We've all gone completely M.A.D.
How small acts can make a big difference

Pg 12

Time to quit your job?
Four signs that we should look elsewhere

Pg 08

Is work-life balance dead?
It’s time to find new ways of working

Pg 05

Leaders are givers
Become a better leader by learning how to give more

Pg 03

COMPASSION VS COMPLIANCE
TRAPS TO AVOID IN BUSINESS LEADERSHIP
PAGES 6–7
BOOРИSH BOSSES

THERE’S nothing quite so ghastly as a ghoulish boss who can bleed you dry quicker than Dracula can bear his fangs. We all know the type: these are the leaders who leave us feeling demotivated, exhausted, under-appreciated and, often, without direction.

They are the bosses who will, when a team member raises a concern, advise that they should “be grateful you have a job”, or offer counsel that, “if you’re not happy, why don’t you leave?”

Goh Chee Seong, dean of Behavioural Science at HELP University, was kind enough to offer his insights into vampiric bosses who suck the life out of their staff. According to Goh, such bosses care more about their own success than the success of their staff. They enjoy playing mind games in order to keep their employees guessing what’s really in their mind, and they will set demanding targets, but neglect to empower their team to make the decisions needed to achieve their targets. Vampiric bosses will blame employees for their own mistakes, and they usually fail to value or protect the dignity of their staff.

These kinds of bosses fall under two categories: they either lack the skills and know-how to carry out their role, or they are driven by their ego, where “problematic employees” tend to be those who refuse to bow down to their Great Leader. Indeed, some vampiric bosses may fall under both categories.

What these leaders fail to understand is that such a leadership style is potentially corrosive in the long run to their business goals and objectives. Rather than sucking the life out of their employees, leaders who achieve lasting success are those who coach with compassion, as described in this week’s pullout by Prof Richard Boyatzis.

These bosses breathe new life into their employees, making them feel valued, part of the team, and invested in the work they do. By cultivating a resonant leadership style, your business will thrive because your workers are able to thrive in a healthy and positive environment, the kind in which dreams are made and workplace nightmares become a thing of the past.

Have a fang-tastic Halloween, everyone!

Till next week,
SANDY
Editor
Leaderonomics.com

BOSS BLEEDING YOU DRY?

By SARA YEE
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THESE vampires are not literal bloodsuckers, but they are something else – they feed off the energy that you give out. So yes, vampire bosses. Not only are they feeding off you but, as a subordinate, you cannot really do anything.

OR CAN YOU?

Vampiric tendencies are inherently parasitic in nature and you, as the host, have to remove the parasite from where it has lodged. It is proven that these sort of people are very much draining your energy and sometimes they are not even aware of it.

NO GARLIC NEEDED

I have briefly met people like these before and I can tell you the mood souls almost immediately: it’s no exaggeration to say you feel like the world would be better ending, because these people are draining your very soul.

Simply by identifying these people and cutting them out of your life is the first and most important step to take. If you cannot do so because they are part of the workplace and are people who have substantially more power than you, it does not mean you have to suck up to them. You can, however, minimise damage by identifying boundaries and working out things with them civilly within those boundaries.

By SARA YEE
editor@leaderonomics.com

NO SILVERWARE NEEDED

There is no need to get up in arms about something that you cannot control. Where possible, avoid them. If that is not possible, practise simple breathing meditation – take a deep, quiet breath and exhale slowly: repeat this a couple of times.

If the vampiric relationship is putting some or the people they quoted and not necessarily those of Leaderonomics.
LEADERS ARE GIVERS
THE SCIENCE OF BUILDING LEADERS

By ROSHAN THIRAN
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“Giving makes me feel like I’m living” — Morrie Schwartz

LEADERONOMICS has five values which we cherish and uphold. One key value we have is “giving.” It is a misunderstood value, occasionally even among employees. Many consign giving to be the opposite of leadership. To many, leadership is about “giving” and “receiving” and at Leaderonomics, our core belief is that the basis for leadership is to give. How is that possible?

Last week, I got the opportunity to meet up and spend an evening with Noel Tichy. Tichy is a professor at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan. Tichy’s big claim to fame happened when he was asked by General Electric (GE)’s legendary CEO, Jack Welch, to help GE’s Crotonville Leadership Centre.

Tichy was part of the game-changing machinery that propelled GE’s fortunes in the late 80s and early 90s to implausible levels. As I chatted with Tichy, I rang clearly what “giving” meant to the CEO. A CEO’s most valuable resource is his or her time.

There is only a finite amount of it. Everyone wants a part of the CEO’s time, and usually they guard their calendars carefully. Yet, the CEOs who give up their time, their most precious asset, to teach, usually end up being successful in the long-run.

Which brings me to an important truth: leaders are givers. When leaders give, they always somehow get much more in return.

A few weeks ago, one of my employees insisted I attend a networking event where everyone was dressed up and went around the room swapping business cards. I hate such events. I am an absolutely useless networker. I have a preference to build relationships with those I meet. The best way to do so is to usually give. Sometimes, it is through introducing them to others who may be able to help them out. Sometimes, I give my time and listen. Sometimes, it may be to provide support. Whatever it is, even though it may seem like I am always giving and never receiving, in the long-run, it yields more returns than I can ever imagine.

GIVE TO RECEIVE

A few years ago, I was speaking at a conference and someone who had Googled our website (www.leaderonomics.org) asked me a question about our values. She specifically opened into the “giving” value and told me that it is easy to have such values in a social enterprise like Leaderonomics, but it would never work in an organisation whose primary aim is shareholder value.

In fact, she added that giving could only happen after we get “— companies need to focus on “getting” revenue and profits before focusing on CLV and “giving” to the community. She was adamant that giving was a result of getting and not the other way around.

In many organisations, there is the need to be politically savvy to get promoted and go ahead. This means being ruthless to get, get, get and only give when necessary. Yet, if you study the lives of great leaders, you will find each and every one of them cultivated a habit of giving in their organisations. Roger Enrico gave by teaching at PepsiCo. Other organisations like Google foster environments where each employee helps others and this enables effective collaboration, which results in innovation.

Great leaders are great givers. Leadership is a thankless task. It is much easier to follow and criticise. Most employees will have a million ways of how their leader can be better. Being a CEO is not only a thankless role, it is extremely stressful and bad for your health. CEOs are lonely at the top and sometimes have no-one to turn to in their frustration. No one shares their stress or burden as no-one appreciates the immense pressure they are faced with. Yet, they sign up for it. Most leaders, especially at the initial start-up stage and I am extremely thankful to him for volunteering his organisation to be our guinea pig. We did such a fabulous job with his organisation and many other organisations came our way if I had held back from fully giving my best to him, we may never have got our early success.

The best leaders give because they always put their interest behind the interest of the organisation and their people. They intentionally focus on the needs of others and forsake their own. I know of countless times I wished I could skip a customer dinner to spend more time at home or had to cover for others who were unable to make it to a session. Instead of sulking, I refocus my mind to look at the opportunities that may await me. And guess what — usually that dinner or event turns out to be a life-changing experience that yields my next biggest opportunity or idea.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Many years ago, I heard a story about a little girl who needed a blood transfusion from her little brother. The doctor asked the boy if he was willing to give his blood to his sister. After a long hesitation, he agreed since it meant saving his sister. At the end of the process, the boy turned to the doctor and asked, “Will I die soon?” The doctor puzzled, told him he would not die. The boy was amazed and replied, “I thought you said you needed to take all my blood to save my sister. I thought I would die.” He was willing to give his life to save his sister.

You don’t have to give up your life when you give. When you give, you not only will become a better leader, but maybe like the boy in the story, you will make a huge difference in someone else’s life. So go on and give.

1. Give Your Time
Building deep connections and such bonds requires giving. We need to give our time to grow relationships. Plan to give 30 minutes each day for your team to build these bonds.

2. Teach
If you cannot teach in your organisation, come volunteer at a Leaderonomics Diode camp where you can teach kids, university students and even NGOs a skill or competence. Teachers are the ultimate givers.

3. Create A Giving Journal
Once a year, go back through your past giving and you will be surprised at how blessed you have been because of your generosity.

4. Give Little But Often
Instead of giving once a year, give more of your time, energy and resources in smaller bits but more frequently.

5. Be Spontaneous
Practice random acts of giving.

6. Donate Money
Contribute to the lives of others and make a difference.

7. Volunteer
If you don’t know where to volunteer, look up www.dogoodvolunteer.com

8. Mentor Others
Make it your goal to develop at least one person.

If you cannot teach in your organisation, come volunteer at a Leaderonomics Diode camp where you can teach kids, university students and even NGOs a skill or competence. Teachers are the ultimate givers.

To read more about Leaderonomics’ values, go to www.leaderonomics.org
DRAWING A BLANK?

LET US HELP YOUR BUSINESS GROW IN 2016.

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

www.leaderonomics.org
O
nce upon a time, work took place outside of the home during designated hours. Today, that world is a fairy tale. If you checked your work email this Thanksgiving, you're likely aware that at most companies there is an unspoken expectation that employees tend to email all hours. It would be easy to blame heartless managers or short-sighted chief executive officers for the collapsing boundaries between work and life. But the causes of this cultural shift are far more complex.

As Americans, we pride ourselves on hard work and self-sacrifice. As human beings, we thrive on feeling needed. Neurologically, certain elements of work can be addictive. Studies have found that satisfying curiosity about a novel event — say, a new and unread email sitting in your inbox — releases dopamine in the brain, which conditions us to check again and again.

Despite the monumental shift in the accessibility of work, organisations continue to offer employees the same advice they did before the invention of the BlackBerry: Seek work/life balance. With the accessibility of work, organisations again.

Over the course of reviewing thousands of academic articles for my book, I have repeatedly encountered a striking gap between the latest science and the realities of the modern workplace. Take, for example, the degree of control employees at your company possess over when and where they work. We tend to assume that granting workers too much leeway will lead to reduced effort; that employees will try to take advantage unless they are closely supervised.

Why is this the case?

For one thing, placing employees in control of their schedules encourages them to work during hours when they are most effective, instead of requiring them to sit comatose in front of a computer because it’s not yet 5pm. Most adults function best in the first few hours after waking. Others are sharper in the afternoon.

Flexible work schedules allow employees in both camps to leverage their best hours instead of conforming to an artificial eight-hour "shift" — one that was originally designed to maximise the productivity of a factory, not human beings.

Studies also show that employees with flexible schedules work more intensely. It’s because, as humans, we are motivated by a norm of reciprocity. When a manager grants us the freedom of a flexible schedule, we seek to “repay” that benefit by investing greater effort.

Productivity aside, flexible working offers another crucial benefit — it allows employees to resolve critical personal matters when needed, so that they can bring sharper focus and clarity to their work.

No wonder workplace flexibility has been linked with a host of positive well-being outcomes, including higher job satisfaction, lower stress, and reduced work-family conflict.

We live in a world in which it is acceptable for work to interrupt personal time. And yet we’re not comfortable when personal time interrupts work. Why?

When organisations provide employees with a clear set of goals and entrust them to manage their time responsibly, making it acceptable for a worker to take an hour during the day to attend a yoga class, visit an elderly parent or welcome his/her child off the afternoon school bus, they generate commitment that ends up saving them money in the long term.

Just ask Patagonia, a successful outdoor clothing manufacturer. Employees at the company's California headquarters are empowered to set their own hours, given access to an on-site day care and invited to take regular breaks during the day for exercise.

Company restrooms even include private showers, transforming the prospect of an afternoon jog from an aspiration fantasy into a practical option. The result? Over the past five years, Patagonia’s profits have tripled, while employee turnover has dropped to a negligible amount. Patagonia’s profits have tripled, while employee turnover has dropped to a negligible amount.

According to the success of Patagonia, there is an unspoken expectation that employees at most companies tend to email all hours.

As Americans, we pride ourselves on hard work and self-sacrifice. As human beings, we thrive on feeling needed.
Coaching with Compassion

By Richard E. Boyatzis, Melvin Smith and Ellen Van Gorder

ALTHOUGH he was vice-president of information technology (IT) at a mass-produced company, James was confused about his future. He was doing quite well. Or so he thought. It was not unusual for him to be driving a mid-priced automobile that he rented for a monthly fee. And although he was devoted entirely to his family and his God, he was devoted entirely to his family and his God. So what was wrong?

When James looked into his future, beyond a few months, it was a blank wall. It did not seem right. And yet, he was happy. He was convinced that the NEA, a change or adaptation or in response to new ideas, feelings, and other people. The person being coached often feels on the defensive, feeling a need to justify or prove himself or herself. Or, the person feels that they should go along with the coach's advice for them to change some aspect of their behavior. In other words, the person sees the coach's image of how they should behave. In this way, we can slip into coaching for compliance. Instead of reaching the person's ideal self, their dreams and ambitions, the person's ability to make sustainable change.

Coaching for Compassion

When most of us try to help someone, we often get sucked into focusing on things that need to be fixed, like a person's weaknesses. In the process, we invade the NEA and the body's stress reaction. The person being coached often feels on the defensive, feeling a need to justify or prove himself or herself. Or, the person feels they should go along with the coach's advice for them to change some aspect of their behavior. In other words, the person sees the coach's image of how they should behave. In this way, we can slip into coaching for compliance. Instead of reaching the person's ideal self, their dreams and ambitions, the person's ability to make sustainable change.

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Coaching others with compassion allows us to consider the possibilities and pursue them. This positive, hopeful state reflects inter-personal, psychological and emotional processes. We are actually healthier, more open, and in general not good.

In contrast, arousal of the PEA helps a person to function at a higher plane. Research in neuroscience, endocrinology, and psychology has shown that arousal of a person's inner state for the future stimulates the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS). This result led to increased long-term functioning, and enabled the person to be more open-minded, flexible, and in general not good.

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By JONATHAN YABUT
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D OES this sound familiar: you’re hyperactive and busy in your first year, and then you plummet like a roller coaster by the time you hit your fifth year.

You were undoubtedly one of the high-flyers of the company, but these days you’re not giving your best. You’ve lost the spark, the passion, and the flame – you finally want to quit.

You want to quit, but you’re not sure why. Maybe you hate your new boss, you’re fed up with the incompetence of people in your organisation, or you simply don’t feel excited about your job anymore. The strong feeling of wanting to quit should always be examined, not ignored.

Here are four motivated signs that can guide you to justify that it’s time to start cleaning your desk.

1 YOU’RE STRESSED AND EXHAUSTED – AND IT’S ON A DIFFERENT LEVEL

While “stress” may be relative to each one of us, there will be jobs that are clearly beyond the workload you were expecting.

You feel tired every day, and you dread waking up in the morning because you know what’s ahead of you, and it’s usually not good. “Hey, you look tired,” says your friend who meets you on a Friday night for drinks.

The litmus test to knowing if you’re too exhausted from your job is when people start noticing it – physically. You get sick easily, you have adjusted to four to five hours of sleep every day (heard of the executive officer who died with this deliberate lifestyle?), and you’re either losing weight (for lack of proper eating) or gaining more (because of stress eating).

All the work stress is not worth it if you’re going to end up in the hospital. You may be one of those who are happily tired – folks who love their job and are addicted to the everyday adrenaline rush, no matter how many items they cross out from their list.

But you may also be one of those who are simply tired because the demands are just too much, whether quantifiably or qualitatively.

Unfortunately, this is when you’ve probably underestimated the job description before signing that contract, or an organisational change burdened you to do more work.

If you think that you deserve a job that is more manageable and suited to your lifestyle, then you should seriously consider moving on. Remember that you live a life through a job, you don’t end it with one.

2 YOUR CAREER IS STAGNATING

“We’re not going together anymore,” said your ex-girlfriend. This is the same cue that can indicate your readiness to move on. Like any relationship, your job shouldn’t just help pay the bills.

It should also transform you into a better person – smarter, more open-minded, more ambitious, and more collected.

While salary is intuitively at the top of the list for most people’s considerations in choosing a job, research shows that people are also motivated by interesting work, challenge, and responsibility. When going to work isn’t a joy anymore, it’s time to consider something else.

When I worked in a telecommunications company as a marketing executive, I learnt how to influence people who don’t report to me, but who need to get my project done.

When I worked in a pharmaceutical company, I needed to drive four-to-six hours to visit far-flung pharmacies and hospitals. Like any salesman, I learnt how to talk to strangers and make connections in an instant.

I was the most absorbent sponge. And when I felt that I had absorbed everything I needed, I knew I was ready to leave. I left because I was thirsty for more lessons that can only be found in a new environment that I knew nothing about. Unless you’re satisfied with what you have, you should leave if you’re not learning anything new anymore (and not because you didn’t get promoted).

Consider quitting if your work has started to become a daily routine that only makes you duller and not sharper.

Your work is supposed to make you feel that you are “value-adding” to the process, not acting as a filler. During these times, it is only you who can make that final decision, not your boss or the company.

3 YOU’RE NOT ENJOYING THE COMPANY OF YOUR TEAM

Many people will stay in a company despite the unattractive pay and the two-hour commute because they enjoy the company of their colleagues.

“Welcome Jonathan to the (insert company name here) family!” says the neon-glowing bannerposted on my cubicle on my first day at work. I still remember that special day when I first knew that I was in the right company of people.

Unfortunately, not all of us will be blessed with this fate.

Some of us will be in our corporate careers where we “just don’t fit in.” I usually give myself six months to determine if I’m within the right bunch of folks.

During my first 90 days, I join every opportunity to get to know people by joining their company parties, sports events, and “HR needs volunteers” moments.

But there will be times when no matter how hard your heart is willing to beat, the people around you don’t seem to resonate. They don’t laugh at your jokes, they don’t invite you for lunch, and they disappointing find How To Get Away With Murder boring.

You will naturally feel rejected, but don’t ever feel that it’s all about you. There will be organisations in this lifetime that weren’t meant for you – and this makes you unique.

You don’t owe them your personal reasons, but you have all the right to leave and be happy in the company of people who truly care about you. It is during these moments of realising what you don’t like that you finally appreciate the things that you truly like. Do you ever wonder why some employers quit their jobs only to go back to their former companies? The answer is because they’ve realised the same thing.

4 YOU CAN’T SEEM TO RESPECT YOUR BOSS

Most people quit their bosses, not their jobs. A research published by Gallup in 2011 showed that a leading reason why people leave their companies is because they can’t manage the relationship with their boss, rather than being unable to meet the demands of their job.

Mistreat is a key driver to stay committed to your job – and your boss is partly responsible for this. He should know how to inspire you (or remind you of your aspirations) to get things done.

Ever wondered why many folks hire a personal trainer? It’s not just because they need an instructor to tell them what to do, but because they need someone to push them when “the force” isn’t strong enough to head to the gym.

During those stressful moments when you hate your job, you should be gritty enough to push, because either you want to impress your boss or because you believe that he’s stretching you to become the next superstar.

You know that your interest is in good hands because it is in his hands. We all need a boss who will make us whisper to ourselves as we look to them, “I want to become like you.”

Ask yourself: do you want to become like your boss (or a better version of him)? Do you aspire to manage that bigger scope of work that he is currently handling? Do you think you will get along with him well in the next 12 or 24 months?

If your answer is “no”, you might want to get transferred to another team or organisation because sooner or later, he will likely be the reason that you will leave the company. You will likely leave because you know you deserve someone better.

A word of caution though: you should quit your boss if you don’t believe in his leadership and management philosophy, but you might want to think twice if your boss is just stretching you to the extreme.

I’ve had bosses who were worse than Crustal de Vil, but I learnt a lot from them and stayed longer because I knew that nothing can replace the skills they transferred to me. Don’t quit a tough boss who colours you painfully like a rough diamond. You will be thankful for those experiences when you look back in the future.

AFTER THE END OF THE DAY

Quitting is a good thing when the time and reasons are right. Most folks hesitate to quit because of fear of losing or the stigma of giving up.

But remember that there’s also an upside to quitting: the faster you make the right decision to move on, the less opportunity cost you incur for joining a new company that fits you well, and one that can truly set you up for success.

Before you hand down that resigna-
tion letter, do note that it is also your responsibility to exhaust all solu-
tions first in the most objective way.

Good luck in your next step!
STORIES OF GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

IS YOUR CORPORATE CULTURE A HALLOWEEN NIGHTMARE?

BY MORAG BARRETT
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IT’S Halloween, the one night of the year when ghosts, goblins and all things spooky rise up to scare the neighbourhood.

Tonight our doorbell will be ringing as the neighbourhood comes alive with trick-or-treating antics—hopefully more treating than tricking!
The costumes, homemade and store-purchased, seem to get more elaborate each year, as does the size of the bag to collect the candy!
The carved pumpkin displays have become more ornate and intricate and replaced the simple Jack-o-lantern I remember carrying on a stick as a child.
All of these customs may feel new but can, in fact, be traced back hundreds of years. It is a night of mischief, followed by a day of peace and reflection.

What you may not be aware of is that Nov 1, is All Saints Day, an antidote to all things creepy that may have occurred the night before.

IS YOUR CORPORATE CULTURE A HALLOWEEN NIGHTMARE?

Company culture can be summed up as “how business gets done”. Without care and attention a healthy culture can become toxic, a Halloween nightmare that lasts more than one night a year.

In our work with clients around the world there are three immediate opportunities to move a corporate culture forward and make sure that it is not stuck in the dark night.

1. REMOVE THE HALLOWEEN MASK

Organisational values are a great tool. However a poster is not the way to go. If you want a corporate culture built on trust, candour and teamwork, then your actions need to demonstrate this.

If your employees feel the need to wear a mask or costume to fit in and be successful, then things need to change. The change starts at the highest level of the organisation – role modeling the expectations, not by a memo or motivational poster.

2. CHANGE THE STORIES

Do your employees tell spooky tales about your company and the villain’s past and present that work(ed) there? Following a new-hire orientation do your veteran employees “tell the new workers how things are really get done around here?”

Stories are a powerful way to change corporate cultures. Look for the opportunities to reinforce and share the good-news stories. Tales that celebrate the successes and behaviours that are desired, rather than the toxic horror stories that may have been.

3. REWARD THE BEST

Make sure that your reward processes (whether monetary, promotion, or trophies and symbols) recognise the “treats” you want reinforced and not the “tricks” that may keep you stuck.

CONCLUSION

Make sure you are not building or maintaining a Halloween nightmare, remove the masks, change the stories and reward the behaviours that will stand the test of time.

To all your little ghouls and goblins, have a fun Halloween!

Morag Barrett is the best-selling author of Cultivate: The Power of Winning Relationships and CEO of SkyeTeam (www.skyeteam.com), an international HR consulting and leadership development company. Morag’s experience ranges from senior executive coaching to developing leaders and teams across Europe, America and Asia. To develop winning and authentic relationships in your organisation, email us at training@leaderonomics.com
GAME-BASED LEARNING: TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?

EMERGENCE OF SERIOUS GAMES

By ADELINE TAY
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In light of the growing popularity of games among both males and females across all age groups, many educators are looking into how games can be used for educational and training purposes. Games that were developed for such purposes were termed as “serious games”. Other terms that emerged from the literature are computer educational games, digital game-based learning, and educational games.

Just like any other video games, serious games are based on a set of agreed rules with clear goals and objectives that can only be achieved by defeating or overcoming the respective challenges in the game. This is complemented by the incorporated element of educational content.

This game-based approach to learning has the potential to influence learning by manipulating cognitive load and by affecting learners’ motivation toward a learning task.

According to Kurt Squire, director of the Games, Learning & Society Initiative, students learn through “a grammar of doing and being” and the design of video games for educational purposes is shifting from one of “delivering content” to one of “designing experience.”

Moreover, games have been shown to engage students both emotionally and behaviourally through their content. There is much potential in introducing game-based learning into the classroom. Here are some reasons why:

1. PLAYERS ARE INTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED
Both theoretical and empirical research support the notion that serious games possess the potential to positively influence intrinsic motivation.

In other words, players are willing to invest more time and energy in serious games not because of extrinsic rewards, but because the gameplay is a rewarding experience in itself.

There are several factors that contribute to the motivational appeal of serious games, which have been identified in the literature.

In a meta-analysis, autonomy and competence have been recognised as essential motivators in serious games. Thomas Malone, an American organizational theorist and management consultant, proposed that challenge, curiosity, and fantasy are three of the most important aspects that make a game intrinsically motivating.

Furthermore, the element of competition has been argued to have positive effects in learners’ motivation to not only engage in the learning activity, but also to persist in it, and achieve success in the task. Therefore, serious games can lead to higher performance because students who are intrinsically motivated are eager to learn, and at times become so focused on and absorbed in a learning activity that they might lose track of time and completely ignore anything else that is happening around them, this phenomenon is termed as “flow” (which brings us to the second reason).

2. PLAYERS ARE IN A STATE OF “FLOW”
The original concept of “flow” was first defined by Csikszentmihalyi as a state of intense concentration on a particular task that leads to a loss of self-awareness and the sense of time.

Many individuals can testify to this phenomenon and recall a time whereby one is totally engrossed in a particular task or activity, especially one that is perceived as enjoyable, and as a result experience the illusion of time “flying by”.

According to Csikszentmihalyi, the flow state can also be achieved when a presented challenge is matched by the individual’s ability to solve that challenge, thereby resulting in a feeling of pleasure.

As an extension of the original flow theory by Csikszentmihalyi, John Sherry proposed the media flow theory which states that flow is achievable if the demands of a particular media product (e.g. serious games) are at or slightly beyond the ability of the user.

It is important to keep this in mind because according to the Yerkes-Dodson Law, players may become bored and lose interest in the game if it is too easy, or they may be frustrated and give up if the task is too demanding.

In relation to the Yerkes-Dodson Law, the appropriate level of challenge presented in serious games needs to be considered in order to encourage the learners to engage and immerse themselves fully into the gameplay, and hence result in optimal learning performance.

3. PLAYERS ARE FIRED UP BY CHALLENGES
Game challenges are obstacles which are embedded in the game that a player must overcome in order to win the game, and they can appear in either manifest or intrinsic form.

Manifest challenges refer to the obvious enemies or tasks that the player must overcome to win, such as quests that one has to complete or enemies that need to be defeated.

Intrinsic challenges involve learning the specific rules and strategies of a particular game which allow the players to control, navigate and interact in the game world.

Thus, one needs to first master the intrinsic challenges before one can overcome the manifest challenges. However, depending on the complexity of the game, the intrinsic challenges can be quite difficult to deal with, as they also involve kinetic skills needed to operate the interface, such as eye-hand coordination to operate controllers, strategic-thinking ability to solve complex puzzles, and a variety of other cognitive skills that facilitate interaction with the game world.

Rather than formulating a game that strives on luck or random chance to win, serious games work best when formulated in a way that winning is brought about by applying one’s own knowledge, skills and strategies in the form of challenges.

Adeline Tay completed her Masters in Education (Educational Psychology) at Sydney University, and is now specialising in developing simulations at Leaderonomics. To find out more on the simulations that Leaderonomics has to offer, write to training@leaderonomics.com
By CAROLINE REGINA PARAMESWARAN
editor@leaderonomics.com

The movie Poltergeist teaches us an important lesson on how to achieve our goals. We need to be aware of changes if necessary and we need to be able to discern when planning should stop and implementation should start.

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Masters of Wealth 2015
November 10-11, 2015
One World Hotel, Petaling Jaya

Back after 3 years, Robert Kiyosaki, author of No.1 personal finance book Rich Dad Poor Dad will be at this two-day event. Join him with a panel of speakers and learn the new rules of wealth creation as yesterday’s method is becoming obsolete. Learn more at www.mastersofwealth.com or call 03-78012888.

Holiday Camps for Tweens and Teens
Give your kids some holiday fun! Mark your calendars with these exciting year-end DIODE camps organised by the Youth team of Leaderonomics.

DIODE Leadership Programmes get your kids learning new skills and making new friends during the school break. Registration is now open for:
- DIODE Kids - November 23-24
- Tweens Leadership Camp - November 25-28
- DIODE Youth Leadership Camp - Nov 30-Dec 5; Dec 14-19
- DIODE School Leavers Camp - December 7-12

If you’d like to meet the team of facilitators, come for the DIODE Weekend and get a taste of the camp experience. Find out how to register at www.diodecamps.com

HRDF Conference and Exhibition 2015
December 8 & 9, 2015
8am-5pm
Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre

The HRDF Conference and Exhibition 2015 is organised as a platform to shape the debate on Malaysia’s human capital. This year’s theme is People, Prowess, Progress. You can find more information here http://www.hrdfconference.com.my/
A POSITIVE FORCE FOR CHANGE

LOOKING TO MAKE AN IMPACT FOR THE BETTERMENT OF SOCIETY? HERE’S HOW 21 M.A.D. DAYS DID IT!

By DANIEL LEE

WHAT WE STAND FOR

21 M.A.D. Days is a social movement and campaign by Leaderonomics to empower anyone to make a difference wherever they are. M.A.D. stands for “Making A Difference” and we believe that the smallest of acts can often make the biggest difference. Everyone has the capacity to create change with whatever limited resources they have. The only thing to do is make the decision to do so.

21 M.A.D. Days, the campaign, launched on Sept 16 on Malaysia Day, aimed to get people to embark on a 21-day journey to break out from their usual comfort zones and make a difference by doing one simple act a day.

The campaign, launched on Sept 16 on Malaysia Day, aimed to get people to embark on a 21-day journey to break out from their usual comfort zones and make a difference by doing one simple act a day.

Throughout the campaign, people who decided to join the M.A.D. movement (we call them “GoMADders”) took on a set of daily challenges comprising of acts such as starting a conversation with a complete stranger, catching up with an old friend, thanking someone they usually take for granted, having a hug, and giving three people a hug to make their day. As they took on the daily challenges, the GoMADders shared their experiences on social media to inspire friends and family to go M.A.D. too.

That way, one simple act, such as giving a colleague a hug, is no longer merely an ice-breaker but a potential catalyst to create more empowering culture in the workplace.

PULLING TOGETHER AS ONE

With the goal of inspiring more people to be a GoMADder, other individuals, organisations and companies have joined the movement to do something within their respective capacities to go M.A.D. in their own ways.

Local establishments Chai Bar (salad bar) and Gee & Geek (café) offered discounts and promotions especially for 21 M.A.D. Days as their way of making a difference through the campaign.

Both outlets lent their spaces as M.A.D. hubs, where people could get to know more about the campaign as well as get their physical M.A.D. challenge kits (comprising of a t-shirt, M.A.D. journal and hand-drawn cards designed by @themakerejess).

EVERYBODY WINS

During the closing event at Menara Star, GoMADders shared inspiring experiences from their campaign.

Three non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were also present to inspire the attendees to make a difference however they can. The NGOs present were Refuge For The Refugees, DropZone (a youth inspiration centre), and ASESEC from Taylor’s University. Each one of them are making a difference in the community and across the nation.

Eleven of the most inspiring submissions were shortlisted and awards were given out to the top three most inspiring stories, which were selected by a combination of online voting, judges’ evaluation and votes from the attendees at the event.

Three complementary flight tickets were sponsored by AirAsia to fly the grand award recipient and two other friends to Sabah to work on a project with Habitat for Humanity, building houses for the underprivileged in the area.

Accommodation worth RM2,400 was also awarded to the grand award recipient by our sponsor AirAsiaGo for their trip while they go and make a difference to the community there.

Overall, the 21 M.A.D. Days campaign has inspired individuals to realise that they have the power to make a difference through small acts of kindness, generosity and giving.

More importantly, these small acts can inspire others to do the same. Now, what can you do today to make a difference?

21 M.A.D. Days will be back in 2016 to inspire more people to go M.A.D.!

You can help to make a difference in someone’s life. Join us at:

www.fb.com/21MADdays

@21MADdays!

WE HAVE A DREAM

We all want to look for the next Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa or Mahatma Gandhi.

But what if we could actually empower anyone to make a difference anywhere?

What We Stand For

HEN we think about making a difference in the world, we probably think about big achievements and extraordinary feats that create significant changes in society.

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