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BUILDING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

IN 2004, a relatively unknown candidate for the US Senate delivered a speech to a national convention that would launch him into the political spotlight. In his address, he alluded to the divisions that previously blighted his nation. He touched on the social issues faced by so many Americans who, despite striving as best they could, were unable to make ends meet. He also shared his own story of unlikely success as a means to inspire hope among the downtrodden and reunite the faith within the downhearted.

The impassioned speech gave those who saw it a glimpse into a man who would go on to fix his name in the history books as one of the greatest leaders of all time. Addressing the convention, we not only got an insight into the core values of an emerging leader, but we were left in no doubt as to the kind of leader he was determined to become:

“No more as we speak, there are those who are preparing to divide us, the spin masters and negative ad peddlers who embrace the politics of anything goes. Well, I say to them tonight, there’s not a liberal America and a conservative America; there’s the United States of America. There’s not a black America and white America and Latino America and Asian America; there’s the United States of America.

“There are patriots who opposed the war in Iraq, and there are patriots who supported the war in Iraq. We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes, all of us defending the United States of America.”

Four years later, the senator who delivered that speech went on to take his seat in the Oval Office as the 44th President of the United States. From his own life story, Barack Obama knew that integration was more than a fancy buzzword – it was a real concept that enabled you to take a clearer look at the situation by offering mediation too. Information from any witnesses will help you to take a clearer look at the situation.

As we look to the future, we should realise that our efforts – from all ethnic groups and creeds – are much more effective as a means to pool our skills, talents and creativity in order to make peace in the workplace without having to resort to methods that may exacerbate the problem.

ONE HEART, ONE SOUL

Happy Family, congkak, Donkey and pick up sticks. Familiar games of the Malaysian childhood. In conjunction with Malaysia Day, we celebrate these wonderful games, and the precious memories that come along with them.

Even though our Malaysia Day video was uploaded a year ago, its message is still timeless today. Fellow Malaysians, let’s treasure our heritage and commit to creating great new memories together.

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By SARA YEE

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MAHATMA Gandhi’s non-violence method in the fight for India’s independence is lauded for its revolutionary principles. Through peaceful persistence, he helped to push India towards the right direction and, ultimately, his efforts resulted in securing independence for the proud nation.

Using Gandhi’s example, there are plenty of ways for leaders to maintain peace in the workplace without having to resort to methods that may exacerbate the problem.

TWO EARS, ONE MOUTH

Engaging with the affected parties is the first step of finding out all facets of the story. As singer Don Henley says, “There are three sides to every story: yours, mine, and the cold hard truth.” This is not to say that one side is wrong or right, but listening to everyone’s side of the story before gathering information from any witnesses will enable you to take a clearer look at the situation.

We all know the implied message behind the saying, “God gave us two ears and one mouth for a reason”. Listen more to the people who are engaged in conflict, rather than trying to rush into the situation by offering mediation too soon. Actively listen to what’s being said, and speak only when necessary. Hearing what’s being said is easy, but paying attention is a skill – and is the key point of mediation.

ROOT OUT THE PROBLEM

Be persistent but tactful. Like Gandhi, ensure that you dig to the root of the problem in order to figure out what is going on, but keep tact by remaining calm and flexible.

Sometimes, the source of the problem may be simple, but often it’s more complex. Either way, solutions should be kept as simple and neutral as possible. If there is a simple solution, use it. Trying to needlessly implement complex solutions may deepen the issue at hand.

Keen observation can also help in devising a solution for such a problem. Body language conveys more to us about a person than the words they use. Keeping an eye out for small gestures and using that as the baseline mood detector can allow you to understand what is going on without having to try too deeply – sometimes, stubborn parties may speak less or may be unwilling to cooperate at all.

WHEN THE DUST SETTLES

If the problem is blown out of proportion, understand that sometimes a solution, although it may appear to be helpful, may not always work. Mediation always begins with listening and understanding. Only then can peace arise. Be a Gandhi in your workplace: advocate peaceful but tough resolutions so that problems are not only solved amicably, but resolutely.

If you found a particular article insightful or interesting, we would love to know your thoughts. Please email us at editor@leaderonomics.com

We are committed to providing content that engages and inspires our readers. If you would like to suggest a specific theme or topic on leadership for us to explore, contact us by email at editor@leaderonomics.com

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The opinions expressed in this career guide are those of the writers or the people they quoted and not necessarily those of Leaderonomics.
A S we celebrated Malaysia Day on Sep 16, we are reminded of our national pride stemming from a multi-cultural society. Slogans and depictions of different races living in harmony with each other represent a utopia of integration and cohesion. While these are all worthwhile images of how things could be, there is a lack of understanding of how to get there. Unity is a look, like bodybuilding – we all aspire to have that “body”, but are unwilling to go through the process, effort and sacrifice of “building”. Cohesion is the structure of what you see; however, there is a more fundamental precursor, which forms the foundation. Does tolerance form the foundation of cohesion? I beg to differ. In fact, tolerance by itself leads to an accumulated state of unresolved, unspoken grievances and misunderstanding, which can be triggered some time in the future. Tolerance only makes sense if there is something pre-existing, which is deeper. What about love? Surely, love makes the world go round. Yes, love is important, however, love comes in many shapes and sizes. What is the basis and foundation by which you define love? What is loving to one person might not be loving to the other.

THE COURAGE TO FACE THE TRUTH

“Superficiality is the curse of our age.” – Richard Foster

There can be no unity without first taking a real hard look at our current situation of disunity. The courage to face the truth can be summed up in one word: honesty. With so many policies being in place by government leaders around the world to rein in elements of disunity, there is the tendency to neglect the foundational truth about honesty – integrity is the best policy.

In this age of open communication, the constituents of any nation cannot be easily fooled by superficial policies or slogans. There is a fundamental need to first come clean on the elements of disunity, then we can begin the task of rebuilding. The obstacle of “coming clean” often lies not with the mindset of the followers – it usually resides in the thinking of the leaders. There is a blind spot in their thinking that all is well, when those on the ground are feeling otherwise. It is no wonder then that companies are now turning up their efforts to survey their employees for the state of engagement and connectedness. In Gallup’s worldwide study of the state of engagement in 2013, it is revealed that only 13% of employees worldwide are engaged.

The state of cohesion (or the lack thereof) is a serious issue, which requires the first step of honest reflection. When leaders humbly reflect on the real state of the union, then there is hope. The false sense of security – believing that all is well when it is actually not – is produced when the leaders surround themselves with advisors who are more concerned with guarding their personal agendas rather than addressing the real needs of the followers.

Figuratively speaking, leaders who are disconnected from their followers seek advisors who tickle their ears with affirming feedback, rather than truthful messages. If you are committed to face the truth, here are two important steps:

1. Seek feedback from your followers – especially the influential ones. Look beyond personality differences and be open to receive honest comments (the truth often hurts, but if dealt with objectively, it will have a healing effect).

2. Sincerely apologise – people are inspired by authenticity. Although charisma gets your message across, it is sincerity that moves people towards cohesion. In other words, humility is key.

THE COURAGE TO FORGE THE TRUTH

“Tame is a vapour, popularity an accident, and riches take wings. Only one thing endures and that is character.” – Horace Greeley

Nothing dispenses cohesion as quickly as a hypocritical leader. Most organisations spend a tremendous effort in crafting their vision and mission, hoping that inspirational copywriting will encourage passionate responses from their employees.

Yet, this is not balanced with an emphasis on ensuring that leaders are held accountable with regard to demonstrating the mission. How can leaders expect the cohesiveness of people pulling in the same direction if they themselves do not walk the talk?

In my engagements with clients, the most common request I get is to provide teambuilding solutions. A factory manager once requested that I produce a two-day teambuilding programme to “fix” the morale and cohesiveness of the production team and yet, when I inquired about the participation from the teams’ supervisors, the response was that the supervisors are too busy to attend.

The manager wanted me as an external consultant to fix the problem on behalf of the supervisors. In other words, “please baby-sit my people and turn them around in my absence”.

Leadership is more caught than taught. Managers should not expect integration and cohesion from their team members if they don’t bother to show up regularly. In fact, research from Gallup indicates that as far as engagement is concerned, a negative manager performs better than an absent manager.

If you are committed to forging the truth, here are two bold steps to take:

1. Stand up for your team – it is common practice that we stand up for our clients and advocate their needs. Why not we demonstrate the same commitment to protect and advance the needs of our employees as well?

2. Speak up against corruption – not just on issues of bribery or monetary malpractices, but also on matters of injustice and deviations from agreed standards. Cohesion is determined not by soliciting popularity, but through standing by right principles.

THE DIVISIVENESS OF UNITY

The uncomfortable truth is this. In order to build unity, there must be a clear division between right and wrong. Unless leaders provide clarity about the current situation (facing the truth, acknowledging the deviations from agreed standards) and are committed to lead by example (forging the truth, demonstrating right behaviour and attitudes), then there can only be the appearance of integration and cohesion, because any perceived unity is built on very shaky grounds.

John C. Maxwell is right – everything rises and falls on leadership.
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- Training application commitments and follow-ups
- Learning through profiling, simulations, videos, articles, subject matter experts and peer interactions

The Focus
- **Discover** your strengths and how to leverage these to manage and lead
- **Apply** key principles of managerial psychology to build a strong team
- **Improve** processes for excellent team performance
- **Link and leverage** individuals, teams and processes to meet overall business needs and objectives

\(^1\)Gallup’s State of the American Manager, 2015  \(^2\)Terms and conditions apply

Contact Dinesh at **012 985 6835** or **dinesh.draj@leaderonomics.com** to schedule a free consultation.

www.leaderonomics.org
WHY does it mean to be Malaysian? More importantly, what does it mean to be a Malaysian woman? I can tell you for sure that it has trained my mind well enough to give me conversation topics when I immersed myself in different cultures during my time studying abroad. It also means I have had a significant dilemma answering questions from foreigners about my country because we are so diverse, so different, yet so tolerant (for better or worse).

I recall a conversation I had with a British friend and it was a simple question: “How is Malaysia’s political scene?” I found myself tongue-tied in trying to explain that, while we have an interesting political scene, the people are really nice and the country is great too.

All this talk of diversity and cohesion, especially following the 52nd Malaysia Day, get me thinking: What has my journey as a Malaysian taught me as a person, as a woman, and as a leader in the workplace?

Taking on my team-lead role a year back has taught me the importance of integration, cohesion, alignment and various other descriptors of “integrating people together,” it helps that I was blessed with a team formed of diverse age, background, race, experience, and nationality—this reflects the kind of integration that needs to be done.

As expected of any team, collaboration needs to result in high performance. As I learnt (and am still learning) certain principles are helpful when it comes to integrating a team at work.

LEGACIES MATTER
No change comes without discomfort; no discomfort comes with painful issues. I do not get to choose the life journey of those who have come to be part of my team, so rather than fighting and denying it, the sensible thing I learnt was to listen to these legacies.

Having honest conversations about it reduces defensiveness that can come with new change.

DIFFERENCES ARE MEANINGFUL
We generally focus on bringing out similarities when it comes to creating cohesiveness so that people have a common goal. While highlighting common experiences help in terms of alignment, for sustainable collaboration, it is meaningful to use this similarity platform to help each other realise their differences so that people feel that they can uniquely contribute to the same goal.

If we downplay these differences, we may inevitably lose the leverage of the different strengths people can bring to the table.

COHESION IS A PROCESS
It is easy to think that cohesion is an end goal where we reach a point that we are integrated, job done, right?

In a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) environment, especially when clarity is short-lived, integration and disintegration is a cycle. Just as we have had many years in Malaysia of coming together and moving apart, organisational teams go through this same ebb and flow.

Understanding cohesion as a process reminds us to intentionally build a collaborative spirit, because this glue can weaken when we are not careful. As a woman learning to lead in the workplace, I find three Es necessary in managing the principles mentioned above, and generally in the context of enabling integration and cohesion.

1. EMPATHY
   As a generalising statement, women seem to be able to empathise better, and I come from the camp that sees this as a consequence of social learning as well as our biological advantage. Given that we have this advantage, why not use it?

One of the key characteristics of a great leader is their ability to be present and to take the view of another person. This does not necessarily mean blind agreement, but the leader intentionally acknowledges what the other person is going through and affirming that it is OK, without assigning judgment.

As I mentioned in discussing legacies, showing empathy removes defensiveness and allows openness to take place. If you remember playing the Tetris game, space is needed for the blocks to fit in perfectly. Empathy is the key to enabling an opening between both parties to integrate a new block into existing structures.

2. EXPERIMENTING
   Often, women are brought up in an environment—particularly in our Asian collectivistic culture—to be safe, to stay behind and to not stand out. This social learning has led to women shying away from exposure, especially from areas we are not comfortable in.

In an effort to integrate a team at work, it is a must to be able to step out of the comfort zone and meet others. This might mean we are exposed to an unprecedented value judgment of, “It’s because she’s a woman, she’s too complicated” but truly, what matters more is our self-judgment.

Experimentation will always come with successes and failures, where certain methods work for team cohesion, others fail miserably. I know there are times where I’ve tried an idea which I thought was amazing, but was met with confusion in the team.

Nevertheless, they appreciated my spirit of experimentation, because it shows I am willing to try new ideas for the benefit of my team.

3. EXECUTION
   The good side of the social learning I’ve mentioned above is that women are more deliberative. Sure, that has stopped us from taking bigger steps immediately but, in line with empathy and experimentation, it can mean better decisions for people in the long-term. Particularly because there is always an underlying subconscious stigma about women’s capabilities to lead, it is paramount that we do what we say and say what we do. All the understanding or awareness that comes with empathy, or the new ideas we are willing to experiment with, will not matter if we do not actually do it, and do it with integrity.

This enables cohesion and collaboration to be sustainable because there is actual execution, which has been thought over. We cannot be “NATO” or No Action, Talk Only (which scientific studies claim women having more word quota than men per day).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS
Ultimately, I am a firm believer that these principles and the way we manage principles are relevant across gender, age, and other factors of diversity.

Just as Malaysia is a constant search for the right equilibrium, her ability to withstand the push-and-pull forces, while still maintaining a sense of hopefulness, could be one of our greatest examples to never give up in building our team’s cohesion.
If you were to design your own human culture, what would you include? What would you leave out?

What culture would you relate to? What would you create a new one? If you were to design your own human culture, what would you include? What would you leave out?

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What culture would you relate to? What would you create a new one? If you were to design your own human culture, what would you include? What would you leave out?
MEEK LEADERSHIP
A FORMULA FOR MAKING HISTORY?

By FABIO MALAGISI
editor@leaderonomics.com

ECENTLY, I was posed with this question: Can meek leadership work in today’s environment? As I explored this idea, it became clear that there isn’t a great framework for what characterises meek leadership. Two classic examples of meek leaders to help solidify this definition are Mahatma Gandhi and George Washington. Gandhi is often referenced with regard to meek leadership. Gandhi drove change through non-violent action, selfless intentions and principled beliefs. His deeply-centred and humble leadership style inspired widespread change across the world. He is often credited as having profound influence on future activists (and meek leaders) such as Dr Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi. Washington was known for possessing great humility. Often described as a “man of the people”, he wore civilian clothes and refused to be called “His Majesty”. Washington, with his servanthood nature, is known as the “Father of his country” and revered as one of the great US presidents of all time. Both Gandhi and Washington demonstrated meek virtues and in the process influenced future leaders. Clearly, meek leadership is a relevant and powerful form of leadership. However, it is not just for civil servants such as Gandhi and Washington. Some of the most powerful forces influencing modern day business clearly were guided by meek principles. For clarity, I have personally defined meek leaders as following three critical principles:

1. Leaders who are guided by a clear and principled set of values.
2. Leaders who view themselves as servants.
3. Leaders who have selfless intentions and use power to care for others.

DELVING DEEPER INTO THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: CLEAR SET OF VALUES
Brenda C. Barnes was the first female chief executive officer (CEO) at Pepsi and former CEO of Sara Lee. Before her departure from the leadership limelight due to health issues, you’d be hard pressed to find a Forbes power list without Barnes. She was indeed an accomplished senior executive and a role model for female executives. She was characterised as an introvert and known to be calm and preferred listening. Although not the typical CEO profile, she successfully ran multi-billion dollar operations and was well regarded as a leader. Barnes had a deep value system that guided her. This deep value and praiseworthy characters are important attributes for meek leaders and, more importantly, for any leader.

PRINCIPLE 2: SERVANT LEADERS
Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Company, is arguably one of the most influential forces behind modern day business. His adoption of the five-dollar workday, eight-hour workday, mass production methods, and focus on the middle class form the basis of many of our modern day business ideals. Ford valued his workers and had a core belief that he enabled them to lead better lives. He is quoted with the following with regard to success: “To do more for the world than the world does for you – that is success.”

Clearly Barnes had a deep value system that guided her. This deep value and precious characters are important attributes for meek leaders and, more importantly, for any leader.

PRINCIPLE 3: SELFLESS INTENTIONS AND POWER TO CARE FOR OTHERS
Sam Walton, an entrepreneur and founder of Walmart, was a charismatic force who grew Walmart into one of the most predominant brands in the world. His insistence on referring to employees as associates gives you a glimpse of how he valued people and used his power to care for others.

In his 10 Commandments of Business, he actually listed “value your associates” as one of them. Walton truly cared for others and, in doing so, built an energising and unique culture at Walmart, which now serves the world through everyday low prices.

A famous quote of his is: “The associates don’t care how much their manager knows until they know how much their manager cares.”

This focus on caring is often lost among the numbers and company strategy. Walton understood this principle and used caring as his competitive advantage.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS
The unique principles of meek leaders often get overshadowed by today’s high-paced world of always searching for the next trend. Meek virtues, however, remain powerful tools that are just as relevant today as they were for Gandhi and Washington. Our examples of leaders who embody meek virtues are impressive and range from civil rights leaders and presidents, to modern day business trailblazers. What they all have in common is that they not only led but also made history in a meaningful way.

Perhaps the qualities of being value-based, serving others and using power to care for others are not only relevant to being a leader today, but makes the difference between leaders who create headlines and leaders who make history. It’s certainly something to think about.
The Brave One

Pandelela, a Sarawakian of Bidayuh ethnicity, started diving when she was only eight years old. We know at that age, children are inquisitive and possess little or no fear of taking risks. According to Pandelela, you need a lean and flexible physique to become a diver. Possessing the agility of gymnastics will be of added advantage because both sports share similar acrobatic movements. Of course, be prepared for a routine and disciplined training.

The HIGHS and LOWS

Like the many life experiences in our lives, Pandelela’s career as a diver is also a journey of highs and lows. But for every stumbling block removed, those experiences can only make her success story and sacrifices more purposeful and worthwhile. Pandelela’s career highlights include her bronze medal wins at the 2012 London Olympics and the Diving World Championship in Kazan this year. Since then, the fruits of her labour have motivated her to do even better.

“Of course, there were times when you feel like you’ve hit the wall with sudden injuries, miscommunication and the pressure of keeping up with people’s expectations of your performance. In those times, I seek support from my family, coaches and teammates.”

“More important, I seek the comfort and guidance from God through prayers,” explains Pandelela, who is a Christian. “Eventually, everything will fall back into place beautifully.”

More than just winning

Pandelela cited David Boudia, an American diver who shares the same faith, as her role model. For the uninitiated, Boudia is a gold medalist in the men’s 10m platform diving at the 2012 Olympics in London. It’s reported that Boudia’s perspective of competing in the sport changed after discovering his purpose in life through Christ, and it is to glorify God in what he does instead of chasing after his own fame, money and pleasure.

“Similarly, I want to dedicate my every effort and win in diving to Him. Other than improving the lives of my family back home, I also want to make Malaysia proud of my achievements.”

“My next goal is to train really hard to do well at the 2016 Rio Olympic Games,” says Pandelela of her aspirations and hopes after qualifying for the games recently.

PARTING THOUGHTS

Asked for her advice for those who want to establish a career in sports, she says, “Never give up when obstacles come your way. When you feel like throwing in the towel, remind yourself why you started your sports endeavour in the first place.”

“And whatever comes your way, keep on fighting while you still have breath. After all, every beginning must have an ending to it. So, in your career journey, ensure you live to see yourself reaching your destination.”

“My conclusion? In doing competitive sports, agility, tenacity and focus are some of the crucial elements in scoring or winning a game. These qualities are often vital complementary building blocks that make great sportspeople like Pandelela shine for Malaysia.”

THE PERFECT DIVE

Always one who loves challenges and adventures, the diving experience left her thrilled for more adrenaline rushes. She fell in love with the sport and there has been no turning back since.

At a tender age of 14, Pandelela moved to Bukit Jalil Sports School in Kuala Lumpur to join the national diving team.

Perseverance and Sacrifices

“In the beginning, my family were concerned about me juggling between studies and training, but they eventually gave their 100% support for me to continue diving,” says Pandelela, who is currently studying sports science and majoring in sports management at Universiti Malaya.

According to Pandelela, you need a lean and flexible physique to become a diver. Possessing the agility of gymnastics will be of added advantage because both sports share similar acrobatic movements.

Of course, be prepared for a routine and disciplined training.

Let us all celebrate this Malaysia Day with a patriotic feeling in our hearts and continue to make our country proud.”

- Pandelela

“I usually wake up at 7:30am and have breakfast before my morning training session. After that, I will grab my lunch and have a quick nap before the afternoon training session begins. I will then have my dinner and study before heading to bed. That’s basically my everyday routine,” says Pandelela.

During competition season, I undergo two intensive training sessions totaling eight hours a day, for six days a week. During non-competition season, I get to rest on Wednesday mornings, Saturday afternoons and Sundays.

“I usually wake up at 7:30am and have breakfast before my morning training session. After that, I will grab my lunch and have a quick nap before the afternoon session begins. I will then have my dinner and study before heading to bed. That’s basically my everyday routine,” says Pandelela.

For bed. That’s basically my everyday routine.

The Eternal Perspective: Go for More than Just a Medal

Although Lay Hsuan doesn’t possess a high bodily-kinesthetic intelligence when it comes to sports, she can still skip rope relatively well. She hopes all Malaysians had a Happy Malaysia Day! Please write in if you have an interesting career journey to share with her.
ARE YOU FIT TO CLIMB THE CORPORATE LADDER?

By TRAVIS BRADBERRY
editor@leaderonomics.com

I T’S September already, and year-end reviews are just around the corner. It isn’t too late to show your boss that you’re worthy of a promotion. Maybe you’ve been holding down the same position for a few years and are ready to move up. Maybe your company is going through some internal shuffling and you’re expecting your dream job to open up. Or, maybe you’ve been disappointed a few too many times by other people getting promoted ahead of you. Whatever the reason, you want to make certain now that you’re ready to move up. In other words, you need to make certain that your boss sees it that way.

“Be so good they can’t ignore you.”
—STEVE MARTIN

Anthony Greenwald, at the University of Washington, has studied bias more than just about anyone, and his research findings have major implications for your ability to get promoted. His recent studies have shown that unconscious workplace biases tend to stay constant, and bosses follow these biases, whether they are aware of them or not.

People are claiming that they can train away biases,” Greenwald says, “(They’re) making those claims without evidence.” When it comes to getting promoted, you want to present yourself in a way that feeds into the biases that bosses have about what makes someone promotable. You’re already doing the hard work, so why not frame your effort in such a way that it increases your chances of obtaining the position you want? While this probably sounds a bit manipulative, there are several straight-forward things that you can do to show your work and make certain that you’re promotable.

The following five actions will appeal to your boss’s inherent biases about promotions, without you being disingenuous.

1 STRETCH YOUR BOUNDARIES
Anybody (well, almost anybody) can do what they’re told. To get promoted, you have to go above and beyond. Taking on additional responsibilities without being asked is not only a great way to demonstrate your work ethic, energy, and skills, but it also lets your boss know that you’re ready (and able) to expand your scope. When you take on more than the norm, your boss can’t help but think that you’re capable of a bigger role. This includes showing that you’re willing to take risks by making innovative suggestions.

2 DON’T BE TOO IRREPLACEABLE
Most people fail at this. Of course, performing at your highest level regardless of the position you’re in is always the best idea. The key here is not to be seen as the only person capable of performing the necessary duties in the position that you want to move on from. If you do, your boss will conclude that promoting you isn’t worth the trouble (and risk) of finding someone to replace you. The best way to find a balance between doing your best and showing that you’re ready for more is by developing other people.

As tempting as it is to hoard knowledge, don’t. Instead, make certain that there are others who know how to do important aspects of your job. Plus, teaching is a critical leadership skill. So, in addition to alleviating concerns about finding your replacement, you’ll demonstrate that you can handle the responsibility that comes with a more advanced position.

3 DEMONSTRATE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ)
You might be able to get away with being a temperamental genius in entry-level positions, but you’ll never move past that without emotional intelligence. If you’re the type who’s prone to temper tantrums when things don’t go your way, losing your cool when people cross you, storming out of rooms, yelling, or going silent during conflict, you’re signaling to your boss that you don’t want a promotion.

No boss wants to be known as the guy or girl who promoted a short-fused person. Once you’re promoted, your behaviour is a reflection of the judgment of the person who promoted you. Show your boss that you have enough self-awareness to acknowledge your weaknesses and to work to improve them. This will prove you’re capable. Emotional self-control is the result of hard work, not an inherent skill.

4 MAKE CERTAIN YOU SPEAK THE COMPANY’S LANGUAGE
Bosss appreciate vision more than anything. They love it when you see what could be useful to the company over the long term and tell them about it in a language they understand. As you move up in any company, your choice of language becomes increasingly important. It’s no longer enough to simply be an expert at what you do; you have to demonstrate that you understand how the work you do serves the business.

That means learning the vocabulary of the executive team and your boss. Whether that’s Key Performance Indicators, earnings before interest, taxes and amortisation, profit margin, market share, failure rate, or what have you, know what the terms mean and why they’re important so that you can use them correctly when speaking with upper management.

Speaking the right language will not only show that you’re interested in more than your current role, but it will also demonstrate your intelligence and fit within the company.

5 DON’T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR IT
Not everybody wants to be promoted; some people are perfectly happy doing the same job for years on end. If you don’t tell your boss otherwise, he or she may assume that you’re one of them.

When the time comes to show up in your boss’s office and say, “I’m interested in a promotion,” it’s important that you have something specific in mind—if not a specific job title, then at least a clear idea of what the responsibilities might include and how this ties into your career goals. And, if the job requires skills you don’t have yet, outline your plan for acquiring them.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER
You may not get the promotion you’re aiming for if that happens, ask for feedback, but stay away from sour-grapes questions like “Why did you pick him and not me?” In fact, don’t speak about the person who got the promotion at all. Instead, ask which of the critical skills you lack and what you need to do to be ready for the next opportunity. Don’t argue; just listen, and ask thoughtful follow-up questions. Just make certain you follow through on the suggestions you’re given. If your boss suggests some things you can do to become more promotable and you don’t follow through, don’t expect to be considered the next time around.

Promotions don’t just happen, and they’re not a guaranteed result of high performance. That’s because you just make certain you follow through on the suggestions you’ve given. If your boss suggests some things you can do to become more promotable and you don’t follow through, don’t expect to be considered the next time around.

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By ALVIN DAN
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HOW do we instill love for the community in the youth of this generation? How do we show them the reality of the world at present, and that they, through simple acts and by sacrificing a bit of time and strength, can bring about a world of a difference for another person?

How do we allow them that experience, and in exchange, for them to discover that when they give, they will receive more than what they intended to give? I remember this sentence was once told to me, “If everyone focuses on getting, no one receives; but if everyone gives, everyone receives.”

In our DIODE Leadership Programme, youths are introduced to the MAD Project, where MAD stands for Make a Difference.

The MAD project is where each group is given our company values to focus on: Empowering, Growth, Giving, and Relationships. Out of these four values, the group will think of a project that will make a difference in a community of their choosing, be it their home, school, or a centre in their neighbourhood.

LOVING THE COMMUNITY

While the MAD project is encouraged to be executed after camp has concluded, we do understand the restrictions that each group faces, as members come from different schools and states.

To continue on a project that requires them to continuously meet and plan does pose some complications. So again we return to the first question: How do we instill a love for the community in the youth of this generation?

As the camp coordinator of the June Youth Leadership Camp, I also had my MAD project to work towards, which brings us to the fifth value of our company: Building the Future.

Because I was determined to see a positive change in the lives of the youths that came for camp, I decided to organise the inaugural MAD Project/Reunion event for the campers.

Having a heart for the community myself, I believe it was imperative to introduce that community aspect to campers, that even at a young age, they can make a difference.

In doing so, they will continue to build communities of love and take one step closer towards transforming the nation.

ANYONE CAN CHOOSE TO BE A LEADER

On Sep 22, a number of campers from our June Youth Leadership Camp gathered at the Assunta Children Society. Five camp facilitators, 13 campers and 16 children from the centre, ranging from ages five to 14 were present.

The facilitators and campers arrived early in the morning, sacrificing their Saturday morning sleep, and found themselves surrounded by children who were up and running, excited for what would come next.

We started by having a simple snack and drink, and the campers were broken up into two groups – one would be in charge of running games for the children, and the other would be involved in our AVP (Awareness, Vision, Plan) session, where we would introduce our Leaderonomics leadership model to the older children.

I started the morning by introducing why we were there. I explained the community I was connected to, and announced that we had some of the children from the centre who were given scholarships to come for our camps.

I shared with them that instead of doing the usual DIODE reunion where participants would gather at a particular venue such as a mall, have a meal and catch up with each other, we aspired to do more than that this time. The games team then took over and we ran them with the children in the centre.

What I found most inspiring was that instead of the facilitators sharing their experiences from camp, I had three campers who rose to the challenge and shared their understanding of what AVP means.

They shared their feelings when questions were posed by the facilitator. Even with that short session, I believe that just by sharing their personal experiences, the three children were definitely encouraged.

It was a surprise to them that our campers were the same age as they are. They realise that they can be a leaders too, and that leadership is not restricted by youth.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

At the end of the event, after the children had returned home, we gathered together for a final debrief. Among some of the comments I heard was that it was an amazing opportunity, an eye-opening experience, especially to be approached by the children and asked to spend a little bit more time and energy to play with them.

Each of us who worked so hard to make the camp an enjoyable and enriching experience for everyone, brought back something more than what they came to give. I believe this is one way we can instil love for the community in the youth of this generation.
Molly Mahoney is the manager of Mr Magorium's Wonder Emporium. She is also a musical prodigy who has every intention of finishing her concerto, which, regardless of her daily attempts, remains unfinished. She has come to the conclusion that she is stuck.

We have all been there, at some point in our lives: stuck in the face of seemingly unlimited potential. Like Mahoney, we are fully aware of what we are supposed to be able to do, but unfortunately we are stuck.

To fix her problem, Mahoney intends to quit being the manager of the toy store to fully concentrate on music. Instead of allowing it, Mr Magorium gives her a wooden cube and promotes her to “Owner” of the store. Mahoney accepts the cube, but protests strongly against being given the store because she believes that it is Mr Magorium’s magic that keeps it magical.

Later on, Mr Magorium asks her what she did with the cube. She replies: “What can I do with it? It’s a block of wood!” To which Mr Magorium asks: “Yes, but what do you think it could become if someone, for once, just believed in it?”

Mahoney is in fact represented by the cube. She knows that she is a block of wood, and that blocks of wood can be made into something, yet she thinks that she is only a block of wood. She is aware of her limited potential, yet limited by her limiting beliefs.

**LESSON:** Many of us are like Mahoney. We are aware of our own potential and limited by our limiting beliefs. Rather than focusing on our presuppositions of our potential, what we need is an opportunity to correct our presuppositions about our potential and discover the reality of what lies within us.

So how should we discover our potential? It is simple: we need to challenge ourselves with the unknown. Concentrate on something that will stretch your limits, something new.

1 **“I’M STUCK.”**

Eric Applebaum is a nine-year-old who is good at building sculptures, but who finds it hard to make friends with kids his age. His only friends are Mahoney and Mr Magorium.

Eric believes that people think he is weird and, therefore, they don’t want to be friends with him. His mother teaches him that that is not a good excuse. She asks him: “Have you asked anyone to play with you?” Eric, of course, has never actually done so.

He is trapped by his own assumptions.

Eric assumes that people think that he is weird and, as a result, they don’t want to make friends with him. His potential friends assume that he is weird and therefore refuse to or don’t know how to be a friend to him.

**LESSON:** There are times when, like Eric, we act based on our assumptions. When we see someone acting a certain way, we immediately assume something about that person and immediately react based on what we think without reassessing our thoughts.

When we do this, we miss great opportunities. It might have been making a new friend, having an enriching conversation or even forging a better business relationship.

So, always try to clarify before deciding on a presumptuous course of action.

2 **“I JUST KNOW IT.”**

Henry Weston is an accountant hired by Mr Magorium to appraise the store’s value. He is introduced as the Counting Mutant which results in everyone calling him “Mutant”. To Mahoney and Eric, this nickname rings true because, to them, Henry is different. They don’t understand Henry, who does not join in on their jokes, doesn’t play, and doesn’t believe that the Emporium is a magical place.

Eventually and in a delightful twist of irony, Henry’s actions become the turning point in the plot, and he saves the store.

**LESSON:** We will all have our Hennys and we must accept them for who they are, no matter how different (or difficult) they may be. We never know if they could be that one important person who will be the turning point in our lives.

For those of us who feel like a “Henry” or a “Mutant”, shuffling people out is never the answer, especially if they are genuinely trying to connect with us.

**IN CONCLUSION**

The characters of Mr. Magorium’s Wonder Emporium show us that diversity in the workplace is a good thing. Change, sometimes in the form of people, is usually a good thing because when we are forced to adapt, we develop, and usually for the better. Besides, it makes life more interesting... and more of an adventure.