabilities to achieve goals; bring individuals together; collaborate productively in diverse teams.
- Manage power networks; give others confidence; outstanding communication skills.

For more information about what Samsung Electronics has in store for your career prospects, go to www.samsung.com/my
Managing director of Pharmaniaga Datuk Farshila Emran receiving the M100 Award from Hke Kim Fah, CEO of GTI Media.

The Pharmaniaga team with Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department at the M100 Awards.

**LIFELONG LEARNING**
A lifelong learning experience for employees is advocated and supported by the company. Pharmaniaga sponsors deserving individuals for technical and behavioural in-house or external training programmes.

**BEYOND WORK**
Taking one step further, Pharmaniaga is committed to helping employees achieve personal success through educational assistance and healthy lifestyle benefits. Convenient on-site services include a cafeteria, lunch allowance, indoor and outdoor game facilities, medical insurance, free health checks, free retail pharmacy vouchers and Biro Angkasa credit facility.

“Not only does the company provide us with access to the best medical treatment, Pharmaniaga also makes it a point that someone from the company visits us in the hospital if we are admitted,” shares an employee.

**OTHER INITIATIVES THAT REFLECT PHARMANIAGA’S FOCUS ON ITS PEOPLE**
- Every employee has an additional day off on his or her birthday.
- Pharmaniaga sponsors tuition fees for employees’ children and provides monetary rewards to those who excel in major school examinations.
--Year committee organises Islamic programmes for the Muslims.
- Sports club brings them together in sports and recreational activities.

A joint consultative council was established with elected representatives from various departments to provide a safe and effective channel for employees to voice their grievances and concerns.

Pharmaniaga celebrates its successes by acknowledging each employee’s unique contribution. Each individual is an asset nurtured through coaching, development and engagement.

Commitment from top management cascades through all levels, empowering employees with a mandate to ensure that the workforce is properly equipped with relevant resources to move Pharmaniaga forward to meet its business objectives.

Pharmaniaga prides itself in practicing equal opportunity and disbursing appropriate incentives and rewards. Pay for performance is the guiding principle of the reward strategy of the company. The goal is to provide premium actual total pay to employees who demonstrate sustained superior performance. Base salaries are reviewed annually against market to ensure competitiveness.

A succession plan framework is also drawn up to identify suitable successors. Individual development analysis are conducted regularly with plans to ensure a smooth transition for key positions.

Pharmaniaga believes that its people are its greatest assets and the backbone of its operations. That is why we continue to invest in this all-important capital resource.

We invest in our people by first recruiting the best employees from the market. Our employee selection process too is constantly reviewed to increase the company’s efficiency and effectiveness in making accurate hiring decisions. Also, our compensation and benefit packages, which are reviewed every now and then against the market, are based on a competitive performance monitoring and reward system designed to encourage maximum personal contribution and thereby sustain our business performance.

We also recognise the need to support our employees’ professional performance and personal contributions through upgrading of skills and opportunities for volunteerism in corporate social responsibility, internal clubs and committees.

**TRANSFORMED EMPLOYEES**
Pharmaniaga holds firmly to the belief that its strength lies in its people, who are key in propelling the company forward. The company invests in its people and in building an environment conducive for innovative product development, insightful planning, diligent operations control, strategic marketing campaigns and sound management.

**PAY FOR PERFORMANCE**
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**IMPACTFUL ACHIEVEMENTS**

For more information on a career with Pharmaniaga, write to recruitment@pharmaniaga.com or visit www.pharmaniaga.com
ENHANCING INDUSTRY-ACADEMIA COLLABORATION

T he need to enhance the quality of graduates and to meet the needs of the industry was highlighted in the recent National Development Policy (NDP) 2011-2020. The focus is on enhancing the quality of our graduates to better serve the needs of the industry. To do so, there is a need for greater industry-academia collaboration to enhance the quality of education. The Prime Minister has called upon universities to engage in closer collaboration with industry. More can, and should be done by universities and companies to collaboratively develop industry-ready graduates.

The current reality, based on the 2014 World Bank-TalentCorp survey, is that most companies do not engage with local universities to communicate their views of what is important for students to learn in order to be more employable. Less than 15% of the companies who participated in the survey have had experience in developing curricula or joint programmes with local universities. At the recent Budget 2015 announcement, the Prime Minister has called for universities to participate in the “Talent Development Programme” which is expected to provide opportunities for significant industry-academia collaboration to enhance the quality of education. The Budget 2015 has allocated RM1 million for Industry-Academia Collaboration

The following are initiatives that can be taken to foster greater collaboration between the industry and the universities.

- Establish Industry Advisory Boards at the universities.
- Develop industry-led curricula.
- Implement industry-driven research and development projects.
- Establish Industry-University Centres of Excellence.
- Implement Graduate Apprentice Programmes.

To view industry content to promote job ready graduates, a centre on the campus which facilities engagement between the host university and their students with employers in key sectors. The centre will aim to provide clear understanding of what employers are looking for in entry-level graduates. University graduates will be able to pursue CIMA professional papers during their internship programme.

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT ZONES (ZONE-1 & ZONE-2)

A centre on the campus which facilitates engagement between the host university and their students with employers in key sectors. The centre will aim to provide clear understanding of what employers are looking for in entry-level graduates. University graduates will be able to pursue CIMA professional papers during their internship programme.

-Industry-related content and engagement to prepare students for employment.
-Industry input on employment and opportunities.
-Industry-led engagement sessions such as orientations, career talks, interviews, etc.

To view industry content to promote job ready graduates, visit http://www.naidayak.com.

SILITERRA-UNIPAR COLLABORATION

Silittera-Malaysia Polytechnic (UniPWR) is a university that is founded on a clear understanding of the need for industry-academia collaboration. The University is committed to fostering innovation and excellence in education through partnerships with industry. The University has established the Centre of Excellence in Microfabrication and Design Research (CEMDR), which is a multi-disciplinary centre that brings together the expertise of the university and industry to address the needs of the industry.

INTI AND MOTOROLA COLLABORATION

In 2011, INTI collaborated with Motorola Solutions with the development of the curriculum for the B.E. in Electronics and Communication Engineering programme. The collaboration involved the development of course content, pedagogy, and industry training. This unique partnership provided the student with the industry exposure they need to enhance their employability. The collaboration enabled students to gain valuable work experience in the industry through assignments, internships, and industry projects. The program also included the development of an industry-based curriculum to provide a more practical and industry-oriented education.

UNIVERSITY OF MALAYSIA PERAK (UMP)

The University of Malaya has a long history of industry-academia collaboration. The university has established several Industry-University Research Centres (IURCs) to facilitate collaboration between the university and industry. The IURCs are supported by private sector partners and provide research opportunities for students and faculty. The university has also established Industry-University Centres of Excellence (IUCEs) to foster innovation and entrepreneurship. The IUCEs provide opportunities for students to work on real-world projects and gain valuable experience.

GRADUATE RECRUITMENT AWARDS (GRA) 2014

The Graduate Recruitment Awards (GRA) is an annual event that recognizes and celebrates the best graduate recruitment programmes in Malaysia. The awards are presented to universities and companies that have successfully implemented effective graduate recruitment strategies. The awards are presented in several categories, including Best Management Graduate Programme, Best Management Trainee Graduate Programme, and Best Industry-University Collaboration Programme.

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EXCELLENCE IN HUMAN CAPITAL

For the sixth consecutive year, Great Eastern Life Assurance (Malaysia) Bhd has been recognised as the no.1 popular graduate employer in Malaysia’s insurance sector by Malaysia’s 100 Leading Graduate Employers.

The latest win adds another feather to the 106-year-old company’s cap – from being the only life insurance company in the country with the longest record of being voted for strong reputation and trust within the sector for its achievement of Reader’s Digest Trusted Brand Gold Award for 11 consecutive years since 2004; the Company’s continued recognition in M100 reaffirms its popularity of being the choice employer for insurance as well, with its longest record of being the choice employer.

LIVE GREAT!
Great Eastern Life director and chief executive officer Datuk Koh Yaw Hui says: “Great Eastern Life empowers its staff to take charge of their health and wellness through its LIFE Programme. This, as well as the Making Life Great (MLG) and other staff initiatives are actively championed to promote workplace balance whilst making the environment at Great Eastern Life the place where one would choose to work in at Malaysia.

Numerous incentives and tools are given to the staff of Great Eastern Life to take care of their health – from subsidised gym membership, to rewarding participation for LIFE Programme activities during its regular Wellness Wednesdays, Trim Tummy Thursdays and Live Great Fridays that range from health quizzes, running clinics, stair-climbing, health talks delivered by medical specialists, Zumba, aerobics, aerobelly, flexigroove and various other fun workout sessions.

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE
Staff engagement, as well as people development, remains central to not only building skills, but also relationships at Great Eastern Life.

Senior vice-president and head of human capital Dennis Tan said, “All companies out there play a major part in contributing towards the national talent agenda in nurturing our young Malaysian graduates to be the best that they can be.”

At Great Eastern Life, from the day new employees come onboard, they are offered comprehensive training to orientate them into their roles and new working environment as well as providing them with continued professional development throughout their career with Great Eastern Life, so that their career may flourish as they progress within the organisation.

The Company places strong emphasis on promoting internally and in its pursuit of grooming in-house talent, supports education at the workplace through its Educational Assistance Programme that allows for professional memberships, study leave, examination subsidies, and special salary increments upon successful completion of courses.

“Great Eastern Life also offers tremendous rewards to staff who excel through our annual Chairman’s Awards, and recognises long-term service through our Annual Appreciation Awards,” Dennis added.

Great Eastern Life also fully supports the nation’s Financial Sector Blueprint to evolve a financial eco-system that will best serve a high value-added, high-income Malaysian economy.

Through its efforts in talent development via continued professional development for its employees, its very own Annual Supremacy Scholarships and internship programme, as well as its support in the FSTEP Management Trainee Programme, talented Malaysians may have a headstart to a promising career in a leading organisation within the sector upon graduation.

GR EAT STARTS WITH YOU
As the largest insurer in the country, Great Eastern Life is able to offer a wide spectrum of career options for graduates in actuarial, law, accounting, business administration, psychol- ogy, engineering, marketing, medicine, investment, and many more.

Those keen to join a LIFE company and make life great for themselves as well as others in an organisation that promotes living healthier, better and longer, may write in to hr-my@greateasternlife.com or call (03) 4813 3209.

SCALING NEW HEIGHTS
A FIRM SUPPORT IN TRYING TIMES

in January 1999, mountaineers Jamie Andrew and Jamie Fisher were trapped for five nights on the storm bound icy summit of a French mountain. Their rescue, one of the most dramatic in the history of the Alps, tragically came only hours too late to save Fisher.

Andrew, despite suffering hypothermia and appalling frostbite, survived, but at great personal cost. Ten days later, both his hands and his feet, damaged beyond repair by frostbite, were amputated.

He quickly learnt to walk again and master all the everyday tasks that we normally take for granted. In less than four months, he was able to leave the hospital, move back home and return to work as the manager of a small company.

Since then Andrew has defied all odds by running marathons, completing an Iron Man triathlon, skiing, snowboarding, sailing, and of course, returning to climbing the mountains that he loves so much. In the process he has raised thousands of pounds for charity and received many awards.

Andrew is an inspiring speaker who tells his story with great passion, sincerity and humour. The result is a talk which is at once gripping, inspiring and ultimately uplifting. He uses his skills as a mountaineer and his experiences to great effect in putting across principles that are directly applicable to successful business practice.

With over 13 years’ experience of speaking in more than 30 countries on five continents, Andrew has worked with many businesses and training organisations. He is also a regular presenter for The IMD (Institute of Management Development) in Switzerland.

We asked Andrew what advice he would have for people going through a crisis or particularly painful period in their lives. Without hesitation, he replied that talking about the issue at hand is most important.

“Share with people you love, whoever you trust, maybe even a stranger. Don’t keep things bottled up,” he said. Andrew firmly believes that it is okay to reach out and depend on other people, and that it is a two-way process.

“They can show you the strength you have within yourself. Everyone has huge potential – untapped – and sometimes it takes huge adversity and inspiration to bring this out. Invariably, this comes from other people.”

Andrew’s advice for people whose partners are going through difficult times:

“1. I am lucky to have Anna, my then girlfriend and now wife.”
2. They realised at the outset, that his accident and recovery was something they had to go through together.
3. “It was just as much a life-changing experience for her. Anna was going through it as much as I was and effectively had to learn how to live her life with my disability too.”

They both had their ups and downs.

“Some days, I would be feeling bad, and she would comfort me. From the hospital bed, I would comfort her too. We have three young children. And I got all the attention. “Aside from my inspirational recovery and all that, Anna was forever in the background. She is a private person, happy not to be in the limelight. But also… not receiving all the credit. None of this would be here today, if not for her care and support.”

To find out more about Jamie’s speaking engagement in Malaysia early December 2014, email ian.i@ leaderonomics.com.
By ELISA DASS AVIN  elisadas@leaderonomics.com

Retention: Is it always good?

WHY PEOPLE CHANGE JOBS

Contrary to what many managers might think, most of their employees who voluntarily leave the company aren’t doing so for better pay or benefits. About a third of employees (32%) choose to leave for career advancement or promotional opportunities, while 22% cite pay and benefits as the reason they’re heading for the door. One in five (20%) depart because of a lack of fit to their role. Managers who experience a rash of turnover might want to take a hard look at their own management style: 17% of employees leave because of management or the general work environment.

WHY SOME TALENTS LEAVE

Today, almost every HR division in large companies worry about employee retention. However, when the right ecosystem is not in place, is having employees who stay on long – sometimes too long – a good thing?

A study by Gallup Organisation reports that the main reason people change their jobs is to look for career advancement and promotional opportunities. It is from this study and Marcus Buckingham’s book First, Break All the Rules, that the so-called ‘adequately challenged talents’ were popularised: “People leave managers, not organisations.”

Is it true when you reflect on your own journey?

While I don’t deny the truth in it, I think we would be remiss if we did not consider the individual’s perspective. I have seen cases where HR adage was true – employees are unhappy with their managers, and it led them to look for other opportunities. However, it is important to also consider the broader context.

In my experience, it often is the case that employees leave because of a lack of fit to their role. Managers who experience a rash of turnover might want to take a hard look at their own management style: 17% of employees leave because of management or the general work environment.

WHY DO OTHERS STAY?

Like me, many employees move on in search of more challenging, learning opportunities and career advancement that their organisation cannot provide. They did not leave because of their managers. More often than not, the learning culture and promotional opportunities are shaped at the organisational level, and needs to be adhered to by the managers. Despite what I felt was “missing” during my tenure, both the organisations I left have had many employees who stayed on much longer and were very contented with their careers. This is not uncommon in many organisations. Often in my meetings with clients, some have shared about their concerns on employee retention, while others were contented with their low turnover.

Let’s look at some groups of talents who have decided to stay on.

1 THE ‘ADEQUATELY CHALLENGED TALENTS’

People stay on in organisations for many reasons. Some stay because the organisations could still provide them with sufficient challenges and the career advancement that meet their expectations. I’d like to term this group as the “adequately challenged talents”.

The organisational policies, culture and opportunities for learning is at par with their personal expected growth pace – which may be fast or slow, depending on the individual. There is an alignment in what they want and what they are receiving.

Both organisations and talents stand to gain in this situation as long as the needs of both parties do not change suddenly. This is ideal for companies in a steady growth environment.

2 THE ‘CONTENTED TALENTS’

The second group of talents stay on because they are comfortable with the organisation and have found an environment that is stable and gives them a sense of belonging. Challenging work and fast-paced career advancement is secondary. This group often stays on for a very long time and are contented with both the work and the environment. This often makes up a large group of long-serving employees. However, this group of talents may not live up to their potential in times of change and growth.

As such, it may not favour the organisation. Instead, the organisation might find itself investing in talents who may not support their change efforts.

3 THE ‘UNREACHED POTENTIAL TALENTS’

The third group of people who stay are probably those who would like to have a little more challenge in their work, but the great benefits and compensation of the organisation is just too good to forgo. Subsequently, they stay on, doing well at their work, but not pushing themselves further. For this group, I’d like to see them as the “unreached potential talents” – people who have side-lined their potential for other reasons.

WHEN RETENTION TURNS BAD

While none of these groups can be deemed right or wrong, nor good or bad, organisations need to start looking at the impact these different groups of employees have on the organisation, in line with their strategic direction.

Perhaps it is good to have a quick organisational survey of what kind of employees you have and had in your organisation. Which group makes up a larger percentage in your organisation and what is the impact?

More importantly, it is crucial for the management to annually have a stocktake of the direction the company is heading towards, and which group of employees you would need in your organisation.

Retirement is inarguably a key consideration for talent management.

However, when an organisation plans to move towards a different culture or direction, having a large pool of long-serving employees may sometimes prove more of a challenge than support. It is important for human resources (HR) and the management to understand who and why some talents stay on in the organisation.

MY STORY

In my first post-graduation employment, I worked in a multinational organisation, focusing on leadership development of student leaders. After the three-year contract, I wanted experience in a corporate organisation for exposure and growth.

I had my first taste of talent management when I joined the managerial advancement for recruited trainee programme in a local conglomerate. Fortunately for me, the programme was more extensive than most companies, and I had the opportunity to experience various roles (corporate communications, branding, training, teaching, internal audit, corporate planning, events, HR, employee engagement, construction, and education) in multiple industries.

After six good years of learning, I felt that my experience had somewhat plateaued and it was time to put myself through another painful learning curve – this time zooming into the area of leadership and talent development in a consulting role, where I have continued to explore and learn even at this point in time of writing this article.

To some, this career journey is not uncommon. However, to my day, I suspect he went through mini panic attacks when I shared my intentions of seeking “new adventures”.

His well-meaning advice has consistently been focused on how difficult it is for jobs to come by and reminded me to be patient with my current job. As we know, for employees of his generation, having a large group of long-serving staff in an organisation is really nothing to shout about. Evidently, the topic on employee retention is not as hot as it is now.

WHY TALENTS LEAVE

Retention: inarguably a key consideration for talent management. However, when an organisation plans to move towards a different culture or direction, having a large pool of long-serving employees may sometimes prove more of a challenge than support. It is important for human resources (HR) and the management to understand who and why some talents stay on in the organisation.
ANY of our best employers recognise the critical importance of investing in human capital, not just for the sake of pumping money into training, but approaching people growth as a strategic thrust in meeting unique business needs and contributing to a unique employer brand.

This week, we take a walk down memory lane and revisit the early days of adult learning. Adult learning as a concept has been around since the 19th century, popularized by a growing movement in the mid-20th century by theorists and practitioners to formalise enquiries into adult education. One such key figure in this movement was Malcolm Knowles, who formalised the concept of andragogy as separate from pedagogy (childhood learning).

Knowles developed a distinct concept of adult educators as being facilitators in helping others learn, as opposed to ‘educating people’.

Andragogy

Andragogy describes six characteristics of adult learners:

1. Internally-motivated and self-directed
   Adults resist when they feel others are imposing the learning process on them, but embrace learning when they discover internal motivations to do so.

2. Bring knowledge and life experiences into the learning process
   Adult learners draw upon their existing knowledge and understanding in adapting to new learning experiences, sometimes having the tendency to validate new concepts based on prior experiences.

3. Goal-oriented
   According to Knowles, adults are readied for learning when “they experience a need to learn it in order to cope more satisfyingly with real-life tasks or problems.”

4. Relevancy-oriented
   Adults want to see the value and relevance of what they are learning in relation to what they want to achieve.

5. Practical-oriented
   Adults prefer to experience first-hand how their learning and problem-solving tasks apply to life and work.

6. Like to be respected
   In contrast to children, adults like to receive acknowledgement that they bring a wealth of life and work experience, and are equal to their educator in their powers of reasoning and intellect.

It has been over 60 years since Knowles’ first major work, Informal Adult Education was published, and yet the works of Knowles and his contemporaries still influence the development of adult learning programmes today.

Learning and Leadership

From the 1970s onwards, a number of representational systems, aptitude tests and cognitive assessments such as Kolb’s experiential learning, MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator), DISC (Dominance-Influence-Steadiness-Conscientiousness) and many more – became increasingly widespread. In particular, the VAK (visual, auditory and kinesthetic) model has seen much traction in helping adults recognise how they take in stimuli in any learning process.

VAK originated from neurolinguistic programming (NLP) which postulates that the human mind experiences and stores information in the abovementioned three sensorial terms.

NLP asserts that most people process and learn based on any of the three senses: sight/spatial awareness, sound, or tactile/kinesthetic. Practitioners occasionally demonstrate a fourth stereotype: Auditory-digital are those who place a fair amount of emphasis talking inside their heads – their internal dialogue – and often exhibit characteristics of the other three stereotypes.

The NLP-VAK model is but one example amongst many learning styles. A 2004 University of Newcastle upon Tyne report identified 71 different theories of learning styles, with varying degrees of influence and popularity of usage.

Much has been written about the pros and cons of learning style theories, with some educational psychologists and neurobiologists questioning the scientific robustness of learning style models and the efficacy of integrating these models into instructional approaches tailor-made for different individuals.

Foundational Self-Leadership

Regardless of efficacy, learning style questionnaires or assessments serve one key purpose in the lifelong journey of growth and development – that of stimulating greater self-awareness as a foundation block towards self-leadership.

I recall taking my MBTI assessment at 16, and subsequently in my career, many other learning style and personality inventory tests such as DISC, VAK, DOPE and even Clifton StrengthsFinder.

These were useful in helping me understand how I perceive the world and my responses to people and situational stimuli, resulting in many “a-ha” moments across the years.

Much observation, research and scientific enquiry have gone into the field of adult learning and development since the days of Knowles.

Educators, trainers and facilitators have moved beyond traditional classroom teaching, to embedding a variety of learning approaches in recognition that we all perceive stimuli differently.

For example, global full-service training company Silega™ designs its business simulations around a variety of learning styles in the classroom.

With visual (reading) alone, participants typically manage a 5% retention rate after any learning session. This is improved to 20% (watching videos) and 30% (demonstration) when there is a combination of two senses (visual and auditory).

It’s when both kinesthetic (doing) and auditory-digital (reflection, discussion and application) senses are engaged, that participants are able to significantly increase their post-training retention rates.

The Blended Learning Approach

Parallel to the growth of learning style theories, the 1960s also saw research and observation give rise to learning and development models, particularly in leadership development.

An approach that intentionally draws learning closer to the workplace is the 70-20-10 model, originating in the Centre for Creative Leadership (CCL) in the 1960s and consistently refined since then.

The 70-20-10 places blended learning at the heart of effective leadership development. Surveying high-performing managers, CCL discovered that roughly 70% of their learning came from challenging assignments at work, followed by 20% from developmental relationships with people (mainly bosses), and 10% classroom-based skills building.

Even so, the way we learn will continue to change dramatically over the coming years, as learning and human resource professionals adapt to the changes brought about by technology and shifts in our understanding of how the human mind works.
I have been deeply ingrained in us for the longest time that if we want the people we lead to perform well, we should dangle a reward in front of them (e.g. a “carrot”) as an incentive, in the hope that what’s good will be achieved and repeated.

On the flip side, we put up a system of punishments (e.g. a “stick”) in various forms, in the hope that what’s bad will be avoided and not repeated. This is the carrot and stick principle, which is very much extrinsic in nature. By whatever name we call it, it has been practised everywhere: education, workplace, sports, games, family and relationships.

This brings us to the question, is motivation so simplistic? Does the carrot and stick motivation actually work well?

**WHY DON’T I CHANGE?**

For some time, I have wondered why my bad behaviours don’t change, despite knowing full well the “sticks” in place.

In fact, they just reinforced the belief that I’m not good enough and not cut out to be who I want to be.

At the same time, I’m deeply curious why monetary incentives don’t motivate me as much as they should.

I mean, surely money is one of the biggest and most effective motivation factors, right?

“Is there something wrong with me?” I used to wonder.

My innate thinking told me that there’s got to be something more, something deeper, something I couldn’t put my finger on, something that drives us to do great and extraordinary things.

I recalled that there were times I could do some things quite effortlessly, not because they were easy, but because they didn’t feel like work.

**THE ‘FLOW’**

I have been an enthusiastic squash player for many years now. Of course, every time I get on the court, I play to win. I mean, surely nobody plays to lose, right?

The reward may not usually be in material form like money or trophies, but pride is equally (if not more) tangible as a reward.

Losing face is to be avoided as much as possible. It’s still very much the “carrot and stick” motivation; it’s still extrinsic in nature.

Curiously enough, there were other times when I felt moments of “magic” when I played for the love and joy of playing squash, and not so much for winning points.

Unbelievable shots just flowed from my racket effortlessly, in moments like these, it felt like time stood still, and the experience was surreal. What a joy – I was in “the zone”.

**IT’S CALLED ‘FLOW’**

The now famous term was coined by the Hungarian psychology professor Mihály Csikszentmihályi, which is the mental state of operation a person has when performing an activity and is fully immersed in the feeling of energised focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity. In essence, flow is characterised by complete absorption in what one does.

The purpose of this article is not to elaborate too much on “flow” (I recommend the book Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience if you haven’t read it already).

For me, I found out that there was something much higher, more powerful than the desire to win, which is the process of learning and mastery, which brought deep engagement and immense satisfaction to me.

And I wanted the freedom to do it on my own terms and not be restricted by boundaries set by the carrots and sticks.

I longed for my inner drivers (intrinsic) to move me and dictate my motivation, and not by external forces.

Deep down, I know this is much more fulfilling and rewarding in the long run. This applies to all areas of my life, not just in sports and games.

**WHAT DRIVES US THEN?**

Two years ago, I came across Daniel Pink’s book called Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us, which explained very well the intrinsic nature of motivation – what truly drives us.

Without reading Pink’s book, you can have a good grasp of his “drive” concept from his TED Talk video.

**INTRINSIC Vs EXTRINSIC NATURE OF MOTIVATION**

From Pink’s videos, you can see that there’s a big gap between what science knows and what people and businesses actually practise. And, the carrot and stick motivation understanding is outdated.

He suggested that the three essential elements of motivation are these:

- Autonomy – The desire to self-direct our own lives.
- Mastery – The urge to get better and better at something that matters.
- Purpose – The yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves.

With that I could understand much better why I do what I do, why I don’t, what really moves me, and why I’m not motivated as much as I “should” by the external reward – punishment system in place.

In place of the carrot and stick principle, give meaning and purpose to our pursuits and journey of accomplishments.

Beyond the basic monetary/ material reward system in place, allow yourself (and the people you lead) to have more autonomy, mastery and purpose, and watch what happens to your performance and overall happiness at work and life.

In coaching, many clients come with surface goals (extrinsic nature) at first. In the exploratory and clarifying stages, we help them discover deeper meaning and significance of what they truly want and why.

It’s common that the clients’ end goal inevitably shifts to something else, oftentimes something closer to their hearts during the coaching process.

**COACHING QUESTIONS**

1. Now that you see that motivation is deeper than just carrot and stick, what has changed in your thinking?
2. What new awareness has risen about the way you work and the people you lead?
3. How can you listen more to your intrinsic motivations and allow them to drive you?
4. How can you give more meaning to your work?
5. What is the bigger purpose that your work serves?
6. Besides autonomy, mastery and purpose, what could be your other intrinsic drivers?

Hwai Tah is the founder of Coaching-Journey.com and a certified professional coach and associate certified coach with ICF (International Coach Federation). For more articles on leadership and personal development, visit www.leaderonomics.com
Leaders who are contented with their progress and stop learning will never have an edge over others. Leaders must be humble and constantly willing to learn new things to stay relevant.

Let me share some ingredients for a successful leadership recipe:

1. A Fluid of Forgiveness
Madame Mallory sabotaged the opening night of the Kadam family's restaurant by purchasing all the ingredients that were needed for them to cook their signature dishes. As a result, Papa Kadam was furious and vowed to do the same when Madame Mallory had to cook for a minister.

However, Hassan did not agree. Instead, he went over to apologise and served a French dish to Madame Mallory as a sign of truce. Hassan chose to forgive rather than retaliate.

Good leaders are aware of the penalties of seeking revenge on others. It will make them lose credibility and waste unnecessary time rather than coming up with greater ideas to beat the competition. An eye for an eye is for the weak, and not a leader's way.

Leaders who are contented with their progress and stop learning will never have an edge over others. Leaders have to be humble and constantly willing to learn new things to stay relevant.

2. An Ounce of Ownership
Things got out of hand when one of Madame Mallory's chefs hired people to destroy Kadams' residence with the intention of obliterating their restaurant.

Madame Mallory fired the chef immediately and went over to Kadam's residence to clean the paint on the wall which was vandalised by the thugs.

A leader should never be afraid to own up to their mistakes. Knowing what's right and what's wrong is important when leading a team to ensure strong work ethics and values are in place to prevent costly mistakes from occurring.

3. A Chunk of Continuous Learning
Even though Hassan was an expert in Indian cuisine, he was constantly curious and committed to learning how to cook French cuisine by reading cookbooks, exploring different cooking techniques and ingredients, and learning from his friend Marguerite, an expert in French cuisine.

Hassan's relentless learning habits bore fruit when he succeeded in mastering the foreign dishes.

4. A Dash of Dedication
Madame Mallory was impressed by Hassan's culinary skills after tasting the omelette he made with his own recipe and decided to hire him. The setback was Papa Kadam was not keen with the idea and objected.

Madame Mallory spent the whole night waiting at Hassan's backyard and told Hassan's brother, "I'm waiting for Hassan Kadam, or Death, whichever comes first".

She was relentless and Papa Kadam finally agreed to let Hassan work at her restaurant.

Leaders go to all lengths to source and secure talents as the importance of having the right people on board is the utmost important element to turn visions to reality.

"Great vision without great people is irrelevant." – Jim Collins, author of Good to Great

5. A Spoonful of Selflessness
Madame Mallory did not stop Hassan from pursuing his dreams to work in Paris after he helped the restaurant win another Michelin star.

In fact, she was surprised and informed Papa Kadam previously that working in her restaurant would serve as a stepping stone for Hassan to work in other renowned restaurants.

Good leaders appreciate talents and know what is best for their career progression even if it means letting them venture to different companies or industries.

By acting on the best interests of others, a leader would have gained plenty of faithful followers along the way.

6. A Tablespoon of Teamwork
When Madame Mallory's restaurant won a second Michelin star, it was evident that Hassan played the most significant role in achieving that milestone.

However, Hassan was full of humility and credited the success to the team of chefs and said, "We did it!"

True leaders will never take absolute credit for all the good work that the team has put together. Leaders who chase after fame at the expense of losing their followers' trust will have a tough time building their legacy in the long run.

Respect and trust are crucial components to make any type of relationship work, especially a mutually beneficial one.

7. An Inch of Innovation
Hassan never shied away from using his traditional spices to improvise his cooking as a chef in a French restaurant.

He built a solid foundation in culinary skills, hence he could use what his experience had taught him to be innovative and creative with his dishes. This in turn earned him three Michelin stars in a short span of time.

Leaders who do not innovate will be in jeopardy of falling behind competitors who dare to take risks and generate outstanding business outcomes.

Being in a comfort zone is no act of a leader. Leaders who are not afraid to venture into uncharted territories have a steeper learning curve and greater courage to lead others to do the same.

Go forth and find your own recipe to be the ultimate leader!
DEVELOPING SKILLS (AND OPPORTUNITIES) IN UNIVERSITY

By SANDY CLARKE
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DRESSING a lecture theatre of media students recently, I asked: “How many here would like to establish a successful career within the media industry?” Inevitably, everyone’s hands shot up, with more than a few faces looking back at me with quizzical expressions, “Are you asking a bunch of media students who wants a career in media?”

The students were a couple of months into their course, and I was invited along by my old lecturer to give them a talk on “Making it in the Media Industry” – an important issue to address, with only half as many UK graduate jobs available in 2013, as compared with 2008, and over 100 applicants chasing each one.

“Great,” I replied, “now keep your hands up those of you who have begun to network with your lecturers and sought their advice and access to contacts?”

Without exception, all the hands dropped, I paused for a moment to allow the realisation to sink in.

In the media industry, I explained, there is no more valuable quality than the ability to create your own opportunities. Every graduate who leaves college will be able to create an all-singing, all-dancing website; every graduate will be a social media wizard; and every graduate will be able to provide a company advice on branding strategy until he or she is blue in the face.

In short, a college qualification gives you the tools to do the job – but it’s your job to build your career.

SKILL DEFICIENCY

In every lecture hall, regardless of subject matter, everybody has the potential to be great, but not everyone will push himself to realise that potential. In the UK, the top complaint of employers is that, while graduates have all the necessary tools to do the job, they lack soft skills.

What are soft skills?

Communication, commitment, decision-making, being a team player, leadership, problem-solving and taking responsibility, to name a few.

BUILDING AND OPENING DOORS

As a media student, I worked hard at acquiring the skills needed to do the job – but I worked even harder at creating opportunities for myself. I emailed newspaper editors to enquire about work experience, I pitched feature ideas to magazines, and offered my services to voluntary organisations in order to acquire more of the soft skills so eagerly sought by employers.

BEYOND ACADEMIA

I also pestered my lecturers and made use of the fact that they were industry professionals in their previous roles. Did they have any advice on how to become a journalist? Did they have any contacts I could speak to, or recommend any publications I could approach?

I was determined to spend my time in college as wisely as possible and create every opportunity for myself that I could, knowing I would be up against 70,000 other media graduates looking for jobs when it was time to collect my degree.

On average, a student’s time in further education is four years. Those uninterrupted four years – in most cases – allows the chance to learn, to create opportunities, and to start networking and investing in yourself.

Sure, have fun and don’t take things too seriously all of the time, but keep in mind your end goal: you want to establish yourself as the candidate with more goods than anyone else so that you can land your desired career. Yes, it’s a tough road and no, it’s not easy.

But, with effort and commitment to yourself, there is no reason why you can’t make a success of yourself.

WORKING FOR, AND BEFORE WORK

After having banded my degree, I secured a job as a press officer for a Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP). Although I went through the same process as everyone else, what gave me the edge was that I had engaged in voluntary work for local charity organisations and spent time lobbying MSPs on behalf of the charities.

As a result, my name and quality of work became known. I had an edge over fellow candidates because of my determination to commit to and create opportunities for myself. Nine years on, I am an established journalist at a regional newspaper, and I also have a number of freelance commitments in radio, providing branding strategies for small and medium enterprises, and writing for national news outlets.

It’s not because I’m more skilled than anyone else that I’ve secured so many opportunities, but rather because I create the conditions to ensure they come along. And while not every venture is successful, the more opportunities I create, the more chance I have for success.

So, if you want to get ahead of the competition and make it in whichever field you’re in, make the most of your time in college by grabbing every opportunity that comes your way.

UNIVERSITY OF LIFE

No one can make you a success but yourself – no one can and no one may. Your character is just as important as the qualifications you have after your education is finished.

If your character has been sufficiently developed, you’ll spot one of life’s head fakes: education doesn’t finish upon receiving your degree – that’s where it begins. Give yourself a good grounding during the formative years of college, and you’ll find yourself embarking on a journey that opens up a world of possibilities.

And from there, you will be able to head towards the horizon of success with complete assurance and confidence in who you are and what you can achieve.

Clarke (left) with the current First Minister of Scotland, Alex Salmond, who he interviewed just before the independence referendum.

Sandy Clarke is a journalist in the UK with years of experience in journalism, PR and communications, and was press officer to the Scottish Government at one time. For more articles, visit www.leaderonomics.com

mystarjob.com, Saturday 22 November 2014
CREDIBILITY IS WHERE THE LEADER’S COOKIE CRUMBLIES

STAYING TRUE TO YOURSELF

By John Walter Baybay

In a previous article about crisis leadership, I mentioned that there were four levels to human engagement, as written by Gallup authors John Fleming and Jim Asplund. I explained that one has to progress from confidence to integrity, and from integrity to trust, and from trust to passion.

There are four levels for this progression, and, ultimately, it will become easier for us to understand the concept as to why people follow some leaders passionately. We are given the wrong impression that it is something we either have or we don’t.

Passion is the result of a process and one does not become an effective leader overnight.

Even as I explained that crisis leaders have some of their leadership taught to them by the situation, its implication also means that their authority is consented upon them by the people they lead. There are, however, some prerequisites.

To emphasise: People “allow” leaders to lead them. While there are many cases where leadership has been implied or stated because of a position, this does not translate directly into influence, which ultimately defines a leader’s effectiveness.

Credibility is where the leader’s cookie crumbles! In John Maxwell’s book: The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership, he described his sixth Law as the “Law of Solid Ground”: Trust is the foundation of leadership.

Just as Fleming and Asplund describe integrity and trust in The Human Sigma, Maxwell further describes the importance of trust.

I quote: “Trust is the foundation of leadership. To build trust, a leader must exemplify these qualities: competence, connection, and character.”

While this could be considered a generalised view of how trust is established, we can see how some of these elements described have their equivalencies between Fleming and Asplund, and Maxwell.

Competence is what builds into confidence, while integrity and character build into trust. Trust and passion are the ultimate results.

The Moral Quotient

There seems to be a common understanding that competence is linked to knowledge or an intelligence quotient, while connection could be classified as a function of emotional quotient and, most recently, character is linked with what is now known as a moral quotient (MQ).

Given these dimensions added to what is known to be prerequisites for effective leadership, one can easily recognise that you cannot get to the top with just intelligence alone.

While knowledge, interpersonal skills, and practice could give you the first two prerequisites, we have seen some of the most recognised leaders in history stumble with just one blow to his/her character.

MQL tends to deal with a person’s integrity and forms much of the bases for trust. Integrity could be defined by its root word: “integer” which is a mathematical term that means “whole number” or a non-fraction. It is further defined as “one that is complete in itself.”

A Leader of Integrity

The literal meaning lends a number of similes to a person’s character and integrity. A leader of integrity must be in a state of being undivided and consistent.

There should be no dichotomy between a leader’s moral and professional life.

There are no compromises when it comes to integrity and character. A leader’s character and integrity are built over time, as character is constantly built up with consistency. Character and trust cannot be gained overnight.

Leaders are always set at the front lines of scrutiny. They are constantly being watched and assessed by people to see if they will deliver consistently.

It is implied that leaders and their followers have a psychological contract between them, such that leaders are beholden to their followers in constantly delivering on their promises.

This consistency is what builds into integrity in forming his/her character and thereby results in the people’s trust. A lack in consistency and integrity compromises a leader’s ability to lead.

Above all things, a person’s moral integrity defines his character and his capacity for effective leadership.

Jumping the Credibility Hurdle

While we tend to look at effective leadership as the ultimate result of years of character development, we are also presented with the opportunity to lead on a daily basis.

Keeping the long-term in sight, we need to use this day to build ourselves to be the leaders that we would like to become. We have to take ourselves back to the first steps of developing an acceptable level of credibility.

Whilst credibility opens the doors to leadership, what exactly gets you through?

Credibility, simply put, is defined as the quality of being believed and eventually trusted.

Competence resulting in confidence

A leader must exhibit a certain level of competence in knowing the subject matter, issues, and objectives at hand.

While it might be asking too much to have a leader who knows everything, the leader must exhibit the ability to know where and from whom to find the answers to issues.

Exhibiting an ability to navigate competently through issues develops confidence in the people you are leading. Do not pretend to be a “know-it-all.”

Integrity as a result of consistency

Always deliver on your promises and be known as a leader who brings consistent results. It is inevitable for you to fail in achieving certain objectives, but do so in a way which communicates how and why these failures happen without making your team members look bad.

Take responsibility and focus on the root causes instead of passing the blame. People want to be led by people who make them feel safe. Always speak the truth and be who you say you are.

Ready, Steady, Go!

Being the leader you envision yourself to be might be a steep goal based on the many things we have said about integrity and character, but every one needs to start somewhere.

Start from where you are! Be excellent at work. Be a positive influence to the people around you.

Be passionate about what you do and create a reputation for consistently delivering the results.

Most importantly, be true to yourself so that you always speak and act with the truth.

Perhaps, if you cannot find yourself doing and leading from where you are in the next few years, then you owe it to everyone else to lead yourself out from where you are into a workplace that is better for everyone.

John Walter Baybay is a regional management consultant who has worked for more than 17 years in the areas of corporate strategic planning and economic planning. He is a competitive athlete who balances his time between business coaching, family, and working with communities. Contact him at editor@leaderonomics.com. Visit www.leaderonomics.com to read more of his articles.
OF ELEPHANTS AND COLLABORATION
LEADERSHIP LESSONS IN FUN EXPERIENTIAL PROGRAMMES

By KAREN NEOH
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I love elephants! And it was with a heavy heart that due to an unexpected turn of events, I had to decline helping out as a facilitator at the recent F&N corporate social responsibility (CSR) activity visit to the Elephant Sanctuary in Kuala Gandah, with Ruman Ilham.

The Leaderonomics Youth team frequently invites everyone in the company to facilitate in their wonderful activities—oftentimes far, far away from the brick and mortar of Leaderonomics, always reaching out to connect organisations, people and causes.

From multinational companies seeking innovative ways to do good, to the youth of Malaysia seeking exposure and leadership lessons (subtly and effectively woven into the activities) to, in this case, the lovely pachyderms of Kuala Gandah.

The objectives of the outing were to encourage and demonstrate teamwork and a sense of integration and brotherhood among the 39 boys of Rumah Ilham through the theme of “collaboration”.

The Leaderonomics Youth leader, Divya Chandy, shares her story.

ELEPHANT TRAIL
After being assigned to groups, participants went on a hike in the jungle where elephants are usually found. They were also introduced to various plants in the Kuala Gandah jungle that were an attraction for elephants.

MISSION: ELEPHANT
Participants then went through a series of station games that demonstrated different aspects of the spirit of collaboration. They picked up clues to a puzzle that they had to solve.

At each station, participants earned points which were later added up and translated into monetary contributions by F&N Beverages Marketing Sdn Bhd toward the cause of elephant conservation. Each group proudly presented its donation to Rostam Yusof, a representative of the Conservation Center. A total of RM4,000 in donations was achieved by the boys that day.

The participants also had the opportunity to leisurely explore the sanctuary grounds and participate in a bathing session with the elephants.

ELEPHANTINE MEMORY
Participants learnt the value of working together in a team despite the fact that working with others may mean dealing with differing views and characters. By pooling together ideas and perceptions through active collaboration, a greater goal and purpose can be achieved.

Let’s hope the lessons are committed to memory, as that of an elephant! As the saying goes (and I looked it up—there actually are scientific studies to support this!), “Elephants never forget.”

If you like this article, you can find out more about our youth activities at http://leaderonomics.org/youth/

The Leaderonomics Youth team helps companies express, translate, design and execute leadership programmes for youth, based on their core values, vision and mission, and industry engagement. Elements of leadership such as self-awareness, teamwork, problem-solving, planning, and decision-making were intentionally and specially embedded in different aspects and stages of programmes like the outing to the Elephant Sanctuary, enabling participants to engage and reflect on them.

THE hallmark of Leaderonomics Youth activities is truly in finding ways to communicate to the youth—it’s not as straightforward as one might think—and puts you at the risk of another animal-related saying, “you can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink.”

With youths firmly in the forefront of their minds, the team focuses on incorporating leadership lessons in fun experiential programmes, and from the slow of comments and feedback from the young ones, the programmes certainly leave a lasting impression.

In conjunction with Independence Day this year, F&N also brought a group of 28 youths from two orphanages, Rumah Kebajikan Anbu Illam and Shelter Home 3, to visit the Port Dickson Army Museum for an interactive tour of the Malaysian history.

To spice things up, the Leaderonomics Youth team simulated an “army style” tour by separating them into four squads, each having to elect a Corporal (group leader) and report to a Sergeant (F&N staff facilitator). At each station, squads had a mission to accomplish, with prizes to gain for the winning squad.

A HISTORICAL GAME
From the first game, “Transporting Parameswara to Malacca”, and a session on how Parameswara was inspired by a wild deer defeating his hunting dog, to the last game of the day, the lessons that could be learnt from our history and historical leaders were impressed upon the youth.

In the case of Parameswara, the session was focused on instilling resilience and maintaining a positive mindset.

Among many other games and sessions, the historical event of how our leaders insisted on forming a Malay army taught the youths the importance of perseverance in achieving one’s goals. Naturally, the game that followed was the marching competition! This got them all excited, and helped them understand the value of teamwork and team spirit.

Tired but recharged, all 28 youths whom the team shared the day with, and I dare say the F&N staff facilitators as well, had a great time and left Port Dickson armed with an arsenal of newfound knowledge, leadership lessons and firm friends.

Fun time splashing with the elephants.

How does Leadership work companies on their CSR activities?

The Leaderonomics Youth team helps companies express, translate, design and execute leadership programmes for youth, based on their core values, vision and mission, and industry engagement. Elements of leadership such as self-awareness, teamwork, problem-solving, planning, and decision-making were intentionally and specially embedded in different aspects and stages of programmes like the outing to the Elephant Sanctuary, enabling participants to engage and reflect on them.

Feeding the animal in the sanctuary.
By LIM LAY HSUAN
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According to a recent article by Aon Hewitt’s Lee & Hao and Chan Mei Ling, engaged employees display the 3S behaviours at work – stay, stay and strive. These behaviours refer to the extent to which employees are willing to say positive things about the organisation, stay with the organisation and be part of it. They go the extra mile and strive for the organisation’s success. This group of people are known as employee activists. Now, you may be wondering, who, or what, are they?

Employee Uprising
Employee activists make their engageability visible. They defend their employers with authenticity, employers are better able to connect with their employees’ self-motivation and determination. Of course, it is sometimes done with the employers’ gentle nudges.

As it is, we know that there is no longer a clear-cut line separating personal and professional life (the term now is work-life balance anymore). With the advent of social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook, anything work-related including the good, the bad and the ugly about their job, bosses and organisations can be shared with ‘the rest of the world’ with a click of “Share” or “Post”. From the Weber Shandwick and KRC research global online survey of 2,300 employees, 39% of them were found to have shared praise or positive comments online about their employer while 16% did the opposite, i.e. they shared criticism or negative comments online.

The survey respondents represented 15 markets (across North America, Latin America, Europe and Asia Pacific), were between the ages 18–65, worked 30 hours per week or more, and were employed by an organisation with over 500 employees.

Employee Activists vs Employee Detractors
How can employers rally their employees to outnumber their detractors? What does it take for employers and organisation leaders to start leveraging employee activism?

Let us get REAL:

> **Align**: Times are changing whereby employees are now driven to go all out for social causes or values they believe in and are passionate about. Thus, when organisations align their workforce behind a larger social mission with authenticity, employers are better able to connect with their employees’ sense of purpose, personally and professionally.

As mentioned by Joseph Tan’s article titled “Employee Engagement Excellence”, the two emotional considerations that can capture employees’ hearts and minds are coherence and conviction. If these two elements are neglected, employees will feel a sense of misalignment between their principles and values compared to the company’s. This can further lead to disengagement and employee detractors.

> **Encourage**: The study also found that 33% of employers encourage their employees to utilise social media to share news and information about the organisation. Although this seems risky, it is found that this social encouragement brings an impact to employer advocacy among employees.

For example, at Leaderonomics, we share interesting updates, articles and videos across our personal social media platforms because we believe that by seeing and hearing what we do, everyone from all ages will be inspired to grow people into leaders, build communities of love and transform the nation in their own respective ways.

> **Recognise**: Employers need to recognise that employee activism is a movement they cannot stop or have total control over. They can only take intention effort (the will and lots of hard work, I’m sure) to try to get ahead of it. The Weber Shandwick-KRC Research study found that strong leadership plays a significant role in driving employee activism.

The reasoning is simple: when employees feel that their leaders value their opinions, or when their leaders make the organisation a great place to work, employees will automatically have a strong tendency to “spread the good news” to others.

> **Liste**: While Aon Hewitt’s 2014 Trends in Global Employee Engagement annual study indicates that the average employee engagement level has increased globally to 63% in 2013, at the same time, the trend in engagement levels does not seem to reflect the extent of efforts being made. Does that mean there is somehow a mismatch from what we are hearing from organisations and what we are observing from the employers’ point of view?

The question to ask yourself as a senior leader is: “Are you really listening to your employees?” For example, suggestion boxes for employees to drop in their ideas to improve their work processes or environment would not mean anything if no one follows up with the suggestions or employee recommendations regularly.

“Listening and responding are leadership skills critical to driving employee engagement. Ultimately, companies that work hard at communicating and listening – from the mailroom to the boardroom – are the ones that win in the workplace and marketplace.” – Andy Polansky, CEO of Weber Shandwick

Concluding thoughts
Within a business, there are ample opportunities for senior leaders to fully embrace their people as advisers, advocates and agents of change. The challenge now lies in the hands of organisations on what they want to do to actively engage their employees, before they switch sides to become employee detractors.

For more employee engagement-related articles, please visit www.leaderonomics.com. To know the story behind Leaderonomics, type “The Story behind Leaderonomics” on your web browser. Be inspired and may it inspire you to become agents of change in your community.