Evaluating yourself
Self awareness for a happy and contented life
Pg 04

YOUNG VOICES
Alert, aware and already addressing issues of gender equality
Pg 04

WOMEN LEADERS
The reality for working women today, and their plans for tomorrow
Pg 05

YES WE CAN
Making a difference at home, in the community and further afield
Pg 09

THE SIGNIFICANT OTHER
WOMEN OF THE 21ST CENTURY
PAGES 4–5, 9–10
I AM WOMAN WATCH ME SOAR

This morning, I found myself in a café listening to salsa music—in the distance, the space I had used a few years back to organise a fundraiser “dance for life” to raise cancer awareness and the joy of dancing to stay fit! Being a Tuesday morning, the momentary indulgence in coffee and Quiet has become a rare occurrence.

Even as I decided to throw caution to the wind and jump up to dance for the unsuspecting breakfast crowd, I scanned in the soaked in the scene around me. A woman reading a book sipping her coffee, women waiting for meetings—some looking poised and confident, others shifting just a touch uneasily in their seats, and the ladies next to me positively effervescent in chatter.

I love the fact I have been in the same place as each of these women at some point in my life. International Women’s Day. How do you even begin to describe the 21st century woman?

In our line article, Roshan Thiran calls for a little introspection and points out a painful truth—that from minions to CEOs, nobody is really good at self-evaluation. He puts forth some tips on how to assess and evaluate ourselves.

The type of man who will be intimidated by me is exactly the type of man who will be intimidated by me. The type of man who will be intimidated by me is exactly the type of man who will be intimidated by me. The type of man who will be intimidated by me is exactly the type of man who will be intimidated by me.

In our lead article, Roshan Thiran calls for a little introspection and points out a painful truth—that from minions to CEOs, nobody is really good at self-evaluation. He puts forth some tips on how to assess and evaluate ourselves.

On the topic of making a career comeback after a hiatus, we spoke to corporate leaders who shared their words of advice with key decision makers who play a role in creating a conducive work environment for women and men alike. They also shared their personal journeys and lessons learnt.

Leaders come in all forms and sizes. We also spent some time with women leaders who have made a difference in communities, small and large.

For a cross-continent snapshot of young women leaders and their world-views, Tara Thiagarajan connected with eight awe-inspiring individuals to bring you their stories.

More on leaders of tomorrow: we also highlight an innovative internship programme that gives students the opportunity to be exposed and immersed in the work of leading organisations across South East Asia.

We featured many individuals who have gone against the grain and exposed and immersed in the work of leading organisations across South East Asia.

We featured many individuals who have gone against the grain and exposed and immersed in the work of leading organisations across South East Asia.

Last, and by no means least, Nina Ti presents some of the tributes we received from readers, celebrating the heroes in their lives.

Have a fantastic weekend all!

KAREN NEOH
Editor
leaderonomics.com

BUSINESS LESSONS FROM BEYONCE

By Tara Thiagarajan

Beyoncé Giselle Knowles is one of the music industry’s brightest stars with arguably, the biggest voice of this generation.

Not only is she a triple threat, she is also a smart businesswoman and record producer. It’s no wonder millions of people around the world are inspired by her tenacity.

What is it about Beyoncé that makes her such a powerful, successful woman? Surely, these are attributes we could all learn regardless of our gender.

1 Collaborate with your peers

Although Beyoncé is a powerful solo artist, she could not have gotten to where she is now if it weren’t for the success of her group, Destiny’s Child.

To this day, she never shies away from any opportunity to collaborate with fellow artistes on chart-topping hits such as the recent Flawless (Remix) featuring Nicki Minaj and Drunk in Love featuring her husband, Jay-Z.

While on her journey to becoming successful individuals, we must never forget the importance of our peers and colleagues in the process. After all, two heads are always better than one.

2 Successful business partnerships

Beyoncé’s partnership with commercial powerhouse, Pepsi is probably one of the most successful business moves she has made.

Especially in the United States, if any individual were to be asked to come to mind when they think of a Pepsi commercial, many of them will think of Beyoncé, the face of the brand.

Pepsi not only intends to include her in commercials as it also plans to fund her creative projects including album promotions and much more.

Beyoncé’s deal with Pepsi shows that she makes smart business decisions that benefit both her and the company she is collaborating with. It shows us that we have to think of long-term benefits of any decision we make before we go with that choice.

3 The Beyoncé brand

Beyoncé has always had her loyal fans by her side with every album she chose to release to the public.

However, nobody really knew how big of an influence she was until she took the world by surprise when she unexpectedly released her self-titled album on iTunes without any promotion.

Within the first three days of the album’s release, a record-breaking 617,000 copies were sold.

Conclusion

It is evident that Beyoncé is a highly influential person who does more than entertain the masses.

She inspires women to be successful while embracing their femininity and shows them that there is no “or” in the “beauty or brains” dispute. She is living proof that you can take pride in your beauty as well as intelligence.

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

I AM WOMAN WATCH ME SOAR

This morning, I found myself in a café listening to salsa music—in the distance, the space I had used a few years back to organise a fundraiser “dance for life” to raise cancer awareness and the joy of dancing to stay fit! Being a Tuesday morning, the momentary indulgence in coffee and Quiet has become a rare occurrence.

Even as I decided to throw caution to the wind and jump up to dance for the unsuspecting breakfast crowd, I scanned in the soaked in the scene around me. A woman reading a book sipping her coffee, women waiting for meetings—some looking poised and confident, others shifting just a touch uneasily in their seats, and the ladies next to me positively effervescent in chatter.

I love the fact I have been in the same place as each of these women at some point in my life. International Women’s Day. How do you even begin to describe the 21st century woman?

In our line article, Roshan Thiran calls for a little introspection and points out a painful truth—that from minions to CEOs, nobody is really good at self-evaluation. He puts forth some tips on how to assess and evaluate ourselves.

On the topic of making a career comeback after a hiatus, we spoke to corporate leaders who shared their words of advice with key decision makers who play a role in creating a conducive work environment for women and men alike. They also shared their personal journeys and lessons learnt.

Leaders come in all forms and sizes. We also spent some time with women leaders who have made a difference in communities, small and large.

For a cross-continent snapshot of young women leaders and their world-views, Tara Thiagarajan connected with eight awe-inspiring individuals to bring you their stories.

More on leaders of tomorrow: we also highlight an innovative internship programme that gives students the opportunity to be exposed and immersed in the work of leading organisations across South East Asia.

We featured many individuals who have gone against the grain and exposed and immersed in the work of leading organisations across South East Asia.

Last, and by no means least, Nina Ti presents some of the tributes we received from readers, celebrating the heroes in their lives.

Have a fantastic weekend all!

KAREN NEOH
Editor
leaderonomics.com

BUSINESS LESSONS FROM BEYONCE

By Tara Thiagarajan

Beyoncé Giselle Knowles is one of the music industry’s brightest stars with arguably, the biggest voice of this generation.

Not only is she a triple threat, she is also a smart businesswoman and record producer. It’s no wonder millions of people around the world are inspired by her tenacity.

What is it about Beyoncé that makes her such a powerful, successful woman? Surely, these are attributes we could all learn regardless of our gender.

1 Collaborate with your peers

Although Beyoncé is a powerful solo artist, she could not have gotten to where she is now if it weren’t for the success of her group, Destiny’s Child.

To this day, she never shies away from any opportunity to collaborate with fellow artistes on chart-topping hits such as the recent Flawless (Remix) featuring Nicki Minaj and Drunk in Love featuring her husband, Jay-Z.

While on her journey to becoming successful individuals, we must never forget the importance of our peers and colleagues in the process. After all, two heads are always better than one.

2 Successful business partnerships

Beyoncé’s partnership with commercial powerhouse, Pepsi is probably one of the most successful business moves she has made.

Especially in the United States, if any individual were to be asked to come to mind when they think of a Pepsi commercial, many of them will think of Beyoncé, the face of the brand.

Pepsi not only intends to include her in commercials as it also plans to fund her creative projects including album promotions and much more.

Beyoncé’s deal with Pepsi shows that she makes smart business decisions that benefit both her and the company she is collaborating with. It shows us that we have to think of long-term benefits of any decision we make before we go with that choice.

3 The Beyoncé brand

Beyoncé has always had her loyal fans by her side with every album she chose to release to the public.

However, nobody really knew how big of an influence she was until she took the world by surprise when she unexpectedly released her self-titled album on iTunes without any promotion.

Within the first three days of the album’s release, a record-breaking 617,000 copies were sold.

Conclusion

It is evident that Beyoncé is a highly influential person who does more than entertain the masses.

She inspires women to be successful while embracing their femininity and shows them that there is no “or” in the “beauty or brains” dispute. She is living proof that you can take pride in your beauty as well as intelligence.

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

This Career Guide Is Powered By Leaderonomics.com

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

For advertising and advertorials, please contact Pravin Kumar at pravin.kumar@leaderonomics.com or +6011 2377 7850

leaderonomics.com
By ROSHAN THIRAN
roshan.thiran@leaderonomics.com

L

AST weekend, I realised how horrible I am at self-evaluation. But as I asked around, I real-
ised that this disease not only afflicts me, but almost every-
one I know.

For example, 95% of all parents think their children are above average. More than 98% of us believe that our leader-
ship skills are above average. Most people believe they would be in the “low-risk” category when it comes to their inclination to get heart attacks or serious illnesses, regardless of their current exercise regime.

The majority of people are unrealistically optimistic about their own health risks compared with their peers. Research shows that most university students do a far better job predicting the longevity of their roommates’ romantic relationships than their own. Clearly, these examples illustrate that people are not objective when evaluating themselves. In fact, research indicates that the “majority of people say that they are more likely than their peers to provide accurate self-awareness,” which in itself showcases how horrible we are at evaluating our own selves.

A number of years ago, brothers Chip & Dan Heath wrote an excellent book called Switch where the two brothers describe how individuals are afflicted by “positive illusion”. They too concluded that most people areousy self-evaluators.

They believe this results in our inability to change, as we are often delusional about our current strengths and weaknesses, thinking change is not necessary for us.

In this book, the Heath brothers espose the story of an experiment by psychologists Peter Borkenau and Anette Lührer. The experiment was tagged the “Fake Weatherman” study.

The scholars brought a fake weatherman into a room full of people, and that person gave a 90 second weather report. The folks in the room then had to guess the weather reporter’s IQ (intelligence quotient). They also asked the fake weatherman to guess his own IQ.

What did they find? Amazingly, the observers offered far more accurate predictions than the weatherman, even though they knew nothing else about these complete strangers!

This experiment was later repeated in different forms. Each time, people with limited to no knowledge or background on the individual observed, made far better assessments of the person than the individual concerned.

How could this be possible? Each of us should make better assessments of ourselves than total strangers, right? But time and time again, it seems that we are less accurate about ourselves than a stranger would be.

Why is this so? The reality is that no one welcomes bad news about themself. It is also hard admitting that you may not be as good as others, or worse, having to own up to mistakes.

But, the leaders that do seek out self-evaluation do so because they want to keep learning and growing. Without awareness, there is no growth.

Ask almost any leader and he (or she) will readily agree that self-awareness is critical to success. The deeper the self-awareness obtained, the greater the leader. Yet, most of us have no time for personal reflection.

THE ‘LOSA’ CEO

Years ago, I was asked by a CEO (chief executive officer) of an organisation to coach his leadership team. As I sat with him, he was clearly annoyed and irate with the quality of the lead-
ers reporting to him.

In fact, he used harsh words such as “stupid” and “useless” to emphasise how poor his team was. I listened and told him that I would get back to him after meeting his team and making an assessment of them.

Surprisingly, as I met the team, his version of events didn’t seem as though I would match what his team said.

This got me rather curious so I told him that I would like to spend some time determining what the real issue was. He continued to be adamant that he had a poorly perform-
ing leadership team.

Interestingly, in all his stories, he was the solitary voice of reason, pushing changes and driving the board’s agenda.

Yet, all his direct reports seem to similarly work hard for the success of the organisation and they believed that he was the reason the organisation couldn’t move forward.

As I tried to “coach” this CEO, he became defensive and continued to assert that he was right and they were all clueless. This situation went on for a few weeks until I told him outright that he may have the "LOSE" disease. He immediately looked me in the eye and asked me what that was and if there was a cure. I replied, “The LOSA disease happens to folks who are lousy self-evaluators (LOSA means Lack Of Self-Awareness). And the only way to fix it is to reflect and take personal responsibility.”

I lost that assignment and never met him again. Needless to say, he did not remain CEO for very long either.

SELF-ASSESSMENTS IN THE WORKPLACE

In the workplace, flawed self-assessments are not just confined to CEOs or senior leaders. Employees tend to overestimate their skill, making it difficult to have meaningful feedback and dialogue sessions.

The hardest discussions to have are with employees who feel that they “know it all” and are always right. In fact, make it a point never to hire such people if I can detect these types during interviews.

SELF-ASSESSMENTS AND WOMEN

Last week, TalentCorp launched the 2015 Career Comeback Programme to encourage women back into the workforce. One thing that these women need to be conscious of is how to be aware of writing their self-

essentially, our self-views generally differ from our actual behaviour and performance. We overrate (or under-rate) ourselves constantly. So, how do we become better self-evaluators? I would like to suggest four steps for us to become better self-evaluators.

Gather evidence – before we make judgments about ourselves, first gather evidence from as many sources as possible. Obtain 360-degree feedback from colleagues, managers and friends.

Identify your strengths, areas where credit is due, and weaknesses.

Develop an action plan – develop a clear plan to improve. The goal of the exercise cannot just be knowl-
edge but has to be action-oriented. Build a plan and set clear timings on how to overcome gaps or issue areas.

Keep an open mind as you analyse the data and imagine you are analys-
ing someone else’s evidence.

Develop an action plan – develop a clear plan to improve. The goal of the exercise cannot just be knowl-
edge but has to be action-oriented. Build a plan and set clear timings on how to overcome gaps or issue areas.

Keep an open mind as you analyse the data and imagine you are analys-
ing someone else’s evidence.

Draw conclusions – outline a detailed report on yourself. Identify your strengths, areas to improve and where you stand in comparison to your peers.

Draw conclusions – outline a detailed report on yourself. Identify your strengths, areas to improve and where you stand in comparison to your peers.

Be clear to spell out in your report how good (or bad) you are in each area of your work, relationships and goals.

The ‘LOSA’ CEO (chief executive officer) of an organisation was the solitary voice of reason, pushing changes and driving the board’s agenda. As I tried to “coach” this CEO, he became defensive and continued to assert that he was right and they were all clueless. This situation went on for a few weeks until I told him outright that he may have the "LOSE" disease. He immediately looked me in the eye and asked me what that was and if there was a cure. I replied, “The LOSA disease happens to folks who are lousy self-evaluators (LOSA means Lack Of Self-Awareness). And the only way to fix it is to reflect and take personal responsibility.” I lost that assignment and never met him again. Needless to say, he did not remain CEO for very long either.

STEPS TO SELF-EVALUATE

Essentially, our self-views generally differ from our actual behaviour and performance. We overrate (or under-rate) ourselves constantly. So, how do we become better self-evaluators? I would like to suggest four steps for us to become better self-evaluators.

1. Gather evidence – before we make judgments about ourselves, first gather evidence from as many sources as possible. Obtain 360-degree feedback from colleagues, managers and friends. Attain any form of assessments done, even those done for development. Ask as many people as possible for frank feedback on strengths and weaknesses.

2. Analyse evidence – once you have gathered as many data points as possible, analyse the data. Review the feedback and be as honest as possible with yourself. Do not try to find fault with the data, but is game to keep trying and

3. Develop an action plan – develop a clear plan to improve. The goal of the exercise cannot just be knowledge but has to be action-oriented. Build a plan and set clear timings on how to overcome gaps or issue areas. Keep a record of progress and adjust the plan as necessary.

4. Final thoughts – research indicates that people who really know themselves are happier and more content with life. It is the hardest thing to truly “examine” ourselves and our charac-
ters including its flaws and limitations. Yet, to know ourselves enables us to go to a “higher ground”, and a higher level of consciousness.

Only when we realise that we are not “perfect” and that we have “repa"ms" to be made, can we truly grow and develop into the leaders we were meant to be.

Remember, self-management can only happen when we are first self-aware. Nothing can be “fixed” without really knowing what to fix.
THE WINDS OF CHANGE ARE BREEDING A NEW GENERATION OF FRESH-FACED, CONFIDENT YOUNG WOMEN WHO DREAM BIG AND CHALLENGE OPPRESSIVE EXPECTATIONS SET BY SOCIETY

BY TARA THIAGARAJAN tarathiagarajan@leaderonomics.com

IGERIAN author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie stated in her now famous TEDxUstoum speech about the personal and community challenges women face. “I have chosen to no longer be apologetic for my femininity and my feminism. And I want to be respected in all of my feminality because I deserve to be.”

Women the world over, know too well the struggles of embracing their gender identity. They face modern sexism everyday from school through university and even in the workplace. From the moment we are assigned our genders at birth, society’s expectations have been placed along with those labels. Dolls for girls and toy trucks for boys is a simple example of this. These expectations may not gel with what we feel about ourselves and they can be constraining and even oppressive.

Society’s expectations of the female gender are more rigid and sometimes, overbearing. This has caused generations of capable women not achieving their full potential, clipping their wings and limiting their dreams to conform to those expectations. According to research, it was found that individually, regardless of their gender, view words associated with feminine qualities to be weaker, that those stereotypically feminine characteristics are somehow lesser than stereotypically masculine ones. However, the winds of change, which have been blowing for decades, have picked up speed in recent years, breeding a new generation of fresh-faced, confident young women who dream big and challenge oppressive expecta- tions set by society.

To gain the perspectives of women from this generation, eight young people from Australia, Finland, India, Malaysia, Scotland and Singapore were asked about school, the challenges they face as young women and how they plan to overcome these oppressive stereotypes.

These are excerpts of our interviews.
SHOWING THE WAY

By LIM LAY HSUAN and KAREN NEOH
editor@leaderonomics.com

In conjunction with International Women’s Day, we focus on the working women of the 21st century. The experience varies across the globe — many have written about the labour force participation of women, the glass ceiling and gender equality. Working mothers have always been inspirational in terms of their agility and multitasking skills in striking a balance between family and career. This is more so when they are in leadership positions in the corporate world.

At the recent launch of the 2015 Career Comeback Programme, we learnt of many great accounts of women given the opportunity to return to work while balancing the many priorities in life. We caught up with several senior leaders who have made it happen even with significant barriers in their way. They shared their personal journeys and lessons for other working women.

As leaders, we also asked them to offer their advice to other key decision makers on how to play a role in creating a conducive and productive work environment for women and men alike.

OF PEAKS AND PLATEAUS

Datun Maznah Mahbob, CEO of Aminvest, shares her wisdom on women and careers. “Women need to be comfortable with their pace of career development. It is okay to reach a plateau at some point of your working life.

“Reaching a plateau is not a bad thing. In fact, it is during these moments that you grow deeper in your values. It strengthens your core foundation before you take off again to achieve greater success and sustainability in your career. On the other hand, one may be ‘accelerating’ all the time, but the person’s growth might be a shallow one.”

On women planning to return to work after a career break, Maznah advises, “Use the time you are away from the workforce to keep yourself updated with industry trends. Consider taking short professional courses to upskill yourself, or attend industry-related events to stay in touch with people in the field.

“You will be surprised what women who return to the workforce can bring to the table. The years of hiatus from work, but managing finances and time at home, and organising your home and children are actually soft skills that can prove priceless when you return to work.”

ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

We also talked to Sugunah Verumandy, human resource manager of General Electric International Inc in Malaysia and Brunei.

To women of all ages, “It is key to identify an employer with employment philosophies aligned with your personal needs and growth. In order to get the attention of such an employer, however, individuals need to prove that we are worth the investment too. In any relationship including employment, it works both ways.

“In my 20 years of work experience, I have learnt that we go through different phases of life whether personal or professional. The ride hasn’t been the same; as a fresh graduate entering the workforce and today as a mother of two children working in a leading multinational company.”

Drawing from her personal journey, Sugunah shared three basic tips:

- Stay focused
- Constantly add value to your employer
- Be in the company of those who inspire and encourage you

Advice to senior leaders: “The ability to create work life flexibility is becoming a key need for most employees and this is becoming more evident amongst our millennials and next generation of leaders.

On the Career Comeback Programme, TalentCorp CEO Johan Mahmood Merican said: “We understand it can be challenging and daunting to look for a job after time out of the workforce. “We hope to ease this process by connecting jobseekers who are women returnees to potential employers. By giving them targeted incentives, we can encourage employers to expand their talent pool and at the same time provide career opportunities for women looking to return to work”.

To all women who take on multiple roles of being a mother, sister, daughter, mentor, employee and/or employer, you are an inspiration! Stay strong!

THE CEO IMPERATIVE

We asked Cheryl Yeoh, CEO of the Malaysian Innovation & Creativity Centre, MaGIC, what advice she would give CEOs when faced with an “innovate/self/herself.” Hiring or assigning this task to the company, and take that on himself/herself. Hiring or assigning this task merely to a chief innovation officer or any other CIO will not work because it will never be embedded into the culture and core activities of the company, which is what’s needed for companies to compete in this increasingly borderless and competitive new economy.

“Technology is moving at lightning speed, and has levelled the playing field for everyone and anyone around the world to compete. If companies don’t equip themselves with the tools, talent, positioning and look-ahead strategy, a Kodak moment might just happen to them.

“For example, as part of our innovation strategy, a lot of retail companies like Walmart, who are competing with the onset of e-commerce giants such as Amazon.com, has set up Walmart Labs, the innovation arm of the company to allow young talent to experiment and build new products for the retailer that is positioned for mainstream launch if successful.”

If circumstances or opportunities prevented someone from gaining advanced qualifications, what advice would you give?

“Paper qualifications are only as good as getting you through the door. Once through, your career progression depends on your performance on the ground, a positive attitude, and a continuous drive for learning and improvement.

“These days, the Internet has levelled the playing field and there are endless online materials that people can acquire knowledge from. Arguably, the skills that high-growth, innovative companies need these days can be acquired outside of the traditional university setting.

“So my advice would be to not give up and be resourceful. A lot of successful people that I know did not go to top universities or get a Master’s degree. They got to the top by being relentlessly resourceful, proving themselves through action and side projects, and taking the initiative on self-learning or mastering a certain skill.”

IF COMPANIES DON’T EQUIP THEMSELVES WITH THE RIGHT TALENT, POSITIONING AND LOOK-AHEAD STRATEGY, A KODAK MOMENT MIGHT JUST HAPPEN TO THEM.
**THE FUTURE LEADERS OF ASEAN**

**MY ASEAN INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME**

**THE OBJECTIVES**

MY ASEAN internship programme was set up as part of the Government’s efforts to ensure that ASEAN engages and benefits Malaysian youth.

“ASEAN is emerging as one of the world’s economic drivers. Home to some 600 million people, ASEAN is the most populous trading bloc in the world. ASEAN is the 7th largest economy in the world and the third largest in Asia. ASEAN is a young, smart and increasingly educated workforce. And the fast-moving economies are embracing change and modern technology. Simply put: ASEAN is proving itself more than ready to face the challenges of the modern world.”

– Dato’ Sri Mustapa Mohamed, International Trade and Industry Minister

This unique internship programme works to engage the broader ASEAN community with clear and concrete goals to ensure the young intern, partner organisations and every ASEAN nation.

“ ’The MY ASEAN internship is a programme for Malaysian students to broaden their horizons as they will be working in an exciting and dynamic environment with a team of experienced professionals. The successful networking event hosted by TalentCorp with the state for both undergraduates and employers formed a significant milestone in our efforts to discover the opportunity of tomorrow.”

– Nardiha Arni, head of group human capital, UEM Group Bhd

“ ’I would encourage students to apply for MY ASEAN internship because in a diverse and dynamic environment, you get to see things in different countries. As an intern in Maybank, the experience I gained was really insightful, because what it gave me prepared me well for my real work-life.”

– Ivan Foo, Global Maybank Apprentice

“ ’I am applying for the internship to learn about the experiences and lessons that I can gain here, and the experience will be very meaningful.”

– Nadezhda Khoo, Diploma in Electrical & Electronics Engineering, My University.

“ ’You can get a local perspective with a local experience, most people get that opportunity, but to get that local experience, you need to expose different cultures, different landscapes, different environments, and get a more global perspective, much earlier in life.”

– Wayne Cen, senior human resource director, GE ASIAAN

**WHAT MALAYSIAN YOUTH ARE SAYING**

**MY ASEAN INTERNSHIP provides our interns with leading employers at various Malaysian universities and place them as interns with leading employers at various ASUS institutions and every ASEAN nation.**

**WHAT’S IN IT FOR MY ASEAN INTERNS**

Beyond exposure to the ASEAN work sector and gaining international experience, MY ASEAN Internship offers excellent advantages for the interns:

– Become ambassadors of ASEAN
– Groomed to be Malaysia’s select pool of future leaders
– Exposure to new realities and ways of doing things, now set of compatible skills
– Broaden your horizons
– Participate in ASIAN-themed competitions and activities

**APPLY NOW!**

**WHO**

Students who are in their penultimate year or who have completed their studies within the past six months in Malaysian universities

**WHERE**

Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam

**WHAT**

10-week internship programme with leading employers with regional presence

**WHEN**

Jul 2015

**NOW: Ahead of the Upcoming Market Day in Kuala Lumpur or visit www.ready4work.my/for-students/asean-internship**

**ON THE LOOKOUT FOR REGIONAL LEADERS OF TOMORROW**

**MY ASEAN INTERNSHIP programme is seeking high-achieving students and undergraduate motivated to excel in their fields and have an active interest in the regional landscape.**

The programme will be facilitated via TalentCorp for both ASEAN nationals interning in Malaysia and for Malaysians in other ASEAN countries.

**WHAT:**

All internship permits will be given the employers who are regional champions in ASEAN

**WHO: **

100 high-achieving students from the member states of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) among Malaysian youth.

**WHERE:**

– Workshop 
– Day in Kuala Lumpur or visit www.ready4work.my/for-students/asean-internship

**TIMELINE**

Aug 7. 2014: MY ASEAN internship was first proposed by the Prime Minister during the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) 2015 Leaders Retreat. This was done as a response to broadening perceptions of ASEAN, predominantly among Malaysian youth.


Jan 2015: Launch of the MY ASEAN internship by MEF.

Feb 2015: Opens for applications by ASEAN employers, which include AirAsia, Axiata, BDO, CIMB, Digi, GE ASEAN, Maybank and Mystarjob.com, Saturday 14 March 2015.

Jul 2015: The 10-week internship programme will commence.

**APPLY NOW!**

Submit your CV to myaseaninternship@talentcorp.com.my

**PARTNERING ORGANISATIONS**

The programme is supported by 24 leading organisations from a cross section of sectors each having regional operations in one or more ASEAN countries.

**SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET EMPLOYERS!**

**DATE:** March 18

**TIME:** 10am to 1pm

**PLACE:** Mercu UEM, KL Sentral

**Brought to you by TalentCorp**

**www.ready4work.my/for-students/asean-internship**

**Are you a student or recent graduate interested to be an ASEAN intern? Submit your CV to myaseaniinternship@talentcorp.com.my**
GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO INTERN WITH DIGI

NAMED one of Forbes’ 100 world’s most innovative companies, Digi is well known for its lively and dynamic working culture and environment which makes it one of the favourite choices for employees, especially the younger generation.

As one of the participating organisations for the innovative MY ASEAN Internship programme, Digi will be giving Malaysians the opportunity to intern in Telenor Group’s business units in Thailand as well as welcoming ASEAN nationals to intern at its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur.

Haroon Bhatti, chief human resource officer, said that Digi’s priority is to give the interns an amazing experience filled with meaningful work and inspiring encounters that they can take away with them.

Each intern will be paired with a senior leader (second only to Digi’s seven management team members) to whom they will report. Haroon said that they are preparing their leaders for the programme as well. The designated senior leaders are expected to not only act as a managing superior, but also to play the role of mentor.

“ASEAN represents a very unique and different kind of potential. People want to be part of this energy and exciting phase of growth. If there’s any part of the world where anyone needs to be, it’s here,” says Haroon.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THIS INTERNSHIP

1. Digital Services: Customer Centricity
Interns will observe and learn from cutting edge digital services. They will also be involved in conducting focus groups and analytics to understand customer needs and help improve and define the important milestones in a customer’s journey with Digi.

2. Employer Branding: Let’s Inspire
In the same way Digi hopes to bring people together, connecting and sharing to inspire, interns will acquire a deep understanding of the next generation of employees who will work with Digi, and to develop and execute strategies to attract them.

3. Health, Safety, Security and Environment
This is a subject matter high on Digi’s agenda, that goes beyond the employee base and extends to all levels of the supply chain. In this respect, interns will be trained and groomed for their role in uncovering opportunities and issues, conducting analyses and working on solutions related to this area.

4. Building Winning Retail Model
Interns will experience how the organisation reimagines its sales and distribution strategy. Opportunities will include conducting analyses of stores and strategising on the kind of quality individuals and services brought in to enhance the overall retail and customer experience. This project includes on-the-job experience at Digi’s sister operations in Thailand.

Interns will be given the opportunity to present at board meetings to gain first hand exposure on the robustness of discussion that happens before a decision is made at Digi.

Regular engagement with their interns will allow mentors to share their personal leadership journeys and gauging and guiding their development along the way, providing them with a broader development and opportunity perspective in their own experiences and space.

Interns will be encouraged to write and share their own personal stories and lessons learned throughout their journeys.

How will Digi benefit from being a participant in the MY ASEAN Internship?

From a corporate responsibility perspective, we want to participate in raising the quality of young talents as they are our next generation of leaders.

With more than 40,000 employees of 38 nationalities operating across 17 nations, we are ASEAN’s most diverse franchise. We are constantly on the lookout for new talents. Through this initiative, we are able to build our pipeline for a robust workforce.

Some of the interns may be interested in our signature graduate management programmes, the Complete Banker and CIMB Fusion, after they graduate. We have trained more than 600 young men and women, and 400 of them are still active within various units, levels and regional offices of the CIMB group.

To make this MY ASEAN Internship programme available to the most deserving, CIMB will cover the cost of transport, accommodation and allowances for basic expenses.

Applications are still coming in. So far we have received 40 applications, the majority of which are Malaysian.

“In the face. Learn from it. Get up dust yourselves off, and start running; people who are not afraid of making mistakes, but love to run fast.”

— Haroon Bhatti
Chief Human Resource Officer
FROM PASSION TO ACTION

WOMEN WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

By PREMA JAYABALAN
prema.jayabalan@leaderonomics.com

HEY are women from different generations who, in their own ways, are playing a part in making a change. They have touched hearts, helped ease burdens and put a smile on many faces.

LEENA GHOSH
Assistant director, promotion and protection of human rights, civil society engagements and Interaction, Asean Associated Entities

1. Can you tell us what interested you about working on human rights, civil society engagements and interaction with Asean associated entities?

I had a penchant for human rights since young. I have been working on human rights issues since my school days right up to when I started my law practice in Malaysia. I was active in the KL Bar Legal Aid Council and also the Bar Council Sub Committee on Human Rights.

When the job in Asean came about, I was immediately attracted to it because it dealt with human rights at a regional level. I also knew that this issue was very new at the time. I am privileged to be able to work in an area that I am passionate about. It is very challenging to work on human rights and even more so at a regional level.

2. What are some of the challenges you faced in your job?

Working on a “sensitive” issue like human rights at a regional level where you are dealing with 10 member states has its fair share of challenges. One of the challenges I faced was proving to the Asean Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) that I was worthy to head the unit supporting them. I had to overcome resistance from people who felt hesitant about my experience and also the fact that I came from a non-governmental background.

Another big challenge was to learn how to engage and deal with member states. This was more acute because I didn’t come from the government sector. I had to learn how to speak, address and engage with Asean member states.

One of the highlights of working with AICHR is to be able to assist in the drafting of the Asean human rights declaration. Although my role is small, I am very proud to say that we contributed to the process of coming up with the first regional declaration in Asean on human rights. This was a personal achievement which I am proud of.

3. Do you think the women of today are actively getting involved in humanitarian causes?

Yes, more and more women are getting involved. Women take an interest in humanitarian issues as many have been affected by them and this drives them to make the world a better place.

Women make good peacemakers and moderators. More women should get involved.

KHHO LAN PHEK
Volunteer, soup kitchen archdiocesan office for human development, Kuala Lumpur

1. How long have you been volunteering with this organisation?

I started volunteering as a counsellor more than 18 years ago, when it was still called the “Welcome Drop-in Centre”.

2. How often do you volunteer? What motivates you to offer your services to this organisation?

I am at the soup kitchen at least twice a week. I believe that outreach is very important so I try to spend as much time as possible talking to and getting to know our clients.

It is inspiring sometimes to meet people who have endured much in life, but who still come with a smile and spread good cheer.

When they thank me for helping, I always tell them that they have probably seen and experienced more than I have. As much as I give, I also receive.

3. Who is your role model and why?

My dearly departed husband Yong and three children Ken, Kathy and Karen supported me all the way. They have touched hearts, helped ease burdens and put a smile on many faces.

They have the same love of helping. It is inspiring sometimes to meet people who have endured much in life, but who still come with a smile and spread good cheer.

When they thank me for helping, I always tell them that they have probably seen and experienced more than I have. As much as I give, I also receive.

ZEENEESHR RAMADASS
Former newspaper journalist turned home business owner

1. What made you resign from your full-time job?

It was a tough but natural decision to make. I was at my wits end during my confinement period trying to find a good babysitter but to no avail. My inner voice or conscience got stronger over the days, irking me to leave my day job and be home with my child. But my rational mind told me we couldn’t afford it, I would get bored and that I won’t be able to take care of my child on my own.

But after many beautiful moments with my baby, I decided to make the leap, so I resigned. As scary as it was, I felt relieved.

2. How did you get into starting your own business?

My husband enjoys designing during his free time. He would create websites and marketing materials for friends and family, charging very little if anything.

We realised that many needed writing work done for their designs so we combined both our expertise and started the company. I have to stress that support from your spouse is integral in running a business from home. We had to organise our space, time and resources accordingly but I believe with success comes sacrifice.

3. What advice would you give stay-at-home mothers who want to have their own startup?

Turn your interest, passion or hobby into a business, it will make things easier.

High chances you won’t get tangled with the emotions that come with doing something you don’t like but need the money from.

Your child needs you at your best everyday so there’s no room for excess baggage from something you don’t like doing.

Don’t be afraid to start somewhere. It is easy to do business these days. There are plenty of platforms for you to market your business; from social media to weekend flea markets, there’s always a venue. You just have to think out of the box.
A HEALTHY BALANCE
MANAGING WORK AND FAMILY WITH CARE

By ELAINE YONG
editor@leaderonomics.com

F

irmly on career? This is a timeless argument for many mothers. In Malaysia, females make up about 50% of the total labour force, and it is indeed a very difficult decision for many women. Prioritising the family ensures the proper care of the children but forsking a source of income. Prioritising work means putting aside or postponing a family. Which will it be? For some women, this is an easy decision but for others, it may entail many sleepless nights.

Thankfully, I have been lucky enough to balance both a job and a family. How did I manage this?

BALANCING WORK LIFE
For starters, how does one balance work and life? Motherhood is a big lifestyle adjustment regardless of a woman’s work discipline.

It is important that a company understands this need and provide benefits to support the employee. Benefits such as flexiwork hours, medical, childcare and nursing facilities for breastfeeding mothers are things important to working mothers.

If your company does not have a written policy on these issues, it is important to establish a common understanding with your boss.

At my present workplace, the facilities here allow me the reassurance that I will be able to breastfeed my second child for at least two years while I returned to work.

For women, to ensure a productive work life is not disrupted when you start a family, draw up a list of career objectives. Identify your goal and prioritise tasks to achieve that goal. This way, office time can be dedicated to tasks that can maximise and achieve this career goal. Check your status at the end of every year. Are you reaching your goal?

When you have children, it is easy to get caught up with their activities and forget your own. As such, a working mother needs to be extra vigilant in keeping time. Get an organiser, and use it to write down important dates of meetings and deadlines of important assignments or projects.

There is no excuse for being tardy or forgetting a task completely. In this modern age, I find scheduling events easiest using the smartphone calendar.

BALANCING HOME LIFE
A reliable childcare support system is the biggest challenge for a working mother. While away at work, it is essential for mothers to fully concentrate on the work tasks at hand rather than worry about childcare issues.

In Malaysia, not many organisations provide in-house nursery or daycare, thus, a majority of working mothers will have to find alternative means.

The internet is a good place to start locating reliable child minders. With social media, many parenting forums provide invaluable advice about childcare centres and even neighbourhood babysitters.

It is easy to neglect the head of the household once the children arrive. Do schedule “marriage dates” with the husband to bring back the much-needed romance.

Plan for a quiet dinner for two, watch the latest blockbuster at the movies or work on a simple project together.

Another useful tip to manage the household is to manage the children’s behaviour successfully. Set routines and praise the children often. Shower each child with individual attention.

Take turns with your husband to play with the children separately. By ensuring that they (the children) have your undivided attention now, you will find that they will continue to listen and confide in you when they are older.

TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF
Regardless of work or home, a working mother also needs to find time for herself. This means taking extra care of your health be it physically or emotionally.

Prevention is better than cure, thus, regular exercise (something as simple as walking) and a balanced diet (occasion fast food is allowed) will ensure that you are fit to attend to work and the physical needs of the family.

I have a simple practice of parking my car 10 minutes away from my workplace to meet my daily exercise requirement.

Secondly, yearly medical check-ups are just as important to monitor your health status. As for emotional needs, a woman needs some alone time to herself once in a while. Book yourself a massage or pedicure session to give yourself an emotional lift. If you prefer company, have a girls’ night out with friends. Personally, I treasure my solitude, thus I have made short solo trips to recharge my batteries.

MY TAKE
Motherhood is a role for life, I wish all mothers a happy and healthy journey in balancing work and family. Happy Women’s Day!
FIGHT YOUR INNER BEASTS

By CAROLINE REGINA PARAMESWARAN
editor@leaderonomics.com

Fear is paralyzing. Every now and then it rears its ugly head and pollutes our minds, convincing us that we are incapable of achieving bigger things. Fear plants negative thoughts in our minds causing us to doubt ourselves. Ultimately, it makes us lead smaller, less fulfilling lives. We battle fear on a daily basis, be it at home or work. But are we actively trying to defeat it or merely running away? Do we have the necessary “armour” to win this battle against fear?

These were some of the issues I struggled with during my first few weeks as an intern. I had to face a whole new environment and my fear of failure held me back from performing. However, my supervisor and boss were very supportive. Through our conversations with them, I gained invaluable insights about managing my fears. These insights were about communicating, acknowledging and deconstructing fears as well as having a trustworthy support group.

COMMUNICATION IS IMPORTANT

“The pen is mightier than the sword.” — Edward Bulwer-Lytton

Words are more effective than weapons in accomplishing a given purpose. In the battle against fear, there are virtually no physical weapons that can help us. However, communication can help. Initially, when I faced troubles at work, I was adamant to try and solve matters on my own. But I soon realised that I was glad that I did. By communicating, we realised how different our working styles were. We managed to find a middle ground whereby we could both work together more effectively.

Communication is essential. Especially when we are unable to manage our fears alone. Through communication, we allow others to grasp a better understanding and help us manage our fears. Remember, fear is an inherent part of human nature. And no one should suffer in silence. Therefore, take courage and voice out your fears!

FACING FEAR HEAD ON

“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself: I have lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along. You must do the thing you think you cannot do.” — Eleanor Roosevelt

Voicing out also helps us to address our fears instead of avoiding them. Before opening up about my fears, I had inadvertently pushed them aside and tried focusing only on the task at hand. However, my worries and fears continued to loom over me like giant daggers. Since I did not address them, they hung over me ominously and prevented me from doing my best.

Once I had identified the root cause, i.e. fear of failure, I was better able to deal with it. Strangely, knowing what I was afraid of gave me a comforting feeling. At least I now knew what was contributing to my lack of productivity instead of constantly bullying myself about not being up to par.

While I addressed my fears by talking it out, there are other ways that can be utilised for those who have trouble articulating their fears. An example is the AWARE method.

A: Acknowledge it. Recognise that it’s a normal reaction.
W: Watch it. Observe your emotions from a third person point of view without passing judgment.
A: Act normally. This tricks your subconscious mind into thinking that everything is alright.
R: Repeat the above steps where necessary.
E: Expect the best.

Feel free to experiment with either method and find out which one best suits you.

THINKING OF THE WORST CASE SCENARIO

Analysing our fears is probably the best way to bring them down. More often than not, we tend to exaggerate our fears. However, when we take the time to deconstruct them, we will probably realise that what we were afraid of wasn’t that scary after all.

This was one of the most honest advice I have ever received. While I spoke about my fears and worries, I was constantly asked, “Why is that a bad thing?” Initially I had all sorts of excuses for that question. Little did I realise that I was merely justifying my fears and completely missing the point. My boss patiently steered me in the intended direction by repeatedly asking me that question until I realised that the worst case scenario I had envisioned wasn’t so bad after all.

By repeatedly answering that same question, I was able to view my fears in a different light and ultimately realise that what I was afraid of could actually be overcome. Therefore, whenever you are fearful, try asking yourself these questions to deconstruct your fears:

“What is the worst thing that can happen?”

“Why is that a bad thing?”

“I can’t overcome this?”

HAVE A STRONG SUPPORT SYSTEM

“No man is an island.” — John Donne

We may be able to overcome fear on our own but having a support group of friends will definitely make the battle a lot easier. While struggling with my fears, I really appreciated the presence of my family and close friends. They encouraged and reminded me that I was more than the sum of my fears and that I had overcome similar situations before.

Their kind (and sometimes not so kind) words helped me see my fears in a different light. Often times it is easy to get caught up in a spiral of doubt until we forget to think rationally. Here is where our select group of personal cheerleaders play a role. Sometimes all that is needed is for them to knock some sense into us and change the way we view our fears.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

“Remember, the only thing to fear is fear; and – well, don’t even fear Fear, for he’s a cowardly chap at the best, who will run if you show a brave front.” — William Walker Atkinson

To sum up, fear is an internal battle which manifests itself outwardly in various negative ways. Thus, we must actively fight to overcome it. Do not let your fears take up permanent residence in you to the point that they prevent you from trying at all. I have shown you some of the necessary tools. So, friends, put on your armour and hold your heads up high. Smile and put your best foot forward onto victory if I can do it, so can you.

Caroline Regina is an aspiring psychologist who is currently interning with the Youth Department of Leaderonomics. She loves to volunteer and experience myriad things but is often harpered by the fear of failure. However, she is taking baby steps towards overcoming her fears by utilising the aforementioned tools with much success. She welcomes everyone who is in the same boat to jump in and vanquish the battle of fear with her. Connect with Caroline at editor@leaderonomics.com
E celebrate International Women’s Day by highlighting just a few of the billions of unsung heroes.

We love strong, independent women who move with courage, make unconventional choices and forge their own paths. Here are inspiring stories shared by you, our readers, about the role models in your lives.

MY beloved mother, Jeyamany Pooranalingam, is now in her mid-70s. She did not have a tertiary education as it was considered improper for girls to be highly-educated during her younger days.

My mother managed to run the house on a meagre income as my father, a primary school teacher, was the sole breadwinner in our family of six. She would always advise my three siblings and me that education was very important and that it was the key to a bright future.

She would ensure that we ate a healthy breakfast as well as nutritional food for all other meals every day.

Now, even after I am married with two children of my own, my mum still treats me like a child.

Whenever I return to my hometown, she will prepare my favourite dishes, serve them to me and watch me eat.

She shares ideas on how to prepare nutritious yet simple meals for my children and advises me on how to take care of my health and to bring up my children.

Even now, my parents are still concerned about our wellbeing and do their best to support us in whatever we undertake.

So, mum, I just want to say, “You are my role model and I will always look up to you!”

PARAMES POORANALINGAM
Penang

JADE is a girl I met at a leadership camp (DIODE Camp) run by Leaderonomics. We were complete strangers on the first day at camp. Never would I have imagined that we would become the best of friends, even now.

Jade, 16, is a firecracker. She left such an impression on me. She may be beautiful, humble, kind, sophisticated and all other gentle things in the world, but as soon as you get to know her – BOOM!

You’ll never know what crazy things she might do that could make you laugh your head off.

But everyone has his (or her) own story, including Jade. Looking at her, you will never know that she went through a very painful childhood.

At the age of 10, she was extremely headstrong and outspoken, which are the qualities of a leader. Unfortunately, these attributes made her a target among bullies.

Her “friends” started leaving her down. She was the qualities of a leader. Unfortunately, these attributes made her a target among bullies. Her “friends” started leaving her down. She was headstrong and outspoken, which are the qualities of a leader. Unfortunately, these attributes made her a target among bullies.

In a meagre income as my father, a primary school teacher, was the sole breadwinner in our family of six. She would always advise my three siblings and me that education was very important and that it was the key to a bright future.

She would ensure that we ate a healthy breakfast as well as nutritional food for all other meals every day.

Now, even after I am married with two children of my own, my mum still treats me like a child.

Whenever I return to my hometown, she will prepare my favourite dishes, serve them to me and watch me eat.

She shares ideas on how to prepare nutritious yet simple meals for my children and advises me on how to take care of my health and to bring up my children.

Even now, my parents are still concerned about our wellbeing and do their best to support us in whatever we undertake.

So, mum, I just want to say, “You are my role model and I will always look up to you!”

PARAMES POORANALINGAM
Penang

Our stakeholders share their stories

Best employers share their stories

World Poetry Day: Poetic wisdom

Also next week

You’re simply the best!

Our stakeholder universe in a changing world

You can’t find enough words to describe you. You are just amazing, cool, beautiful, and many more adjectives that escape me right now.

And you are just a funny person who makes my world go round. There is nothing you cannot do, Mom.

Have done more than I can ever ask for, Thank you for being there for me always.

Remarkable that you are, I love you.

ALEXANDRIA JOHNSON
Perak

SUPERMOM!

In the year 1957,
God sent a beautiful angel to Earth,
And a flower blossomed splendidly in this world,
She was everything I could wish for.

Amazing as she is,
She is also an extraordinary person,
How lucky I am to have a best friend like her,
She lifts me up whenever I am down.

Who is this unique person, you may ask,
It’s none other than my hero, my saviour, my Supermom,
Whenever I need an inspiration,
She will be there,
Even though she is an ordinary woman,
She is no average human being in my eyes,
And she can do anything,
You name it.

Even though life for you was hard,
You didn’t give up at all, Mom,
You worked hard to accomplish many things,
God has made you this way.

Something in you makes you a bionic mom,
Vigilant, cautious, alert,
Whisper your name and you will be there,
Believe you can save the world with your mighty hands.

Feeling a theme song coming on soon,
Supermom you are, superhero you be,
In a Marvel comic book,
Pretty sure you have many readers.

I can’t find enough words to describe you.

And you are just a funny person who makes my world go round.
There is nothing you cannot do, Mom.

You have done more than I can ever ask for,
Thank you for being there for me always.

Remarkable that you are, I love you.

ALEXANDRIA JOHNSON
Perak

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

For advertising and advertorials, contact Pravin Kumar at pravin.kumar@leaderonomics.com or +6011 2377 7850