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OF FINDING THE ONE (JOB) YOU LOVE

LABOUR Day may be celebrated on different days around the world but it recognises everyone who contributes to society, their families and the economy in their own ways.

This year’s theme being “Healthy Workers, Higher Productivity”, it is fitting that Brian Fellow stresses the importance of health and wellness at the workplace.

Beyond that, he gives concrete examples of how he is transforming his own company – from having healthy options during work lunches to finding wellness opinion leaders from within – leaders who would be given an opportunity to lead in areas they may never have expected to at work.

The thread that has run through many a story in our pullout is finding a job we are passionate about – indeed if we are passionate about work, is it really “work”? Freda Liu shares her experience of focusing on her calling, as opposed to her call of duty.

I hope you and your loved ones have a lovely Labour Day today, and enjoy the fruits of all your hard work.

KAREN NEOH
Editor
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LABOUR OF LOVE

By LIM HAY HSUAN
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LABOUR Day, also known as International Labourer’s Day, has its origins whereby labour activists fought for eight hours of work, eight hours of recreation and eight hours of rest.

In Malaysia, it is observed on May 1 as a public holiday, to appreciate workers and celebrate their achievements. The theme for this year is “Healthy Workers, Higher Productivity”, aimed to promote healthy lifestyles in the workplace.

Here are four tips to help the working populace stay healthy and productive:

1. **Refire**
   - In this second quarter of the year, it is good to revisit our written goals set at the beginning of the year and re-evaluate where we are at.
   - Are we still on track, or have we slacked off on what we set ourselves to do? Is our fire still burning, or is it slowly dying? What can you do to rekindle the flame?
   - Take this day off to rethink your purpose, reignite your passion, and start loving what you do. Stop doing unproductive things that may be preventing you from being your best.

2. **Exercise**
   - It is a no-brainer that exercise improves our health and quality of life. According to a Stanford University research, just by taking a simple walk improves our creativity too.
   - A colleague of mine sometimes goes to the office after her morning gym sessions. I can testify that she always looks cheerful and sprightly.

3. **Sleep**
   - Sleep is often taken for granted, even though we know it is the time where our body undergoes repair and detoxification.
   - In an article by Dr Travis Bradberry, he highlighted the dangers of how sleep deprivation affects not only the physical aspects, but also our emotional health too.
   - By skipping sleep, we catapult our stress levels and impair our brain functions – definitely not a wise move if we want to improve our productivity at work.

4. **Thankfulness**
   - Count it a blessing to be working and doing something with your gifts, talents and skills.
   - Whether you do it for money or passion, or for a higher purpose, learn to be grateful to be given that opportunity to showcase what you have.
   - By having this attitude of gratitude, your life can be enriched even more.

In conclusion

A wise angelic king once wrote, “I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil – this is the gift of the Divine.”

To be able to enjoy the work of your labour is indeed a gift. Accept this gift gracefully. Have a good REST this Labour Day!

The opinions expressed in this career guide are those of the writers or the people quoted and not necessarily those of Leaderonomics.
WEAVE HEALTH AND WELLNESS INTO YOUR COMPANY’S CULTURE

By BRIAN FIELKOW
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INVESTING in your employees’ health and wellness means that you’re investing in your company’s culture. I’ll admit, when it comes to my company, creating a corporate culture has been at the forefront of my organisation, but I was behind the curve on corporate wellness issues. But I am now changing that. Although I did not focus aggressively on wellness in the past, it wasn’t because I failed to care about my employees. The opposite was true. I cared deeply.

My thinking was, and still is, that employees are adults. Each person makes choices about what to eat and drink, and whether to exercise.

I'm planning to revamp the company’s vending options so that the majority of choices are healthy. As you weave wellness into your company’s culture, you can provide incentives to employees. Encourage people to work out together. There’s nothing like letting the team know that everyone is in this together.

4 SIT COMFORTABLY
Invest in ergonomics. Get rid of poorly-made chairs. Put as much thought into an ergonomically efficient office as you do into buying the next major piece of equipment for your facility.

5 FIND YOUR WELLNESS OPINION LEADERS
Your company likely has employees who are knowledgeable and committed to their own wellness. Harness their power. Allow them to become an in-house resource for other employees.

6 PROMOTE BALANCE
We live in an era where we are constantly on-call. We are never more than a text message or an email away from the office. Show your employees that you recognise this fact and encourage them to find time to truly disconnect. Also, consider the fact that traditional vacation benefits may no longer fit our modern lifestyles. We are abandoning defined vacation days per year and replacing it with a more progressive “flexible time off” policy.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS
Look for insurance premium discounts if you actively support a wellness programme. Above all, create an environment that lets people measure success against their own personal goals and not some manufactured standard.

You, as a business leader, can implement simple changes to promote wellness. Stay clear of judging others and respect the decisions that each person makes. As you weave wellness into your organisation, have a plan to operationalise your objectives.

What is your action plan to weave wellness into your company’s culture?
MAKE IT WORK
YOUR CALLING VS A CALL OF DUTY?

BY FREDA LIU
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We all have gifts and sometimes yes, we have a specific calling in our lives. When I started my career, I didn’t know if it was my passion. All I knew at that age was that I enjoyed writing, communicating and interacting with people.

My other career choice was advertising but if meant I had to do one or the other. Should I go into copywriting or client servicing?

In public relations (PR), I could do everything. That meant accepting a brief, coming up with a proposal, doing the writing, executing the plan and following up with the plans.

INTEREST PIQUED

Before I completed my final semester at university, I did not even know there was a career option in PR. It was by pure chance when I was doing an elective course in PR that piqued my interest and got me hooked.

When I started, the industry was fairly new, while advertising was more established. People in the advertising industry definitely earned more.

If money was my main drive, I would not have gone into my chosen path. So at 23, I guess PR became my “passion”.

I was also privileged to do other things like reading news on radio and TV, which I developed alongside my full-time job. It was mostly to earn extra pocket money, but I knew I was learning something new. Who knew then where all these experiences would take me?

THE REALITY: HARDWORK AND SACRIFICE

In the early days of PR, the role was viewed as somewhat glamorous. The fact that I was on radio and TV also seems “glamorous” to the outside world.

Now, here is the reality of the work I did in PR. The work really starts at 5pm when we are finished with meetings and events. We reply emails, send media invitations, write reports and news releases and prepare media kits. Every working day ended at 8pm at best.

There have been days when I had to stay overnight when the work called for it. However, most people would only see us at fancy hotels greeting media and so the job seemed glamorous.

For my work in TV, I was there three hours before going on air vetting through scripts, doing voiceovers and putting on makeup just to be on air for 30 minutes. Sometimes the news was at 8pm or 11pm during weekends. There was not much social life.

In the early days of PR, the role was mostly to earn extra pocket money, but it meant I had to do one or the other.

In PR, I could do everything. That meant accepting a brief, coming up with a proposal, doing the writing, executing the plan and following up with the plans.

LIVING YOUR CALL OF DUTY PASSIONATELY

What’s the point? Living your passion and a call of duty can be the same thing. Living your passion does not mean there’s no hard work behind the scenes. Living the passion means reaping what you sow.

I have been working at my station for seven years now, ever since it started. In the early days, it was a small team and we did everything: from scheduling, preparing questions, conducting interviews (the glamorous part!) to editing.

This is not knowing if people will like what we do or if people even know about us. However, we plough on. Why?

I believe that what I do can change and help the business community. That is my call of duty and my passion. My years in radio and TV have all helped to sharpen my skills to do what I am able to now.

LIVE YOUR PASSION

You may have your passions but you must find outlets to live them. In your pursuit of your passions, don’t neglect your other duties and responsibilities like paying the bills and spending time with family.

In life, you don’t always get what you want or think you want. Over time, I have realised that I enjoy looking for stories be it in PR or radio. I like communicating these stories. I know there is much work to be done, even though sometimes the work can be repetitive. Be prepared to bite the bullet. Yes, you reap what you sow. Throw in the time factor because corn doesn’t grow overnight.

Malcolm Gladwell in his book Outliers talked about practising a specific task for 10,000 hours to hone your skills. Are you willing to make the same sacrifices as The Beatles or Bill Gates prior to their success?

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Yes, your call of duty can help you in your calling too. It does not have to be for or against. It can be done simultaneously. Moreover, your calling can change. Mine has definitely evolved. The target audience and medium has changed and will continue to change. However, the underlying core of what I do in communicating hasn’t.

The world changes, the tools change, people change. Be prepared for these changes in the pursuit of your calling and your call of duty.

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E VER wonder what keeps your favourite baristas cheerful from your first cup of coffee at the start of your day, all the way to closing time – even as your choice of beverage goes from extra shots of espresso to blended juice? From barista to managing director, the people of Starbucks are called “partners”, which gives the sense of working together and belonging in a team as a family.

Starbucks has been consistent, and persistent, in ensuring that their teams of partners come first – from communicating and delivering on their employee value proposition, to building their capabilities, cultivating a coffee culture, and nurturing a sense of purpose and meaning beyond work.

1 EMPLOYER BRANDING

The Starbucks employee value proposition is in itself quite revealing. It shows that the partners responsible for crafting it took the time to truly understand what is important to their fellow partners, and what makes them thrive.

- Opportunity. To be your best self, to have your own career.
- Opportunity. To have an impact. To live your values, and have them matched.
- Opportunity. To connect with something bigger. To make your own path and succeed.
- Opportunity. To make a meaningful connection.
- Opportunity. To be more than an employee; to be a partner.

Clarity of this message is pivotal for attracting the right people. Beyond that, everyone at Starbucks plays a role in delivering on this promise to ensure a great working environment for each other, and ultimately a great place for coffee for all.

2 PARTNER DEVELOPMENT

With the doors of opportunity opened wide, partner development is imperative to help each and every partner seize and get the most out of every opportunity.

Fully aware that this investment is necessary to equip, empower and engage their partners, Starbucks has a structured career pathway (known affectionately as their “coffee journey”) for each new hire, regardless of what position they start in.

We find that there is never a shortage of partners eager to share their coffee journey in the hopes of inspiring others to come onboard.

And for whichever path they are on, or direction they are heading in, Starbucks has developed innovative partner development programmes that encourage an ecosystem that values continuous personal growth as well as growth of fellow partners.

These include the internal promotion programmes, career enhancement programmes as well as retail learning certification programmes.

3 COFFEE AND CULTURE

Starbucks envisions of the day that we all become aficionados, and by design, works to cultivate a coffee culture.

Much like their beverages are infused with depth in flavour and that unmistakable zing!, Starbucks strives to infuse its partners with passion for coffee by building their coffee expertise and desire to share the passion with other partners and customers alike.

Walk into any store and you know that the Starbucks partners, even as they are beaming with pride, take their coffee seriously.

Not satisfied with being mere coffee enthusiasts, partners have the opportunity to elevate their craft to the master level.

For the curious ones, visits to coffee farms also allow partners to interact with farmers and see how it all starts from the humble coffee cherry.

4 HUMANITY AND LOVE

Cupping your favourite beverage, breathing in its aroma and sinking down into a comfortable cafe chair – one often feels like being enveloped in a warm hug of memories with family and loved ones.

On a national front, Starbucks supports its partners to leave their cafes en masse to, in various ways, extend their warmth and caring to those in need. Partners have an array of programmes they can choose to participate in to help the communities they live in.

Starbucks takes pride in building human connections — not only with customers and the community, but also with their partners.

In addition to delivering on their promise to give their partners opportunities, as well as the skills to build on those opportunities, Starbucks develops engagement activities within Malaysia and also with partners in other countries.

- Interested to come onboard the coffee journey with Starbucks Malaysia? Check out www.starbucks.com.my for more information.

BEST BUDDIES SHARE THEIR STARBUCKS JOURNEY

JOANNE Herman Christopher and Syarifah Nurikiana, or better known as Shazy, are two Starbucks partners that will leave a lasting impression on you with their bubbly and outspoken personalities. Joanne is currently the store manager of Starbucks Mid Valley and Shazy is the Starbucks store manager at The Gardens.

The dynamic duo met each other in 2013 when Joanne was transferred to work under the same district manager. They hit it off immediately. They have been best of friends ever since, mainly due to the fact that they share many similar interests.

When it comes to work, they always exchange ideas and share knowledge. Now that their workplace is close to each other, they have been closer than ever.

CR@Y MOMENTS

“One of our best moments together was when we both travelled to Vietnam for the first time for the Starbucks Leadership Conference last year.

“Shazy and I were in the same group, and together with a couple of other store managers, our group won the best dressed that night! We went as soldiers and the win was simply amazing that we celebrated by dancing on the stage,” said Joanne.

MEANINGFUL MOMENTS

“Every day at Starbucks is a learning experience, Starbucks represents something more than a cup of coffee. As Starbucks partners, Joanne and I both believe in contributing back to the community and we have fun doing it!”

“We participate in community service projects that were organised by the corporate social responsibility team and the experiences have been truly rewarding!” said Shazy.

Both buddies share the same passion for coffee and cherish moments of connection with customers and partners. They are enjoying their coffee journey at Starbucks and look forward to a fruitful career ahead.

“Love what you do and make the best out of every day,” Shazy concluded.
The intention of motivating IAC for E&E sector is to move away from the current relatively adhoc collaborations between individual companies and universities towards a more coordinated and comprehensive approach that ensures that collaborations towards producing industry ready graduates are driven for all priority technology clusters of the E&E sector.

Employers and Universities to Address Industry-Specific Talent Needs

The Graduate Employment Survey, an annual survey in Malaysia, has revealed several key findings regarding the mismatch between the skills of graduating students and the requirements of employers in the industry.

Key findings include:

1. **Skill Mismatch**: Employers indicated that one area of concern was the ability of graduates to work with others, as only 50% of respondents believed that their graduates possessed this skill. Moreover, 54% of respondents stated that they would like their graduates to possess better communication skills. The highest mismatch was in interpersonal skills and soft skills, where 33% of respondents identified these as major areas of concern.

2. **Alignment with Employers’ Expectations**: Employers in the E&E industry have highlighted the importance of graduates possessing skills in microelectromechanical systems (MEMS), state-of-the-art manufacturing, communication, electronics, and solar energy.

3. **Application of Skills**: Employers are looking for graduates who can take advantage of the higher income opportunities arising from the economic transformation and can help companies improve their performance and meet the needs of industry. The skills required include communication, interpersonal, and work skills.

4. **University-Industry Collaboration**: To address these issues, universities have been encouraged to work together with industry to integrate industry experience and work-based learning into their curriculum, through programmes such as the Student Industrial Training. This will help graduates gain practical experience and meet the industry’s requirements.

5. **Graduate Employment Programs**: The survey also highlighted the importance of graduate employment programs, such as the Industrial Internship Programme (SIIP) and Student Industrial Training (SIT), which help graduates develop industry-relevant skills and experience.

6. **Innovative Initiatives**: The International Trade and Industry Minister, Mohamed, has announced several initiatives to address the mismatch, including the TalentCorp programme, which aims to boost the E&E sector and address the skill gaps within key seven high technology clusters in the E&E industry. These initiatives include integrated circuit design, embedded systems, communications (radio frequency), opto-electronics, and software manufacturing.

7. **Enhanced Collaboration**: The collaboration between universities and students is critical, as it allows students to develop skills and experiences that align with industry requirements. Universities have been advised to work closely with industry to ensure that the curriculum is relevant and delivers graduates who are ready to enter the workforce.

8. **Corporate Partnerships**: Corporations such as Infineon and Keysight are working with universities to provide students with industry-relevant experiences and skills.

The key message is that universities and employers need to work together to ensure that graduates are equipped with the skills and knowledge required by the industry, thereby addressing the skill mismatch and improving the employability of graduates.
TOWARDS A SUCCESSFUL CAREER

IT’S TIME FOR GRADUAN® ASPIRE CAREER AND POSTGRADUATE FAIR!

THE upcoming talent networking fair promises more opportunities for direct engagement with top companies and institutions for all participants.

Supported by Talent Corp Malaysia (TalentCorp), GRADUAN® ASPIRE returns for the fifth time this May 9-10 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

It brings talents and leading employers together under one roof for two days of career and networking opportunities. Since its inaugural event, GRADUAN® ASPIRE has made strides to become one of the key events to showcase career opportunities, and to connect organisations with the brightest talents in Malaysia.

As with previous years, the fair brings with it exciting events for both talents and organisations. Read on for the events planned for GRADUAN® ASPIRE 2015. For more details, log on to www.graduan.com/aspire.

CAREER AND NETWORKING FAIR
MAY 9-10, from 11am – 6pm

Malaysia’s leading organisations will be on hand to offer talents the information they need to land their dream job as well as to learn about the corporate world. Talents interested in pursuing their careers with these organisations will have the opportunity to ask questions, and also to submit their curriculum vitae for potential employment.

Based on previous fairs, many talents have found this platform effective not only in getting information but also to be noticed and eventually hired by the respective organisations.

ASPIRE+
MAY 9, from noon to 3pm

Happening for the first time this year, the ASPIRE+ Corporate Luncheon 2015 is an exclusive opportunity for participants to network with CEOs and senior management from Malaysia’s top companies.

To be held in a casual setting, this networking session allows talents to connect with these experienced professionals. At the same time, CEOs and senior management are able to interact with the new-generation of talents.

ASPIRE 500 CONFERENCE
MAY 9, 2015 from 10am – 11.30am

Find out what experienced CEOs and professionals have to say about being successful in the corporate world. Another great opportunity to get insights as well as nuggets of wisdom from those in the know.

CONFIRMED SPEAKERS:

- Datuk Sri Shahril Mokhtar, CEO, MRT Corp
- Datuk Georg Fischer, CEO, Tesco
- Datuk Johan Idris, managing partner, KPMG Malaysia
- Abbas Saad, sports presenter
- Jake Abdullah, CEO, ASTRO Radio

ASPIRE LOUNGE
MAY 9-10, 2015 from 11am – 6pm

Want to get more out of this networking fair? Then be sure to visit the ASPIRE LOUNGE which offers a more casual setting for you to get useful employment tips and guidance from HR practitioners.

GRADUAN® BRAND AWARDS

This annual awards rank organisations based on a survey of talents at GRADUAN® ASPIRE. Through this survey, talents vote for their most preferred employer as well as share thoughts on the organisations.

The data and information collected will help organisations better suit their hiring style to appeal to the best talents in town.

GRADUAN® ASPIRE 2015: LEVEL UP!
MAY 9-10, from 11am – 6pm
KUALA LUMPUR CONVENTION CENTRE MALAYSIA

THIS IS FOR YOU IF:
- You are a fresh graduate about to embark on your career.
- You are currently employed but want to know about the opportunities available to you.

GRADUAN® EMPLOYER BRAND AWARD 2013 winners included CIMB, Malakoff, Maybank, Nestlé, Petrofac, Petronas, Shell, Technip, Telekom Malaysia and UMW.

Brought to you by TalentCorp
A LOOK BACK
Here are some highlights from GRADUAN® ASPIRE 2014 last year.

More than 36,000 talents and over 120 organisations and institutions took part in GRADUAN® ASPIRE 2014. Organisations that took part included Maybank, DRB-Hicom, Petronas, Digi, PwC and Exxonmobil.

A LOOK BACK
Brought to you by TalentCorp

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COMIC ARTIST STRIPED!

LIFE IN SERIAL MISADVENTURES (SERIOUSLY)

BY LIM LAY HSUAN
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URING my childhood, I got a glimpse into the world of Lao Fu Tze (Old Master Q), Peanuts, Laf and Gila-Gila comics, thanks to the influence of my brothers. I almost believed that one of my brothers would up as a comic artist. He used to doodle a series of original comics with distinctive stick figures in a collection of diary books. It became quite a serious hobby that he even gave his comics a name.

Fascinated even as a child back then, I’ve always wondered about the life of comic artists, who incessantly tickle our funny bones with their drawings, bubble talks (sometimes none at all) and exag-gerated cartoon characters.

Since my brother didn’t end up as a comic artist, I got in touch with Ernest Ng, the comic blogger behind Bro, Don’t Like That La, Bro, in an attempt to extract his creative juices, and get him to share his journey.

THE EARNEST ONE
As far as he can remember, Ng, the second of three children to a doctor and a nurse, has been drawing (since he was five). He also realised he has a knack for making people laugh.

Ng’s talents only needed to be further nurtured for him to unleash its fullest potential in art and humour.

Essentially, Ng was self-aware in his early age that he was more inclined to the creative industry, and thus had no interest to follow in his parents’ footsteps in the medical field.

When asked about his parents’ response to his unconventional career path, he says, “My parents didn’t say much because initially they thought it could be just a hobby while I had a full-time job.”

“Then the comic series suddenly had a huge following among friends, family and readers, so I just decided to invest my time and energy fully into it.

“They are really supportive now considering that I declined taking up medical science to pursue what I love to do best,” continues Ng.

BAND OF BROTHERS
To the uninformed, Bro, Don’t Like That La, Bro is a comic biography of Ng and his other four childhood friends affectionately referred to as “bros”.

In the Malaysian context of “bros” culture, one can only imagine the many mischiefs and crazy things they encounter and do together in their daily lives.

“I realised I had a lot of stories to tell about the misadventures that I had with my ‘bros’. Initially I wanted to write about them, but I felt that I can tell the stories better if I drew them,” explains Ng, who hails from Malacca, when asked about his comic blog.

“About 95% of the things illustrated in the comics somehow happened in real life at some point in our lives. You can say that I have single-handedly exposed most of their secrets and embarrassing stories virtually to the whole world!” jokes Ng, who has a degree in mass communications.

HILARIOUSLY FRAMED FOR LIFE
Currently a full-time comic artist, Ng describes his typical day as “pretty much the same. I wake up, check my emails and social media updates over a cup of coffee, and the day pretty much begins there.”

“I’d spend most of my time at my workstation just drawing and drafting ideas for my next comic or content for my next book. If it gets a bit too much, I’d kick back and play video games to unwind,” reveals Ng.

Inspired by his “bros”, friends and the people around him, Ng tends to imagine people in a cartoonish kind of way. Since the format of his entries is concise, usually on a six-frame comic strip, Ng’s challenge is always on how to fit an entire story into these frames without losing the actual core and hilarity of the story.

“All the time, you always have to plan ahead, and if they like what they see, they will automatically come back yesterday. Also, I avoid things that hold you, and if they like what they see, they will automatically come back for more,” Ng once shared during an interview with Benama TV.

“Always be yourself, and don’t beg people to read your comics. Instead, share your works with the people around you, and if they like what they see, they will automatically come back for more,” Ng once shared during an interview with Benama TV.

GIGGLE AND HOOTS (OF LAUGHTER)
As with any other career, Ng also experiences his ups and downs as a comic artist.

“My biggest challenge now is to try to do as many things as possible in the shortest time. As a content creator in the comic sphere, we always aim to put out as much content as possible to keep up with the expectations of our readers.”

However, he counts his blessings for open doors and opportunities to meet different kinds of creative people who are also in the same content creation field.

“It feels right at home every time we talk about ideas and its implementa- tions,” says the multi-talented Ng, who has two comic books under his belt, namely Here Comes The Bro and Back to School, which made it to the top bestseller’s list in our local bookstores.

Through his comic, what does Ng hope to achieve at the end of the day? Ng’s response: “That my work will always make people laugh and be entertain- ed. It brings joy to me when someone sends me fan mail telling me that my comics have taken their blues away.”

TIPSY TIP
Asked about his life principles, Ng shares, “I always strive to be better than yesterday. Also, I avoid things that hold me back, and I aim to improve myself every single day.”

According to Ng, drawing comics is not easy; yet it is not impossible, as long as you put in your utmost dedication and perseverance to pull through.

“Just make sure you’ve had a lot of practice and patience in your craft. Most importantly, if you have a story to tell and want to share it via comics, don’t let anything stop you,” advises Ng to aspiring comic artists out there.

“Someone whom I consider my mentor once said, “If you love doing something, you will always find a way to make it work,” continues Ng.

CONCLUSION
No doubt, the best comics are stories that are relatable to readers. Now we know that behind every successful comic artist, lies a great story- teller, and that rings true in Ng’s case.

As Ng concludes it himself, “When you do something you love, everything else will just gel. And you’ll feel great doing it.”

Well said, Ernest, and I wish you the best in your upcoming projects.
By MARCUS LIM
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In the DIODE Leadership Camp series that I frequently facilitate and coordinate, I meet teenagers from various backgrounds and young adults from various disciplines.

The teenagers, being participants of the camp, would often be there by force; and the young adults, being the facilitators, would often be there by choice. But both share similar issues when it comes to self-confidence. The issue with self-confidence is that it happens to be a building block for most things in a person’s life.

A person’s level of confidence translates into how well the person speaks, how well-equipped the person is at making decisions, and how motivated a person is at trying new things or excelling in their daily tasks.

Hence, low levels of confidence equal to immature expression of opinions, poorer decision-making and inconsistent performance.

HIDDEN SIGNALS

While there are many factors which influence a person’s self-confidence, this article addresses self-evaluation as one of its major influencers. Before we go into detail on how that happens, it must be noted that self-evaluation is not only limited to what we think about ourselves, but also what we think people mean when they are evaluating us!

Sometimes it may not even matter what other people are saying because we usually draw out and interpret what we want to hear based on how we evaluate ourselves.

The best way to describe this is perhaps through what I have observed during the camps and how, as parents or mentors, we can help in boosting the confidence levels of our youths by helping them use a simple self-evaluation principle to guide their thought processes.

The goal is help them derive the best out of every feedback or evaluation for themselves in any situation they may encounter in the future.

OBSERVING CUES FROM THE STUDENT

Those lacking in self-confidence are poor at self-evaluation. This phenomenon is apparent when we ask participants at camp to single out their strengths (what they think they know best).

We seek specific examples and use it to show proof that the statement “not good at anything” is false.

The best specific examples will come from the individual you are mentoring. If it comes from you, chances are they are going to say that you are biased. And finally, once you have proven that that statement is false, reinforce it by asking what else he/she is good at.

This whole process is just the beginning. It teaches students to seek for specifics when they receive feedback and analyse the statement that has been thrown at them.

But what’s more important to note is that people these days focus too much on what they need to improve, that they forget what they are good at.

This is one of the major causes of declining self-confidence. And so when mentoring people, it is important to remember to use their strengths as energisers to help them manage their weaknesses.

In the case of one of my participants in camp (see accompanying story), she loves to draw and because of that, she loved science.

She could draw all the organs of the human body and plant cells, but somehow was bad at memorising the names of rivers and mountains.

And so I suggested why not draw these out instead? Apply what she loves to geography as well!

Merging what people love to do, to things people don’t really like to do, usually helps to make doing the things they hate easier.

But it is also important to note that when doing that, the main focus should always be on what they love and not what they hate or they may just end up hating what they love.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

It is important to self-evaluate for improvement, but be sure to enhance what you are already good at, and simply manage what you need to improve on.

Drive the motivation from what you love doing by merging with things you don’t really like to do.

Remember that the main focus should always be on what you love and not what you hate or you may just end up hating what you love.

Marcus Lim is a part of Leaderonomics Youth and he is excited by new ideas, concepts and challenges. Being a practitioner of the art of movement, Parkour, he believes in building confidence and self-awareness through physical representations and movement of the body. He plays an active role in developing young leaders by coordinating and managing the Leaderonomics Club in high schools around the Klang Valley.

If you are interested in developing yourself as a young leader, you can email him at marcus.lim@leaderonomics.com or visit our site at www.leaderonomics.org/youth/leaderonomics-club/
FISHING FOR CLUES

REDACT: Are You A Shark Or A Goldfish

(April 11). I feel that we sometimes have no choice to decide to become a shark or a goldfish because the characteristics are naturally wired in us. We just need to learn how to adapt ourselves to different scenarios.

Being a shark has its advantages. It has its strong long tail that allows it to swim away fast. It also has sharp teeth to protect itself from harm. A shark can become aggressive and attacks when it feels threatened.

Compare this with a goldfish—small in size and with a short, beautiful tail. It is gentle in nature and doesn’t actively search for food because the owner feeds it. It lives in a rather secure environment in an aquarium, with its grace and beauty appreciated by the owner.

The analogy of the two fish is similar to our workplace.

Those who are passive (goldfish) rarely climb up the corporate ladder. Bosses over such employees either usually appreciate their work, or they take advantage of their submissive nature to overwork them.

On the other hand, those who are seen as proactive (sharks) are the ones who usually get promoted.

Above are just my thoughts and opinions about the article. Hope it doesn’t offend the writer in any way.

CY TAI

Interested in reading about your possible status as shark or goldfish? Do check out the original article at http://leaderonomics.com/personal/are-you-a-shark-or-a-goldfish

INTO THE FIRE

THE article from Banker to Chef (April 4) struck a chord with me. I have had a similar interest, but I never got the chance to study culinary arts. I could not take up this course previously, as it was assumed that the career pathway would be too rigid. However, deep inside I still have the passion to learn culinary skills.

Reading this article, a few queries crossed my mind:

Does the writer have plans to further pursue his career in this new field of culinary arts, and never return to working in a bank?

I major in Management and Marketing but if someone like me were to pursue this type of career, this person will need to prepare mentally, physically and financially as well because he (or she) may need to start from scratch.

I have had some trial experiences working in a bakery only as a cashier staff, a little in the kitchen, helping to prepare simple breakfast at a small boutique hotel and manning a takeaway shop.

I hope to find the determination, just like the writer has, to take on this course and experience a total career change.

L.M.Y

Petaling Jaya, Selangor

WRITE US

Feedback to the editor is welcome, please include writer’s full name and town of residence. It may be edited for clarity and length, and should be emailed to editor@leaderonomics.com. Please do not send attachments. More feedback is available at www.leaderonomics.com/tag/readers-feedback

PARTING SHOT

Also next week

- Mapping our stakeholder universe
- Worst mistakes made at work
- Don’t lose by a ‘peanut’
- Your dreams are not over

SECTOR FOCUSED CAREER FAIR (SFCF)

SFCF UPSI: Global Business Services
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris
May 11-12, 2015
Malaysia’s global business services sector is consistently ranked as the third most preferred outsourcing destinations globally. Malaysians wanting to make their mark in this sector should head to the SFCF Career Fair organised by TalentCorp at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris from May 11-12, 10am to 6pm.

SFCF UMP: Engineering
Universiti Malaysia Pahang Gambang Campus
May 23-24, 2015
Calling all engineering students in the East Coast! The SFCF Career Fair will head to Kuantan in May. Explore internship or career opportunities with more than 30 top employers in the engineering sector at Universiti Malaysia Pahang Gambang Campus from May 23-24, 10am to 5pm.

DIODIE CAMP

Harmony Excellence Resort, Lorong Chemperoh
Jalan Janda Baik, 28750 Pahang
June 2015

The camps aim to help youth discover and grow their leadership potential by providing an alternative method to learning through hands-on experiences in project management, communication skills, confidence building, public speaking, self-discovery, teamwork, decision making and much more in a fun and safe environment!

DIODIE Youth Leadership Camp, June 1-4, 2015
DIODIE Teens Leadership Camp, June 3-6, 2015

MALAYSIA HR AWARDS 2015

The prestigious 15th Malaysia HR AWARDS 2015 organised by the Malaysian Institute of Human Resource Management will be presented to winners on Oct 29, 2015. To date, an overwhelming number of submissions have been received. This year, the Malaysia HR AWARDS 2015 will be presented in eight categories. Submission for interested organisations and individuals is still open till June 30, 2015.

BRAND YOU CONFERENCE

A KEY LEADERSHIP STRATEGY FOR WOMEN

Connexion, Nexus, Bangsar South City
July 29, 2015

What is your Brand? Does it stand out? The BRAND YOU Conference will help women build strong personal brand for confidence and visibility. Organised by Leadwomen, a company focused on advancing women to the top, the event is a full-day workshop facilitated by William Arruda, the personal branding guru from the United States.

For more information on the events above, please email editor@leaderonomics.com

To read the article that received numerous write-ins, do go to http://leaderonomics.com/personal/from-banker-to-chef-one-man's-daring-plunge

THIS MAY BE FOR YOU