“WHO SHOULD I HIRE?”
THE TALENT ASSESSMENT APPROACH
PAGES 6–7

Key traits to look out for
Are you the perfect fit in leadership role for your organisation?
Pg 03

LEADERSHIP JOURNEY
Rohan Thiran’s much awaited leadership book, and more!
Pg 04

YOU AND (MBTI)
Leveraging on your personality for career choice
Pg 08–09

THE STAR APPROACH
Behavioural interview for jobseekers and recruiters
Pg 10
ASSESS YOURSELF!

By ARIELLE YEN
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EVEy successful person in this world didn’t get to where he or she is today on the first try. Success means different things to people. Nevertheless, there is one universal goal in achieving success – to accomplish the aims you’ve set for yourself.

Achieving those goals won’t happen by doing the same thing over and over, expecting different results.

According to Albert Einstein, that’s a symptom for insanity! So what should you do instead?

Here’s a suggestion: Assess yourself. Only you truly know the reach of your own potential, so only you know how far you should push yourself.

You’ll also have the opportunity to figure out which methods suit you best, and what exactly is it you want to improve on.

1. THE IMAGINARY BARRIERS

If you aren’t where you should be or want to be, think about what’s “blocking” you from getting there. Then think again. Are you really stuck in that position, or is it all in your mind?

An ant comes across a rock. The ant isn’t blocked from its path. It can walk around the rock, or climb over it.

That is to say, there are always solutions to solve whatever dilemmas you might have. There’s always ways to improve.

Usain Bolt is the current world record holder for the 100m sprint. But that’s not for him – he still has to push himself to keep or improve his time.

Other runners such as fellow Jamaican representative Yohan Blake are also trying to upheave the extremely high benchmark set by Bolt.

Whatever it is you’re doing, try doing it even better. The bar is yours to define, set and raise.

Do you have an opinion you’d like to share with us? Visit leaderonomics.com or write to us at editor@leaderonomics.com

Please provide your full name, occupation (designation and employer) and telephone number.

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PREMA JAYABALAN
Assistant editor
leaderonomics.com

2. LIST DOWN YOUR ROLE MODELS

Role models are people (real or fictional) you look up to. Positive role models inspire you to make constructive changes or improvements to your life. They set the standards of which you should aspire to reach, and it’s from them that you gain knowledge.

Remember that you will always be your own person. But if there is someone who inspires you, by all means, take heed of lessons that you can learn from them.

An example: I admire J.K. Rowling, for her endless and unparalleled creativity, her vivid writing, and her perseverance in getting her multiply-rejected, now-beloved manuscript about a boy wizard (Harry Potter, anyone?) published.

Whist I wouldn’t want to copy Rowling’s work, there are lots of things I’d like to take from her writing, especially the way she creates compelling stories and characters so real they seem to morph right in front of you from the page.

Do you have a role model? Do you think you’re emulating them in the right way?

3. DISCOVER YOUR LEARNING STYLE

If you’re looking for improvement but can’t seem to get anywhere, it’s not because you can’t; it might be that you aren’t learning the “right” way.

There are several ways of learning. You might like to learn by reading and writing, which is what you might have been taught.

However, you could also draw pictures or mindmaps, associate what you’ve learnt with sounds, songs or other audio cues, or physically carry out the act instead of watching from the sidelines.

It’s all about what you prefer. If you don’t know what your preferred learning style is, try a few out and see what suits you best!
What are your leaders made of?

Sugar, spice or nothing nice? Let the non-partial assessors speak

By ELISA DASS AVIN
elisadas@leaderonomics.com

I

n recent times, we have seen how dangerous it has become for an organisation or community to support a leader whose capability, integrity and capacity are not truly known.

When it involves high positions such as the chief executive officer (CEO), chief operating officer, chief financial officer, or other C-suite positions, a wrong choice of leaders can lead to disastrous results such as loss of direction, disengaged culture, slumping profits, or even threats of bankruptcy for the organisation.

At times like these, we start to wonder why the leader was placed in such a position in the first place?

Do We (TRULY) Know Our Leaders?
The truth that many hiring managers want to admit is, in a country such as Malaysia, there are still many who obtain a job or promotion because they were eloquent at interviews or had the favour of key decision-makers.

Of course, they performed at least satisfactorily to be even considered in the first place, but it is arguable if their performance is good enough for their new role.

Not many may gain their position solely based on their capability for the role. Worse, in a highly negative work culture organisation, some leaders may promote others who serve their own personal agenda, rather than that of the larger organisation.

So the question beckons, why is this person in this position? Does he deserve this role?

How do we minimise, if not eliminate, such disastrous recruitment or promotion in an organisation, especially at a strategic level where key decision-makers are positioned?

I personally can’t think of anything better than non-biased, objective assessments.

The Wrong Fit Really Hurts

The success of assessment centres have been around for a very long time and dates back into the 1940s when the British war office selection board used various activities to assess candidates before recruiting them as army officers.

The use of this may not be unfamiliar to many leaders.

However, despite its obvious advantages, it is sometimes not given the importance it should because of the time and resources required as well as the fear of how the candidates would respond.

However, leaders sometimes forget to consider the fact that putting someone in the wrong fit not only affects the direct role, but may sometimes affect the revenue/profits and survival of the entire organisation.

This is true for leaders at every level of the organisation.

Do Your People Have What It Takes?

When running an organisation or team, especially in challenging times such as these, wise CEOs want to ensure that the command- ers under their charge not only have the technical capabilities, but also share the same values, work attitude and competencies he/she deems as important for the organisation.

It is easy sometimes to fall for the convincing words of different leaders who may say they possess what it needs.

But do they really when the rubber meets the road? This is where a good assessment centre can simulate the toughest situation and assess these key qualities that are important to the organisation.

Know Who You Really Need in Your Team

We hire people we like. But do we need them in our team? At times, we need one or two who dare to voice their disagreements to keep decisions well-balanced.

Before jumping onto the bandwagon of sending people to assessment centres, leaders need to know what are the key knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that they require from people in the organisation.

This, a lot of times falls back to the competency model that the organisation has, as well as the organisational values that the larger family upholds to.

A success profile can be drawn up for the roles that will be assessed. It is dangerous when we do not start with the end in mind as to what kind of personal- ity would do best in each specific role.

More important is what the leader can do. How does he do it? Is it with integrity? Is it done without slay- ing his people? Is it innovation?

Will he execute, or does it stop at ideas?

These are key questions that must be answered. And sometimes just verbal interview answers do not suffice.

One of the best ways we can see a person’s true self is when they are placed in a simulated situation where high pressure is applied through various interesting interventions to see how well an individual performs under such circumstances.

The result from an assessment centre will be one that is very objective as it is from someone who doesn’t know the candidate personally and has a set of specific characteristics to look for.

Such information is key when it comes to deciding who can be entrusted with key roles and in succession planning.

The final assessment report also helps to identify the very specific areas that needs development, and investments can be targeted towards refining that niches.

Needless to say, an objective assess- ment will also help you identify the superstars among your leaders.

This is crucial information for crucial times when we can’t afford to make business and people mistakes.

Today Is a Good Time to Start

Take five minutes to stop and think of the key leaders in your team. Do you really know what they are made of?

What will they do when there is a crisis caused by their departments? Will they admit to the mistakes and take responsi- bility or will they shift the blame?

What will your leaders do when revenue drops? Will they go out of their way to make sure things happen, although they are leading a cost-centre?

When there is a fight for a top position, how will they fight it out? With integrity based on their capabilities or do they do whatever it takes to win?

Do you know what kind of leaders you want? More importantly, do you have them?

What are your leaders made of?

Remember, not everything sugary and spicy is definitely nice. But it is surely cru- cial to find out!
SPREADING WINGS TO THE SOUTH

By SHEILA SOLOMON
sheila.solomon@leaderonomics.com

A few weeks ago, my big boss Shahrurn Masood, the leader of the Leaderonomics troops down south, tasked me with a project – to prepare for the launch of the Leaderonomics office in Johor. Our Iskandar office is the first ever regional office for Leaderonomics and it is tasked to work with corporate organisations, educational institutions and social communities, enabling us to develop leaders all across Johor, and beyond.

While I was excited at the prospect of spearheading the launch, I was trembling in fear at the thought of leading such a big initiative. Something crossed my mind – what’s the value of a launch? Why should we waste money, time and resources on such an event? After all, it’s just an event – and will likely be lost in the annals of one’s memory: a day or two after the event. Would I be part of a time-wasting, resource-sapping, unproductive event?

Would I be part of a time-wasting, resource-sapping, unproductive event?

I now know the answer to this question: 1. IT CELEBRATES AND COMMEMORATES

You’re launching a product, service or even a new location like we did, launch events are a great way to display the hard work your team has put in. Since you’ve done the necessary why not put an extra effort to make it memorable?

Given that launches typically require participation from teams across the board – from sales and marketing to product teams – this is also a great way to promote internal collaboration.

2. IT BUILDS CURiosity AND CREATES BUZZ

You’ve invested time and money into this new offering and presumably, it’s ultimate purpose is for others to utilise. So what’s the use if there is no buzz and people don’t know it exists?

A launch event is an opportunity to create chatter in a targeted community about your latest developments. Build curiosity in your invitations. This way, even before the actual event, you’ve got your company name in office and home conversations.

“Hey did you hear that Company XYZ is unveiling something new next week?” Perfect.

3. IT GETS PARTNERS AND CLIENTS TOGETHER

Launch events provide an ideal setting for catch-ups with existing clients, partners and potential ones about developments and new offerings. Create an atmosphere conducive for relationship-building with your external network.

This is a prime time to get early adopters, influencers and advocates on board, and build momentum for future partnerships and sales.

4. IT’S A CHANCE TO COMMUNICATE KEY INFORMATION

You’ve got the crowd in the room, and they’re there specifically for the launch. Make the most out of their attention by using the time to communicate essential information.

Sell the ‘whys’, get them excited, emphasise team efforts, the care taken in the manufacturing process, or whatever your essential gems of information may be.

Preparation for this also serves as an opportunity to refine your company’s value proposition.

5. IT’S A GREAT TIME TO GET FEEDBACK

Since you’ll be educating attendees about your new offerings, you’ll inevitably get comments. What a useful and efficient way to get feedback!

As the day unfolded, I suddenly recalled the question I had at the beginning of the journey – why bother with a launch?

It immediately dawned on me that I now know the answer to this question:

Here are my insights on why having an event launch for your services or products may not be as bad an idea as I first reckoned:

Ready to Roll

Despite having these doubts, being a Leaderonomer, I knew I had to be a trooper and get things going. Before I knew it, August rolled along.

Datuk Syed Mohamed Bin Syed Ibrahim, our guest of honour arrived to the area of leadership materials and insights in the language. Will we ever be able to create leaders who can transform a country, instead of driving it to ruin? This Malay language book, launched during the height of the country’s political rowing, shows us how.

Packed with leadership adventures reflecting the outrageous and emphatic ways in which leaders around the world have kickstarted revolutions in business, politics and life, this newly released paperback features true examples from Datuk Mohd Dahari, Steve Jobs, Mother Teresa, Sir Richard Branson, Jose Mourinho and many other global leaders.

We think we learn from teachers, and we sometimes do. But the great teachers are not always to be rectified in schools or in great laboratories.

Sometimes what we learn depends on our own powers of insight – now expressed in book form. Read Kembara Kepimpinan and change your game today.

Ask for elaboration. Chew together on opportunities for improvement, expansion and partnerships. Get their insights and note them down for future developments.

IN CONCLUSION

I learnt a tonne of organisation and managing our Johor office launch. As Roshan says, “The best way to learn is to do something.”

I am glad I worked hard for the launch and am looking forward to its fruits. If you are ever in Legoland in Medini, drop by our humble office to say hello!

Sheila is a programme manager with the Leaderonomics Southern team. She looks forward to connecting with organisations across Johor, Malacca and Singapore, and supporting their efforts in growing leaders for their companies. She shares Roshan’s belief that “the success of every community, organisation and nation hinges on its leadership” and looks forward to playing her part in helping Malaysia rectify its leadership deficiencies.

Write to people@leaderonomics.com to know more about our southern troops.

By NINA TI
nina.ti@leaderonomics.com

ONE of the fiercest debates going on right now is whether our leaders are going to save or destroy this country – and in retrospect, how did we get into this mess?

If you take the path of leadership development seriously, like we do at Leaderonomics, you will understand why growing a leader deserves just as much attention as toppling one.

Leadership development is vital not only in many organisations, villages and countries can usually be traced to lack of or bad leadership. In his book Kembara Kepimpinan, Leaderonomics CEO Roshan Thiran addresses our nation’s leadership woes in two ways: first by sharing powerful insights that can help us reflect on leadership horrors and – secondly by speaking directly to the Bahasa-speaking community that has remained overlooked and relegated for so long, especially in the area of leadership materials and insights in the language.

If you, as an organisation, would like to explore the opportunity to transform your people into leaders, you can get this book from all bookstores (retail price: RM19.90) from this month onwards.

Contact Kiah Sue Mei at szemei@mph.com.my to order in bulk. For orders of more than 1,000 copies, you can have your organisation’s logo printed in this book. It’ll be a priceless gift for all the employees and leaders in your company in their own language.

By SHEILA SOLOMON
sheila.solomon@leaderonomics.com

5 Lessons I Learnt From Our Office Launch in Johor

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THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE

By TERRY SMALL
editor@leaderonomics.com

OW much time do you spend outdoors? John Burroughs once said, “I go to nature to be soothed and healed, and to have my senses put in order.” Good advice.

Spending time with nature is good for your brain. Consider this: Why would similar hospital patients just a few rooms apart recover at different rates? It turned out that some rooms faced a brick wall, while others faced a small stand of deciduous trees. Other than that, the rooms were identical.

When the researcher at Paoli Memorial Hospital looked at patient recovery charts, he was struck by how much better the patients fared when their rooms faced out onto a natural setting.

Those who faced a brick wall needed a full extra day of recovery time. They were also more depressed, and experienced more pain.

Many of studies show similar results and the effects are large. It seems that grass and trees are good for your brain. Why?

Many of us love urban environments. Architecture has its own beauty. Nature, though, seems to have a unique restorative effect on our brains.

William James noted that there are two types of human attention: directed attention and involuntary attention. Your brain is engaged in directed attention when you are driving your car, reading a book, writing, negotiating a crowded sidewalk, etc.

Involuntary attention is what happens when your brain is in nature. Your attention wanders freely in a non-directed way. This mental meandering seems to restore mental function.

Directed attention depletes. Involuntary attention restores. The Japanese have a name for this: shinrin-yoku — the natural therapy of forest bathing.

A great book to read on the brain benefits of being in nature is Your Brain on Nature by Eva Selhub. Also, The Nature Principle by Richard Louv. I love setting my office up outside, going for walks, cycling, gardening, and hiking. I always seem to do my best thinking outdoors.

How about you? Spending time outside gives your brain a chance to “carry out the neural trash”; dial down stress, and recover. Try to find the time.

Yes, you are busy, but don’t be like the woodcutter who would not take time to take a break and sharpen the axe.

Here is a suggestion: Maybe set a goal of 20 minutes a day to be in a natural setting. Call it your “20-minute vacation.” Leave your smartphone at home. Your brain will thank you by being happier, and more relaxed. Research says you may even lower your blood pressure, pulse rate, and cortisol levels.

One more thing. When you engage in involuntary attention, your directed attention gets better.

Terry Small is a brain expert who resides in Canada and believes that anyone can learn how to learn easier, better, faster, and that learning to learn is the most important skill a person can acquire.

For more interesting articles on Brain Bulletin, check out www.leaderonomics.com

OPEN LOBBYING
HUNDREDS OF NEW GRADUATES HAVE FOUND THEIR DREAM JOBS AT CAREER FAIRS. HOW ABOUT YOU?

By NINA TI
nina.ti@leaderonomics.com

JOB-HUNTING can sometimes feel like a guessing game – which is probably why hopeful applicants might say “I am going to try my luck” when submitting a resume.

Maybe if we knew what goes on in a recruiter’s head, we would not need to kiss the dice (or as the case may be, a recruiter’s head, we would not need to take time to take a break and sharpen the axe).

Being physically present enables a job candidate to display the personal attributes that prove he/she can interact effectively – which are the soft skills needed – while enabling the perspective employer to advocate the big performance objectives for the position.

The World Bank report (2014) cites that 62% of firms in Malaysia complained of difficulty in finding workers with the right skills even though job vacancies were available. Could it be that job searches needed to be fine-tuned?

Employers are debating if soft skills are being released into the market, many having just finished their finals and about to graduate, hungry to land their dream jobs. The second installment of the Mega Careers & Study Fair will take place on Aug 22–23, 2015. Who knows what chances will be available to jobseekers this time?

Whatever is out there, at least you know job-hunting doesn’t have to be a shell game anymore.
Talent assessments emerged as the process of identifying, evaluating and measuring the knowledge, skills and capabilities of individuals. These capabilities are assessed based on different elements, such as personality characteristics and competencies needed to be used by an academic foundation in a selection process for picking scholarship award winners. This approach helps identify potential talent who can be groomed for success.

Is the practice of assessing employees or potential talents easily taken to two common practices – standardised testing and assessment centres. In standardised testing, the use of psychometric assessments and testing is often related to specific job-related behaviours and competencies that are important for the role.

Talent is simply collecting data and making inferences to the business, for them to understand who they are, and which path they should take to improve on.

To determine their potential, many top organisations employ the use of assessment centres (screening exercises) to understand the strengths and weaknesses of an individual’s competencies and fit of a potential candidate.

By complementing the hiring process with additional processes with additional means beyond just interviews, organisations are able to assess talents from the perspectives of culture-fit, motivation and actual job-related competencies needed.

Performance assessment for organisations can comprise of a simple psychometric assessment administered online to a candidate, to a full-scale one-day centre assessment round of exercises.

These assessments focus on measuring and evaluating the knowledge, skills, behaviours, interests and motivations of candidates to help draw conclusions on whether they possess the attributes and competencies required to do the job.

Many organisations use psychometric assessments to gauge the capabilities and fit of a potential candidate.

Talent assessment exercise can take place in multiple settings such as group interviews, presentations, case study discussions, role-plays and even assessment centres.

For pre-existing talents, a talent assessment process can be beneficial to an organisation, as it can help identify high potentials, with the cream of the crop being encouraged and rewarded for their efforts.

For example, determining if a senior manager is ready to assume the role of a managing director, based on assessing them against the expected competencies for that level.

In such situations, the process can be beneficial to an organisation as it can help identify high potentials within an organisation that are ready with potential successors when the need for a new leader arises.

Some organisations may give the extra step in their talent identification process to determine each talent’s readiness to take on specific advanced roles, by conducting succession planning analysis for their talent pool.

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GET TO KNOW YOURSELF FIRST

HOW YOUR MBTI PERSONALITY TYPE CAN AFFECT YOUR CAREER CHOICES

By MICHAEL POH
editor@leaderonomics.com

DEVELOPED in the 1960s by mother-daughter pair, Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myer, the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a personality test based on theories by prominent psychologist, Dr Carl Gustav Jung. Each year, more than 1.5 million MBTI personality tests are conducted across different individuals to help them explore various goals. It’s usually employed by companies such as Ernst & Young to assess the job-fit of a potential candidate, improve their communications with their colleagues and to enhance team unity in an organisation.

This is achieved by increasing one’s self-awareness of his/her strengths and weaknesses as well as their personality type identification. Here, we go through the basics of the MBTI assessment and highlight some careers for selected personalities among the 16 possible MBTI types.

We will look at a brief introduction of the comprehensive personality tool that can help you with a career choice.

WHAT DOES THE MBTI ASSESS?

The MBTI is based on the idea that our personality is made up of four dimensions, each has two opposites (dichotomies).

They are:
- extraverted (E) or introverted (I)
- sensitive (S) or intuitive (N)
- thinking (T) or feeling (F)
- judgmental (J) or perceptive (P)

The MBTI test requires the individual to answer 93 forced-choice questions to determine which of the two sides he/she leans more towards in each of the four aspects. In the end, each individual receives a unique profile set type out of the 16 possible combinations, such as “Introvert-Sensing-Thinking-Perception” or “Extravert-Intuition-Feeling-Judging”.

Our “type” helps us understand our preferences, strengths, weaknesses and compatibility with others and can influence the career path we undertake.

BREAKING DOWN THE ASPECTS

Let’s take a look at these aspects.

1. Extraversion (E) – introversion (I)

“Outward-turning” (extraversion) refers to the tendency to be sociable and energised by action and people, while “inward-turning” (introversion) refers to the tendency to be more thoughtful and to prefer deep conversations with fewer people.

> TURN TO PAGE 9

PERSONALITY TYPES AND POSSIBLE CAREER FITS

ISTJ & INTJ
SOFTWARE ENGINEERS/COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS

DEALING mostly with codes, software engineers and computer programmers tend to work alone. Therefore, introverts would probably fit in well. Depending on the nature of their work, they can lean to either sensing or intuition, each with their own benefits.

For work involving the maintenance and enhancement of software systems, a tendency towards sensing is advantageous since they generally favour working within pre-existing structures or systems and to come up with practical solutions.

For those who do more research and developmental projects, an intuitive mind is key as they typically provide the innovations required during the early stages of a new project. They also have to be technically oriented, and stay logical and objective in their work. Individuals who function independently and are adept at regulating their internal emotions are often in demand.

This is because the industry needs organised and decisive people who are disciplined enough to see through laborious projects. Individuals who score high for judging often desire achievement and strive to seek closure with projects through comprehensive planning.

ESFP & ISFP
MARKETERS

EXCELLENT social and communication skills are a must for any marketer as they meet various individuals within the company on a regular basis. They typically engage in persuading existing and potential clients.

Hence, people with an extraverted outlook who can make conversations with different types of people are ideal.

As marketers are responsible for forecasting demand, they need to be insightful enough to set their eyes on the future and recognise opportunities for the organisation. They’re expected to unleash their creativity and think outside-the-box when it comes to marketing strategies and advertising. Therefore, individuals would preferably have an intuitive mindset.

In decision-making, there are two possible kinds of marketers: one who listens to emotions and pays attention to the feelings of others, and another that relies on their sense of objectivity and practicality. Both are equally competent.

Marketers are expected to be highly adaptable to the changing business landscape. They should be flexible in their thinking and habitually keep an open mind.

ENFP & ENTJ

ARTISTS love to observe and interact with the world using their senses. Hence, they are very perceptive to their environment. Such sensory acuteness is a testament to why they favour hands-on experience.

They prefer to enjoy life as it unfolds instead of leading a structured and routine life. Just as a painter embraces each and every stroke of his/her brush on the canvas.

Their keen sense of aesthetics and beauty is rooted in their deep self-awareness of their own emotions.

It even extends to the feelings of the people they interact with; artists are capable of picking up the slightest emotions conveyed through body language.

This inclination towards sensory perception and their heightened awareness of emotions leads them to create expressive art pieces.

As artists, they are creative and innovative individuals who often choose not to conform to societal norms and instead, to experiment with new experiences or ways of doing things.
THE 16 PERSONALITY TYPES & CAREER CHOICES

An individual’s personality profile is presented as four-letter acronyms such as “ISFP” or “ENTP.” Everyone falls into one of these combinations, and the resulting personality that arises from their interactions creates the 16 unique profiles (see Table 1).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISTJ</th>
<th>ISFJ</th>
<th>INFJ</th>
<th>INTJ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISTP</td>
<td>ISFP</td>
<td>INFP</td>
<td>INTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESTP</td>
<td>ESFP</td>
<td>ENFP</td>
<td>ENTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESTJ</td>
<td>ESFJ</td>
<td>ENFJ</td>
<td>ENTF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following (see story on Personality Types and Possible Career Fits) are just a couple of career descriptions and the specific personality types which I believe would fit them.

Check them out after you’re done with the actual MBTI or the version online. Try having a look to see which of these descriptions resonate with you.

I’M AN INTJ, WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Personally, I think that even though the MBTI speaks volumes about our individual tendencies, we are still influenced by our peers, the media and other cultural and social factors.

It’s easier for us to pursue careers which are best suited to our temperaments, but only if we actually love the work we do.

Fortunately, we have the conscious choice to do things differently from what our personality dictates.

Judging: Thinking (T) – Feeling (F)

This part of the personality predisposes us in how we make decisions on a regular basis.

Scoring high for thinking (T) means that one is able to stay consistent, logical and objective during decision-making while people who prefer feeling (F) will consider the emotions and the needs of other people.

Feeling (F) will consider the emotions and the demands of your dream career, and remind you to cultivate the right habits. Take these words from the ancient Chinese philosopher, Lao Tzu, as parting advice.

Watch your thoughts; they become words.
Watch your words; they become actions.
Watch your actions; they become habits.
Watch your habits; they become character.
Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

Michael Poh is a blogger who believes in the power of the written word to influence and inspire. An enthusiastic video gamer, Michael is a Judger and makes decisions quickly and will exhibit either thinking or perceiving abilities.

도’s more interested in perceiving the world through either sensing or intuition.

Touching Lives Across Borders

Malaysians Are at the Forefront of a Medical Mission to Help the People of Laos

By Nina Ti

nina.t@leaderonomics.com

Driven by a desire of giving selfless service, Eddie Lam has worked tirelessly to bring hope and medical relief to district communities in his adopted country, Laos.

This plucky Malaysian is one of the main movers behind the recent “Humanitarian and Love” project – a free medical mission that delivered basic healthcare, from July 18-20, 2015, to the poor villagers of Santhong District in Vientiane.

“This country lacks healthcare facilities and support. I wanted to demonstrate that our healthcare team has compassion that transcends borders, race, religion, language, culture, politics and nationalities,” says Lam, who has resided in Laos for the last 11 years.

Compassion Knows No Bounds

The mission was a huge undertaking—close to 4,500 treatments were given. The villagers received free outpatient services from the eye, dental, general medical and TCM (traditional Chinese medicine) clinics which were set up at the local school.

What is even more amazing was that the mission was made possible through crowd-funding, raised by medical practitioners and volunteers from Malaysia and Singapore, which fulfilled a budget of US$50,000 (RM195,000).

Sponsors ECM Libra, Essilor, YSP Industries and KPMG Laos played important roles – in an alliance that brought together more than 200 medical professionals, volunteers and transla-
tors from three countries, working together with the upcoming Vientiane International Hospital (VISH) and the embassies of Malaysia and Singapore.

Plans in the Making

According to Dr. A. Arudwesan, the managing director of VISH, “The mission served as a bridge to reach those who needed medical aid, and as a measure to transfer knowledge to develop the healthcare services in Laos.

He adds that the mission is a good start and expresses hope that it will be continued annually with the completion of the hospital. The humanitarian work that is being done by the mission volunteers does not just alleviate the pain and suffering of those in need, but also reflects the goodwill, compassion and happiness that can be shared with everyone and everywhere.

Get in touch with us if you would like to learn more about medical missions, or are interested to volunteer for community outreach projects.

Infp & Infj Designers

Introverted or extraverted designers have their own communication methods when dealing with clients and creative directors to determine the requirements of their end product.

More importantly, designers need to understand the relationships between information and data and connect the dots before they can come up with good designs.

While graphic designers need to grasp what appeals to the intended audience and effectively deliver the messages that their clients wish to convey, a fashion designer is also expected to be skilled at discerning existing trends and predicting future fashion trends.

They need to see beyond what is already out there and imagine new possibilities, and this is done through their intuitive sense.

They also need to understand the emotions and needs of their end-users as this gives them an edge in their designs. Designers have to consider the clearly-defined goals involved at different stages of the design process before they can even begin their work.

Their work performance is therefore highly dependent on their judgment and decision-making abilities.

Infp Writers and Editors

A lot of reflection and thinking happens in a writer’s head before they can express themselves adequately with words. To do that, a writer spends time alone with his/her thoughts and ideas.

Without a propensity for introversion, it might be hard for someone to enjoy the writing process. At the same time, writers tend to be idealistic and forward-looking. They’re always looking for ways to inspire others with their writing.

As abstract thinkers, they’re very interested in what their subconscious mind is telling them.

Writers tend to be in touch with their own emotions as they normally write their pieces with the intention of arousing the reader’s emotions. Their great sense of self-awareness of their own feelings help them relate to how others feel.

They would rather not jump into conclusions too quickly, preferring to stay curious and to indulge in their imagination.

Since they don’t make decisions hastily, they would rather not work under deadlines and have greater autonomy for their work.

Such open-mindedness facilitates their generation of ideas in their mind to help them write better.

The “INFP” profile is notably known as the personality type for many of the greatest writers in the world.

Some famous individuals who’ve been said to be INFP are George Orwell, Virginia Woolf, Edgar Allan Poe and J.K. Rowling.

(Left) Volunteers giving treatment to a woman at the temporary dental clinic.

(Top) Lam managing outpatient registrations at a village in Santhong.
Competency-based interview: A Walk-through this Vital Process

By MATHY RANDHAWA
training@leaderonomics.com

The first element of recruiting strategy is to determine “why” you are hiring people. You must determine your organisation’s direction and what recruiting can contribute to each of the directions. This will give you an idea of the manpower requirement of your organisation and also the kind of people you need to recruit.

Vision, mission, short- and long-term goals, strategies and values of an organisation should be translated into actions for actualisation through organisational structure. The organisational structure will include roles, positions and jobs. In order to actualise the direction for an organisation, the right person should be hired for the right job.

Therefore, competency-based interviews reduce the risk of making a costly hiring mistake and increase the likelihood of identifying and selecting the right person for the job.

Competency in a Nutshell

Competencies are seen mainly as inputs, which consist of clusters of knowledge, attitudes and skills that affect an individual’s ability to perform.

Competency can be divided into three categories:

1. Generic competency: Considered essential for all employees regardless of their functions or levels. Examples include communication, initiative and listening skills.
2. Managerial competency: known as soft competency which relates to the ability to manage a job and to develop an interaction with others. Examples include problem-solving, leadership and communication skills.
3. Functional competency: Generally recognised as hard competency. It relates to the functional capacity of work and mainly deals with the technical aspect of the job. Examples include marketing research and financial analysis.

In practice, many organisations include a mixture of tasks, job outputs and behaviours as descriptions of competency.

Life Made Easier with Competency-based Interview

Interviewers who adopt the techniques of a competency-based interview will see these benefits:
- Interviewers are able to evaluate and assess the ability of the candidates.
- A competency approach provides greater clarity for the selector and candidate about what is required.
- By breaking the requirements of the job into a list of competencies, decision-makers can then determine the most appropriate method of assessing an individual against each competency.

Generally, such an interview assists the interviewer to identify the agility of a candidate to learn and improve their competencies in the position appointed. Furthermore, candidates can assess whether the job matches their competencies and if they would be happy in that role.

Differentiating Competency-based Interview

A distinction should be drawn between “competency” and “job description.” A job description defines the job into sequences of tasks necessary to perform the job. It emphasises the duties and responsibilities of an employee as opposed to competencies which outline the job in terms of the characteristics and behaviours necessary for success.

An interviewer needs to align both competency and job description before hiring a candidate for the position interviewed. Competency-based interview is also known as behavioural interview, where the questions asked are based on specific incidents that happened or past experiences rather than hypothetical situations.

The interview is often:
- Structured: the questions are focused on disclosing examples of behaviour in the past.
- Intended: to disclose specifically and in detail examples of behaviour in the past.
- Designed based on the principle that “past behaviour predicts future behaviour.” Candidates are most likely to repeat these behaviours in similar situations in the future.

There is a likelihood to identify the honesty of the candidate through competency-based interview.
- The words used, revealing responses and the body language projected by the candidate when answering questions will help gauge honesty.
- This enables the interviewer to judge the candidate’s ability to perform the job and assess the person as a whole.

Approach in Such an Interview

An interviewer might make a snap judgment about someone based on their first impression. It could be positive or negative, which may colour the entire interview.

In order to avoid such judgment, the STAR approach can be implemented in competency-based interviews. This approach benefits the interviewer and the candidate.

The interviewer may base the questions according to the STAR approach to assess the candidate. The candidate may also use the same approach in answering the interviewer’s questions.

The STAR approach:
- S: What was the Situation in which you were involved?
- T: What was the Task you needed to accomplish?
- A: What Action(s) did you take?
- R: What Results did you achieve?

The following guidelines (see accompanying example) benefit candidates as interviewees.

The candidate should answer the questions step-by-step as guided in the STAR approach.

Vision, mission, short- and long-term goals, strategies and values of an organisation should be translated into actions for actualisation through organisational structure.

Example: Team Leadership Competency

The interviewer may phrase the question based on STAR approach as such:

“Please describe a situation in your career in which you built a team using members from separate workgroups. Be specific about the groups with which you have worked, your common goal, the specific role you played in bringing everything together, and the outcome of the situation.”

The candidate should answer the questions step-by-step as guided in the STAR approach.

Situation
- Can you explain the situation?
- Where and when did the situation happen?
- What events led up to it?
- Who was involved in the situation (work colleagues, supervisors or customers)?

Tasks/actions
- What tasks were you supposed to do at that time?
- What did you actually do at that time?
- How did you do it?
- What specific steps did you take?
- Who was involved?

Results
- What was the outcome?
- Can you tell me the results of taking such action?
- What specific outcome was produced by your action?
By CHRISTOPHER MOORE
editor@leaderonomics.com

CHARLES De Gaulle, once leader of the French nation, had something very interesting to say on the topic of value and leadership: “The graveyards are full of indispensable men.”

This would go on to be the military adage “if you can’t be replaced, you can’t get promoted”.

As a young professional moving into the lowest ranks of middle management (or, as I like to think of it, junior leadership), the gap between each step in the chain is difficult to bridge. Therefore, adaptability, flexibility and mental and emotional preparation are all immensely important during the process.

The truth is, success looks very different when you’re trying to be a leader. All the rules get turned on their heads.

BEING INDISPENSABLE IS A BAD THING

If you’re doing well at your job right now, it probably looks a lot like getting a tonne of positive feedback from your bosses and hopefully, your peers, about how they just couldn’t run the team without you.

Your bosses and hopefully, your peers, are sending emails at 11pm, not to show off, but because they’re just that busy.

Why it might hold you back:

In workplaces, there is a term called “firefighters”. They’re the workplace heroes who step in when things fall apart and make everything better again. They put out the fires.

And everyone loves firefighters. But as De Gaulle said (weren’t you listening earlier?), the same qualities that make you a good firefighter also make you very difficult to replace.

If there’s fear that performance will dip when you go or that the team isn’t equipped to go on without you, management will have no choice but to delay your progression. Eventually you may even feel you’re not being given opportunities and kept busy when you know all the time unaware that you’re lying in a bed you made.

What you should do instead:

If you recognise that your working group has deficiencies you’re plugging, build a better plug!

Simple ideas are to create better procedures, checklists, FAQs and ways of working that make the job easier for the team and facilitate sharing of knowledge amongst peers.

When you go on holiday, nobody should even notice.

SUCCESS IS NOT A ZERO-SUM GAME

You don’t have to look far for examples in your own life of someone taking credit for someone else’s work. It’s depressingly common and it may very well have happened to you.

People can also be more subtle, by denying information and knowledge others need to find their own successes.

What you should do instead:

If you want to be a manager, let alone a leader, you need to invest your time in something far more important – people.

You need to understand the people you work with and help each and every one of them develop the skills they need not only to do their job well, but to do your job one day!

You should be giving out assignments that stretch people and teach them new skills, working with them on training plans, helping them get better at things they’re bad at and using the things they’re good at for success.

Delegating blindly won’t achieve much, but when used as a precision tool, with the delegate’s best interests at heart, you will build a group of people capable of achieving more than any of you thought possible. And that’s how you get ahead.

REPLACEMENT GUY

KNOWING HOW AND WHEN TO MAKE WAY FOR YOUR SUCCESSOR IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR LEADERS IN SUCCESSION PLANNING

This is a win-win. Your team is stronger than before, and you’ve gained experience doing something every leader needs to be able to do – building a stronger team.

WORKING REALLY HARD ONLY GETS YOU SO FAR

People seem to have this notion that if they take on lots of work and do lots of compensatory hours, they will prove their usefulness and move ahead in the world.

If you look around your office right now, I’m sure you can see a peer or manager who does this.

They’re sending emails at 11pm, not to show off, but because they’re just that busy.

Why it might hold you back:

When you go on holiday, nobody will do the things you do.

When you’re really busy it means you are spending a lot of your time doing something very unproductive – working!

The problem is, the most you can possibly work is 24 hours per day.

Even if we scale it back to something more realistic like, say, 14 hours for our hardest workers, I guarantee that this whole time isn’t spent being productive.

That’s just not how human beings work.

What you should do instead:

If you recognise that your working group has deficiencies you’re plugging, build a better plug!

Simple ideas are to create better procedures, checklists, FAQs and ways of working that make the job easier for the team and facilitate sharing of knowledge amongst peers.

When you go on holiday, nobody should even notice.
The fear of public speaking has been listed as one of the world’s top three fears, and in most situations hitting number one.

Hence, overcoming this fear is one of the four main elements that we focus on in our DIODE Leadership Camps. For starters, let me share a tip on how you can overcome this terrifying fear. Notwithstanding the fact that it is a fear that grips the heart of even the most confident speaker, the key is to find every opportunity to exercise those public speaking muscles because, as cliché as it might sound, practice makes perfect!

**INTENTIONAL SCRIPTING**

So here’s a simple way you may begin. Almost anybody of any public speaking level could do this.

I use a technique called intentional scripting. For one, found this extremely hard to do. But when I actually did it, I found myself improving day-by-day as my speeches become more effective. As the name suggests, you will need to find a script. When I started this, I printed out the speech of our first leader. Almost anybody of any public speaking level could do this.

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**1 SPEED**

Speed is usually added for effects and to create a sense of excitement. If you read through a sentence quickly, you may generate a sense of urgency and energy that is required to capture the attention of your audience, while reading it slowly generates a sense of importance—a sense that something needs to be heard and understood.

It is recommended that you slow down during important parts of your speech to allow information to sink in.

**2 VOLUME**

A play of volume is used to emphasise certain words. Saying a word loudly may indicate that it is important for everyone to hear.

Sometimes using volume can help you capture attention. Speaking softly at some parts makes your audience lean in, trying to catch the word you are saying, hence getting their attention.

Imagine a scale of 1 to 10 (see Figure 1), 1 being a whisper and 10 being shouting. A normal conversation is usually around 3–4 while a public speaking voice is usually 6–7.

Word-emphasising volume is usually around 6–7 while 9–10 is reaching shouting and screaming, which can be very annoying if used throughout a speech.

**3 GESTURES**

The biggest mistake people do with gestures is to keep using the same ones for everything. A tip for this technique is to look for action words or verbs and convert them into gestures.

For instance, “hear” can be signaling to your eyes to take in, trying to catch the word you are saying, hence getting their attention.

Imagine a scale of 1 to 10 (see Figure 1), 1 being a whisper and 10 being shouting. A normal conversation is usually around 3–4 while a public speaking voice is usually 6–7.

Word-emphasising volume is usually around 6–7 while 9–10 is reaching shouting and screaming, which can be very annoying if used throughout a speech.

**CONCLUSION**

So good luck and all the best in overcoming your fear of public speaking. Do join us at DIODE as we explore the remaining four techniques in becoming great leaders for tomorrow. For more information, visit www.diodecamps.com.

**Which level of volume do you use most?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whisper</th>
<th>Conversation</th>
<th>Public speaking</th>
<th>Shouting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1**

For more information, visit www.diodecamps.com