There are more than 12 great leadership articles in this week’s pullout. However, we have some 50 new articles each month, plus a library of 4,000 great videos, podcasts and articles at www.leaderonomics.com.

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DISCOVERING LEADERSHIP THROUGH MOTHERHOOD

3 HOW MAYBANK STRIKES THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE

6 SEVEN LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM MOTHERHOOD

8 HARNESSING SELF-AWARENESS IN CHILDREN
“How do you do it?”I have been asked this question multiple times over the past seven years—the length of time it has been since I entered motherhood while juggling a demanding career. It was never easy to find the right response to this question, only because of how multifaceted and deep-set the answers were. But each time, I would find myself simply saying, “I am blessed with a solid support system.”

Motherhood brings with it a complex set of emotions, but they are navigable by the choices that are made by mothers, society and the system at large.

There were many moments in these years when I have assumed failure, struggled to find myself as a nurturer to my two young daughters, Neha and Reya, while balancing my commitments at work. At the same time, with each apparent fall, came an opportunity to rise—a chance to break old boundaries and build new, reinforced ones that would go on to redefine my personal approach to challenges. I had the chance to find confidence in the wisdom of mothers who have been in my place; contribute actively to my job while working from home; and, to leave work knowing that my children were placed in the safe and reassuring hands of loved ones who understood and supported my personal goals.

These were experiences that spilled into my professional life; experiences that—when examined closely—ran parallel with the general need of people in the workplace.

Understanding, support and confidence are basic pillars that go a long way in retaining working mothers in the workforce, and this week, Leaderonomics looks into the various perspectives of motherhood in the working world.

Maybank Group, the country’s largest financial institution, anchors this issue, with its progressive policies put in place to support mothers at the workplace.

Its group chief human capital officer Nora Abdul Manaf tells us how the company has constantly been looking at policies that would humanise work processes and influence society in order to break stereotypes associated with the banking industry. This thinking led them to open the Maybank Tiger Cubs Childcare Centre (MT3C), an emergency centre that processes the disruptive impact of the business.

The thinking and process of the company is evident not only in Maybank, but also in many firms who are progressively putting in place policies that address the needs of working mothers. From making time off available to their employees to juggling commitments at work and home more effectively. Two women who benefited from the MT3C and FWA initiatives share their stories with us. Read this on Page 6.

On Page 6, read about the experiences of Leaderonomics’ faculty member Rupa Sivandri, who talks about how motherhood changed her life completely, and enhanced the drive in the work that she did for people management and management consulting. She shares seven learnings from motherhood that gave her valuable lessons on leadership.

And as mothers rediscover their way to leadership, how do they pass these lessons over to their children? Krystal Clare shares her thoughts on how parents can play a role in raising self-awareness in children. “Children listen, observe, soak up information and mimic actions which in turn, often take after the behaviour, attitudes and beliefs of the people who surround them the most,” she writes on Page 8.

Want to know how to get some peace of mind in an excessively plugged-in world? Holly Rust writes about five ways people can manage work expectations in the era of technology. Learn these tips on Page 7.

Also in this issue: Malaysian jazz queen Sheilla Majid shares her thoughts on success, Karen Gately writes about the different ways to connect with disengaged employees and how you can use soft skills to win the top job. This issue is dedicated to all the courageous mothers and mother figures out there, and to everyone—family members, helpers, childcare providers and employers—who stand by mothers in their time to shine.

Happy Mother’s Day!

Lydia Gomez
Editor

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By KAMINI SINGGAM
and LYDIA GOMEZ
editor@leaderonomics.com

E VERY employee dreams of a company that will take good care of their needs beyond the salary package. Professional growth opportunities, competitive benefits, work-place facility and work-life balance all play an equally important role in retaining and driving employees to be constantly on top of their game.

For Maybank Group, the country’s largest financial services group and one of the leading banking groups, the above is not a dream to be fulfilled, but a responsibility that the organization and its leadership seek to fulfill, in order to engage with their employees.

The multi-award winning employer has some of the best perks that transform the concept of employer-employee relationship whilst driving productivity, and maintaining high employee engagement and retention.

And, we at leaderonomics thought that it is only apt – in conjunction with Mother’s Day – to talk about how the banking group may just turn out to be one of the best places for working mothers.

ITS ALL ABOUT THE PEOPLE

Flexing the stripes of diversity, inclusivity and gender equality, Maybank is all for humanising their financial services but also employee engagement efforts, including when facilitating their exits from the company.

The group has a myriad of initiatives in place for women to create a meaningful and exciting workplace experience that also accelerates their career growth and productivity while empowering them to integrate work and family life. Some of these include facilities and offerings such as flexible work arrangements, gym for ladies, various health and wellness programmes and special car park arrangements for pregnant women, amongst other things.

And, if you are mother with young children, you will be impressed with the measures taken by the bank to benefit (yes! you read that right), a well-equipped, need-based childcare centre with day-care facilities and breastfeeding rooms as well as flexible work arrangements and childcare allowance.

Maybank group chief human capital officer Nora Abdul Manaf says the company was constantly looking at an approach that can humanise work processes and have a degree of influence on the society that would ultimately break barriers and stereotypes associated with the banking world.

When the idea of a childcare centre was conceptualised, it started off with us sitting down and thinking how many chores do we need because we have over 24,000 people (employees) in the country and about 44,000 outside. Next, we already provide childcare subsidy; so do we now remove that benefit? I couldn’t do both because there are some people who need a centre while there are some who already have good childcare arrangements and are happy with the allowance,” says Nora.

Then, came the question of productivity which became a critical point that helped Maybank decide to open their Maybank Tiger Cubs Childcare Centre (MT3C), an emergency centre that helps resolve any sudden childcare-related crisis.

When mothers – or even fathers – take time off work for some (medical) emergency, there is a bit of work disruption, and the time taken to stabilise will still result in a productivity dip,” says Nora who adds that the MT3C was a result of Maybank wanting to lend a hand to help employers and arrest issues of low productivity due to unforeseen circumstances.

Nora also says that at times, they’d go as far as to figure out other solutions for non-performing or ‘distract-ed’ employees – for reasons other than child-related – by learning what is bothering them and finding a suitable work arrangement to help them refocus.

Parents with emergency child-care issues such as unavailability of babysitters for example, can approach the MT3C for help by simply filling a form. The centre has registered nurses and certified local caretakers to manage up to 30 children at any given time.

It also meets all building safety standards and requirements by the government and adheres to all in-house health and safety rules – including non-admission for sick children to ensure that every child is safe and sound under their care.

Recently, Maybank announced a year-long maternity benefit, believed to be the first of its kind in Malaysia, to facilitate mothers who are returning to work.

Under the scheme, mothers can choose to take the usual three-month paid maternity leave or extend another three months on half-pay.

“If they are not still ready to return to work, they can take the remaining six-months – unpaid – to focus on their child. We have the 3-6 break for mothers to decide what works best for them.

The institution also provides flexible work arrangements – depending on need and the nature of work – not just to mothers, but all employees.

HELPING EMPLOYEES DISCOVER THEIR PASSION

Interestingly, Maybank is also probably the only institution that allows its employees to go on sabbatical leave and assume other jobs, perhaps even start their own business or engage in an employment which is not in conflict with the interest of the bank.

“It is about helping people sustain themselves without a full-time job and make way for people who can only operate effectively with a full-time job. This helps us with employee engagement. If you are seated in this job (disengaged) thinking you would do better as a florist for example, we would encourage and help you get out there and try,” says Nora adding that it’s their way of helping people grow and discover their potential.

Whether such things should be encouraged, Nora says it’s the company that decides a management tool which works best for their employees, even if it means helping their employees find [and support] their true calling and letting them go with some backing.

AHEAD OF ITS TIME

Maybank’s progressive initiatives started in 2009 when they began transforming their workforce with various work arrangements and benefits that increased competitiveness and a sense of loyalty among employees.

Today, the institution has managed to improve its key retention rate from 53% in 2009 to 81% in 2016. Women make up 55% of its employees. With great emphasis on gender balance in the management, the organisation has 30% of women in top management and 45% in management positions, as well as long-serving employees who make Maybank stand out as an employer of choice in the banking industry.

Guided by the philosophy of equality and fairness, Maybank continues to focus on employee engagement and other strategic priorities that will help scale them into a world-class organisation.

LEADERONOMICS speaks to two Maybank employees – and mothers with young children – who find the facilities offered to working mothers and employees in general to be extremely beneficial. For the mothers, it translated to peace of mind and increase in productivity.

Charme Aminda, Group Risk

I’ve used all the facilities! My youngest son is 20 months old; I got pregnant when I began employment here three and half years ago. My pregnancy. So, I got to use the special car park (for pregnant women). Just before I resumed working, my son began to refuse the bottle. So, I panicked. I couldn’t just leave him and come here, guessing if he was drinking milk or not. That was when I approached MT3C, and they allowed me to come in and feed him while he was being entertained.

It was like an extended maternity leave for me! I would come in during lunch time and feed him. Even here, he would refuse the bottle sometimes, so I had that special place where I could sit with him. The children minds here are very professional. They ring me up when they switch morning. I was also able to send my daughter to school a little later. I live in Taman Melawati, and in rush hour traffic it can take more than an hour to get to work.

My colleague had told me that she used to wake up at 4am to cook for her family before heading to work. We work long hours. With this programme, she can just come to work at 10am and go back at 7pm, so her work and family matters are taken care of.

There’s quality time for family. Some of them can go back early, cook for the family, and are able to send children to school. Prior to this programme, we had to take half-day leave or take the full day off to have these matters done.

Without this system, we have to be here at 6.45am. If there are work issues, we would have to stay later than 5.45pm. My family is happy, and we the employees especially, are not stressed as it is a great option for work-life integration.
By PREMA JAYABALAN
prema.jayabalan@leaderonomics.com

“How many times have we heard statements like this from our mums, especially during our rebellious teenager years? For me, it was a common phrase from my darling mother, usually when we don’t see eye to eye. Today, as a mother I can relate to this statement – I have become like my mother as I raise my child.

I had a natural delivery for my daughter Shakthisri, with no epidural. I did it the old-school way with all the pain, fear and sudden thoughts of “what did I get myself into?” A nurse offered the epidural injection which would have made my delivery smooth and painless, but there stood my Iron Lady and these were her exact words: “You don’t need an epidural injection. She’s a small baby and you will deliver her the natural way.”

I felt like screaming, but she was so determined, taking full control of the situation and politely declining the nurse’s offer. I was upset with myself for not background, and choosing to blindly listen to my mum. But when my baby was out, the worst pain I had experienced in my life just vanished into thin air.

The first thing I uttered to my mother after everything was over was: “Now, I know what you went through, ma. Thank you.”

After that, my baby, who was born premature, had to be constantly monitored, and I decided to do what I had done when I was going through one of the most intense pains in my life. I decided to listen.

Many of us, be it in the working world or with family and friends, have ceased to listen, and seem more focused on just talking and instructing. We find it difficult to listen to people because we feel we know better. However, at times, listening can prove to be instrumental in our development and progress. Never restrict who you should listen to – the most life-changing ideas can come from the people we least expect help from.

My mother was often teased for being one who explained every single thing to her children – no matter how trivial. Even when we were wrong, she would explain to us our misdeeds before correcting us. She would also make us apologise on the spot if we were rude to anyone.

As we grew up, my sister and I used to tease her when she did the same to our nephews and nieces; and, as it turns out, the apple does not fall very far from the tree. We were at a function last year, and my three-year-old daughter kept playing with her chair, which got in the way of the people walking behind her. I kept telling her to stop, but she did not. I was about to give her a yelling when she did it again, this time, to an elderly aunty.

Instead, I made Shakthisri apologise to her and once when I thought the aunty had walked away from us, I quietly but firmly told Shakthisri that what she did was wrong and the repercussions of her action had made it difficult for the aunty to walk pass. After a series of questions, she understood. When I was done, I was surprised to see the aunty beside me:

“Whatever you did was a good thing. Making your girl apologise and explaining her actions to her at such a young age, instead of just letting it go. These things may seem small but nipping them at the bud will help shape an individual with good characteristics.”

The words of that aunty made my day and it dawned upon me that in handling that situation, I had become like my mother. Merely chiding someone for something they did wrong will not get them anywhere. It’s good to explain to them why they were wrong, and the implications of it. Most of the times, we unintentionally make mistakes and an explanation to create awareness is just the thing we need.

We are all human.

My mother spent 38 years of her working life in Assunta Hospital, Petaling Jaya. I remember visiting her at work during my childhood. At times, she would take my sister and me to work. I clearly remember her telling us to greet the people we met there, from the doctors to the cleaner uncles and aunties. Years later, as a young adult, I would pick her up from work and I would hear her saying, “Apai khabar bhai? Sudah maklon?” to the kitchen and the security staff whom she met along the way while we were walking out.

I was in the hospital last week and while chatting with a nurse she found out who I was. She then asked me to send her regards to my mother, saying how nice and humble my mother was. Upon leaving, I met a pakcik working in operations who enquired about my mother’s well-being. My mother retired four years ago but her humility and warmth were still remembered by the people who knew her.

This is the single most important lesson from her that has become deeply rooted within my sister and I, and I am glad that it’s continuing in my daughter today. It’s been embezzled as a habit in me, and I subconsciously pass it on to Shakthisri. She is taught to thank anyone who does anything for her – even if it’s a waiter at a mamak stall – and she must greet everyone with respect regardless of their social status or background.

No one is above us and no one is beneath us, we are all equal. We should always treat every individual from all walks of life with respect. This attitude will always be reciprocated as there will come a time when we need help, and we will not know who will come forward to help us. It could be someone much less privileged than us.

We all eventually turn into our mothers in one way or another, so the next time you have an argument, you may want to think twice before you tell your mum you will never be like her.

A very Happy Mother’s Day to all the wonderful mothers who work endlessly to instil the best of values in your children. A special dedication to my Iron Lady. Thank you for being you, ma. Happy Mother’s Day!

I GOT IT FROM MY MOMMA
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO BUSINESSES?
The role of HR today has become one of leadership and strategy, which means they now work closely with top management and executive members. So, in order to secure buy-ins for particular projects, HR professionals would not only need to know people analytics, but also understand how to connect the dots between relevant data and business results, and present it in a compelling manner. 

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WHEN I found out I was pregnant, I had a few sleepless nights. In pregnancy, I was in a bit of a panic mode. I didn’t really want children and I wasn’t ready for them. When I made the final sign that truthfully gave me reason to start planning. I was nervous about the idea of being a mother. I felt that I could not really go wrong.

4. I can’t control others

Yes, I thought this through it too, but I really didn’t like her. She is her own mother’s daughter, and I cannot do anything about that. As long as I am present, I want to be prepared. It is my personal goal to be a responsible parent. If there are any issues with our attempts to stop a planned pregnancy, I would prefer to have them addressed now. I am not prepared to proceed with an abortion if it becomes necessary.

5. It’s all my fault

Sometimes at work, other parents play the sad game and cry over how good they are to their kids. It’s not all that bad, but I don’t want my kids to feel like they are the only ones with a loving and caring parent. I know that it takes two parents to make a healthy environment for a child.

Satisfying all of your needs, but only some of mine. It is a two-way street, and I am not the only one who can do it all.

My life is all a little too perfect. It’s not all that bad, but I don’t want my kids to feel like they are the only ones with a loving and caring parent. I know that it takes two parents to make a healthy environment for a child.

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All that being said, I don’t think it is all that bad, but I don’t want my kids to feel like they are the only ones with a loving and caring parent. I know that it takes two parents to make a healthy environment for a child.

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ESTABLISHING SELF-AWARENESS IN YOUR CHILDREN

HOW PARENTS CAN PLAY A ROLE IN DEVELOPING YOUNG LEADERS

By KRYSITL CLARE
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I was just another Thursday and I had finished a lunch meeting. I drove over to pick my son up from playschool and as he was coming down the stairs I overheard a teacher assistant asking him “Are you going to tell your mummy that you scribbled on the wall?”

My initial instinct was that it’s probably a tiny scribble. At the same time, the principal’s room door opened and she asked if she could have a word with me. As she narrated and scroiled through the pictures, I was shocked.

It was worse than just a scribble. My son and a classmate had gone to town with the class teacher’s permanent marker. It was all over the tables, chairs, floor and white board. It was obvious they had the time of their lives for those five minutes.

This was something out of character for my son. Being the only child, he has had a very narrow perspective of boundaries and testing limits. Figuring out what is acceptable and not acceptable is an important learning process for children.

Every day is a learning process about boundaries and testing limits. Figuring out what is acceptable and not acceptable. That day, I gave him time to reflect.

With some reflection, I hoped he would develop a higher sense of self-awareness and understanding that all his actions have repercussions.

**DO AS I SAY, NOT AS I DO**

I remember the first time I heard this saying and wondering if it could really work. Children listen, observe, soak up information and mimic actions which in turn, often take after the behaviour, attitudes and beliefs of the people who surround them the most.

Self-awareness is listed as one of the 10 core life skills by WHO (World Health Organisation) and is defined as having a clear understanding of “self”.

The process of self-awareness starts from a very young age when children begin discovering their likes and dislikes. This is the point where they start exploring and learning about themselves.

Having self-awareness allows a person to take control of their emotions and behaviour and enables one to change their thoughts and mindsets.

When your child has good self-awareness skills, they will know their strengths and weaknesses, be in tune with their emotions as well as likes and dislikes. They will be able to express their feelings and at the same time, be mindful of the feelings of others.

Over time they will also understand that their actions and words can impact other people. While this might be a lot to ask of a child, it is important to understand that such skills will develop over time, mostly with the help of role models.

Learning self-awareness requires more than just reading self-development books. Learning brings change but the environment needs to be cohesive. It is important for us to:

1. Express Appreciation
   - It’s priceless to see the twinkle in their eyes. A child who feels appreciated will learn how to express appreciation for others.

2. Self-reflect
   - Ask them questions, encourage them to take a moment to reflect if they did the correct thing or even if they could have done something better. Ask them if they would change how they reacted or behaved.

3. Have patience
   - Learning — and practising — patience is a lot tougher now than it used to be. Information is at our fingertips and we are no longer appreciative of the value of delayed gratification but learning to be patient is vital.

**Having self-awareness allows a person to take control of their emotions and behaviour and enables one to change their thoughts and mindsets.**

DO THE VALUES OF YOUR ORGANISATION SPEAK TO PEOPLE’S HEARTS, OR ARE THEY JUST GATHERING DUST ON THE WALL?

The performance of an organisation depends on the ability of its leaders to translate its vision and values from aspirational statements into actualised behaviours that are practised in everyday situations – from the biggest transactions to the smallest interactions.

When Core Values are thoughtfully designed – and internalised – at the workplace, employees think, act and behave in alignment with the purpose and direction of the organisation.

Partner with us and witness your organisation’s Core Values transform from aspiration into actualisation.

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SOFT SKILLS FOR ROCK-SOLID EMPLOYABILITY?
WHAT YOU SHOULD BE SELLING TO PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS?

By GEETHA BAI PARAMASIVAN
geetha.paramasivan@leaderonomics.com

SOFT skills are often defined as the traits and interpersonal skills you have in hand when engaging others, and building relationships.

These not-so-tangible skills are asserting their importance in the workplace these days. There are ample skills — such as courage, determination and emotional intelligence — that can make you stand out as the new age leader. Employers these days seek balanced individuals, and while technical skills are important, they can be easily taught. To put it simply, it’s easier to train someone to do the job they are hired to do than it is to teach someone people skills, I once worked with a superior who told me this: “Geetha, I hire attitudes.”

What she meant made perfect sense, especially when I was tasked to manage the team she had hired. They were all individuals with an edge, oozed enthusiasm and positive attitudes, possessed good interpersonal skills, were great team players and could basically manage their own projects with minimal supervision.

Now, as a manager, why wouldn’t you want to work with a team like that? But would a resume smattered with a list of soft skills get you noticed or would it be sent into oblivion faster than you can say gesundheit? Here are some creative ways of doing it:

IDEA 1: DEMONSTRATE YOUR SOFT SKILLS

Desired skills in your career, those that were opportunities for you to apply your soft skills knowledge, would be a clever route to follow. Write or talk about specific instances when your soft skills set you apart from your counterparts and how they succeeded in getting you through a challenge.

Focus on your responsibilities and achievements when describing your soft skills. Listing “team player” or “problem solver” as a skill may not be enough to get the attention of the potential employer.

Rather, you could explain how your ability to work in cohesion with others played a part in the success of your team or organisation. Start with the role that you were playing, the problem that you faced, and how you employed these skills to save the day.

IDEA 2: USE THE RIGHT VERBS

The right verbs in your cover letter and resume will tell the prospective employer that you have, to some extent, a grasp on how these skills have been an integral part of your professional life thus far. For instance, letting the prospective employer know that you’ve proposed, collaborated, coordinated or even resolved a task indicates that you have communication skills, sound interpersonal skills and problem-solving skills, and have experience employing them when the situation presented itself. Another advantage of using verbs to describe your soft skill base on your resume is the subtlety that it offers.

IDEA 3: MIRROR THE JOB POSTING

More often than not, the job posting already contains clues — keywords that are indicative of the soft skills a potential employee should possess. For instance, if the job ad is looking for a self-starter or a detail-oriented person, then these are the soft skills you need to emphasise in your resume. Besides that, you can also use these keywords during the interview. This not only shows the employer that you have all the desirable skills to get the job done, but also your initiative in understanding the requirement of the role.

IDEA 4: TAKE A COURSE

Taking an online soft skills course such as the ones offered by Leaderonomics’ Digital Learning are highly beneficial for your personal growth and career development.

Listing out the courses you have completed on your resume can be highly beneficial to you, and gives the potential employer some reassurance of your abilities.

Besides that, it also highlights the importance that you give to honing your soft skills and abilities—which ultimately demonstrates your desire for life-long learning and self-improvement. To understand the importance of it, read Four Reasons Why We Shouldn’t Stop Learning at all.

Leaders face turbulent situations, diverse personalities, and multiple opportunities all while developing talent. Talent development is the best development and coaching leaders passionately develop talent and deliver results at the same time.

Powerful conversations are the coaching leader’s path to remarkable results. Coaching leaders also focus on developing strengths and maximising capacity. Here are the six core coaching skills — adapted from a book titled Coaching for Engagement — that will help leaders develop talents through engaging conversations.

1. Self-awareness and energy management
   - Develop awareness of your energy state
   - Notice the impact of your energy on others
   - Manage energy before conversations. How are you approaching this conversation?
   - Monitor and manage energy during conversations. Watch for joy and frustration during powerful conversations

2. Curious questioning
   - Invite input and expect differing opinions
   - Seek to understand the values, assumptions, and goals of others
   - Pursue new ways of seeing by inviting others in

3. Open listening
   - Remain respectful when others speak. Reject personal assumptions and expectations
   - Listen for aspiration. What motivates them?
   - Watch body language and monitor emotions. How do they feel and what does that say about this topic?

4. Appreciative discovery
   - Look for untapped talents, strengths, and capabilities
   - Explore new options and opportunities for service
   - Generate enthusiasm by connecting with aspiration and motivation

5. Catalytic feedback
   - Talk about what’s working and what’s getting in the way
   - Set achievable goals and celebrate small wins
   - Reinforce positive behaviours with praise

6. Heightened engagement
   - Stay focused on results while building relationships
   - Define success together, agree on next steps, and how progress will be reviewed

Criticise progress, identify relevant learning, and celebrate achievement

SURPRISING STRATEGY

Begin with self-awareness and end with heightened engagement. Approach the six core coaching skills as a sequential trail to a mountain peak. Ask yourself these questions:

- Which coaching skill has been most useful to you and how?
- Which coaching skill is most challenging?
- How might leaders develop it?

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By ROSHAN THIRAN
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WEN I was a little boy, hearing renditions of Sinaran and Antara Angin dan Jakarta and memorising all of Sheila Majid’s songs, something was something not only me but many of my friends did.

As teens, we were not just awed by her captivating beauty but also by her amazing voice. So, to actually meet Datuk Sheila Majid and interview the “The Queen of Jazz” was one of the biggest highlights of my career.

Sheila has enjoyed a successful career for the past three decades as an international, multiple award-winning singer. Her impressive career began fortuitously after she was spotted singing at a friend’s party. Sheila was only 17 – and was busy studying for her SPM examination – at the time she was approached to record a studio demo.

Sheila “had to be strategic” if she was to convince her academic father – an Oxford graduate – to allow her into the music business.

The sanguine songstress decided to hold off on her foray into the music business until she had sat for her exams. Her father agreed to let her go into the studio as a means of “filling the time” while she awaited her SPM results.

As the youngest of eight children, Sheila developed a strong passion early on for music and began to learn the piano at the age of four. At school, she was actively involved in school concerts and events, eager to perform whenever the opportunity arose.

Despite having all the signs pointing towards a possible career in music, Sheila never had any idea of taking her passion to the next level. However, following her first studio stint, interest grew on the material she recorded, which led to a local record label producing her first album in 1985.

The album, Dimensi Baru was well-received, which led an international label to buy over the initial contract and have Sheila record her second album, Emosi.

The success of the album saw her break into the Indonesian market, and in 1987 she became the first foreigner to win the Indonesian BASF Award in Best Female Artist in R&B category.

Entering into a competitive industry at such a young age presented some challenges, but Sheila believed that if what we’re taking on is done for the right reasons, the challenges can be dealt with easily.

In her appearance on The Leaderonomics Show, she said: “I went into music because I love music, I love to perform, I love singing. There was no thought of going into the business because it was a glamorous life – let me tell you, it is not a glamorous life.”

“What people see visually is glamorous, but that’s very superficial. I’m really happy that I had a family that kept me grounded because once the make-up is off, once the adulation and the costumes are off, you go home, and everyone treats you like normal, like plain ‘ol Sheila.”

“You can cry and feel sad — for some time — but life has to go on; you’ve got to just get up and go. Life is not about stopping yourself from falling; life is about falling, getting up, and moving on.”

The dazzling diva insists that striving for excellence — a quality she feels is lacking today — makes a difference between achieving great success and settling for mediocrity.

A major challenge in the music business is pandering to “what sells”, which usually means artists toe whatever line is set by record labels.

But that’s never been Sheila’s style as she believes that holding true to her values helps her achieve greater heights in her career.

“Some people call me fussy, but I have to set a certain standard and people begin conforming to it. I was the first to have my personal make-up artist. Initially, people talked — but today, everybody has one.”

“It’s the finer details that make all the difference, but they can often be overlooked,” mused Sheila as she explained many of her innovative “firsts.”

When overcoming challenges, Sheila insists that bouncing back from failure begins with deciding not to dwell on it.

“A lot of people want to dwell and be a victim. They keep telling the same old stories but yet they don’t do anything to improve or get out of their rut. So, you have to sit down and think what’s going to work for you.”

“You can cry and feel sad — for some time — but life has to go on; you’ve got to just get up and go. Life is not about stopping yourself from falling; life is about falling, getting up, and moving on.” — With words by Sandy Clarke.

As a CEO, part of your challenge is to be able to scale and continually grow your business. Many CEOs struggle to reinvent themselves at different phases of their leadership journey and this translates to an inability to grow their own businesses and organisations. CEOs also face significant challenges with little support or people to talk to about their struggles and pains.

In 2016, Leaderonomics, together with the Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC), pioneered the Leadership Dojo programme specifically designed for CEOs to learn from CEOs, senior CEO mentors and from global leaders who have succeeded in their respective journeys.

If you are a CEO who is looking for a programme to help you grow in your leadership journey and enable your business to scale to the next level, do register your interest for the 2017 intake at goo.gl/EqnLp9
DO YOU LOVE YOUR JOB?

By KAREN GATELY
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DO WE LOSE WHEN WE LEAN IN?

By SONIA MCDONALD
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EFFECT for a moment on tal-ented people you have seen fail to consistently deliver step up to a challenge or grab available opportunities. Are there times when you have strug-gled to get your work done because you lacked the energy to try? Have you experi-enced what it feels like to simply lack the desire to do your job?

According to management consulting firm Gallup, 63% of employees worldwide are somewhat totally disengaged, mean-ing they lack motivation and are less likely to invest discretionary effort. Research consistently paints a similar picture of untapped human potential and the consequences for organisations they are attached with. To put things into perspective, the Corporate Leadership Councils research suggests that engaged organisations grow profits up to three times faster than their competitors.

TALENT + BEHAVIOUR = SUCCESS

Success takes not only talent but also successful behaviour. Knowledge, skills and experience add little value, unless people choose to apply them effectively. The standard of contribution people ultimately make, depends on their capa-bilities and engagement – that is the level of energy they invest and the ways in which they choose to behave. Behavioural choices reveal the strength of a person’s spirit. When energised, people are more likely to make choices that allow them to effectively apply their talents. When drained of energy, even the most capable and typically motivated person can fail to perform their best. A lack of focus, avoiding challenges and conflicts, procrastination and a gen-eral lack of discipline are some of the consequences that drained people bring to their role. In contrast, energised people are more likely to engage well with their cot-eamates, strive to achieve outcomes and contribute in ways that enable the team to succeed.

WHY PEOPLE ‘SWITCH OFF’

While many factors contribute to de-engagement, among the most common is that, people simply don’t like their jobs, let alone love it. Reflect on the aspects of your role that drain your spirit. How do you typically think, feel and behave when drained by your role? Reflect also on what you love doing most, how much time you spend doing those things and the subsequent impact on your spirit and performance. Understanding the extent to which people enjoy their work – and why – will give you valuable insights to why they behave the way they do and their future potential with your business.

The reality is people are unlikely to thrive in a role or profession that they don’t enjoy. And yet all too often, I meet people who stay on career paths despite having little to no passion for what they do while struggling to perform. These are the people leaders need to switch on or move on.

BEGIN WITH THE QUESTION: DO YOU LOVE YOUR JOB?

Ask every member of your team to reflect on the extent to which they love their job. Not just like or tolerate their role, but love it. The stronger a person’s passion is for their role, the more likely they are to invest energy when striving to succeed. While people can be ‘somewhat engaged’ and contribute to an adequate perfor-mance standard, thriving takes passion-fuelled energy.

Ask people to reflect on what they enjoy the most about their job and the things that frustrate or drain them. Understand the amount of time people spend engaged in tasks or interactions that they enjoy versus those they don’t.

ENABLE CLARITY

Guide people to gain greater clarity of how they want to contribute through their work. Only with an intimate understanding of the things they love and what they want to achieve, can people begin to make the deliberate choices necessary to turn their career aspirations into reality. For many people, discovering what they want or what they are passionate about is in itself a major challenge. Guide your team to create a clear view of the role they want to play by first helping them to understand their preferences and strengths.

PLAN CAREERS

Understand what needs to change to position people to succeed now and in the future. Explore the paths people want to take and understand how these aspi-rations align with the future needs of your business.

Reflect on how the talent and culture needs of your business are likely to evolve and the steps people can take to grow with those needs.

While it may not be immediately pos-sible to move people to roles they will enjoy, look for opportunities to do that over time.

Career planning is essential to not only develop your people but also keep them with your business. Among the most common reasons people give for joining or leaving an organisation, is the oppor-tunity to learn and progress.

SUPPORT TRANSITION

Identify the capabilities people need to develop in order to achieve in their current and aspiring roles.

Recognise the specific skills, knowledge or experience required and identify ways in which people can acquire them. Think laterally about development opportunities.

Participating in projects, attending events and supporting more senior colleagues can be valuable ways of advancing the capabilities and enhancing the engagement of your people.

At times, the ideal role for a member of your team lies outside of your organisation. Help people to move on if that is in their best interest. It never serves an organisation well to retain unhappy, unfulfilled people.

Be open, engage in honest and respectful dialogue and bring a cooperative mindset. Working with people and helping them move on will allow you to smoothly transition responsibilities to other team members and minimise adverse impacts to your business.

Very early? Who knows; either way, deferred starting date. They rescinded her maternity leave, a pre-tenure sab-erday. She asked for a higher salary, paid for her future. Explore the paths people want to take in order to keep people in their organisations. Help people to move on if that is in their best interest. It never serves an organisation well to retain unhappy, unfulfilled people.

WOMEN leaders and executives, I have a quick question for you: would you walk into your supervisor’s office tomorrow and ask for a raise? The question might make you smile at first. You should, because you say – you deserve it right?

But then doubt seeps in and you start wondering why. There are so many complicated reasons for it, and being a woman is just one of them. Overall, women believe that they should negotiate their salaries more often. On a fundamental level, that sounds like the right thing to do. But in reality, it does not happen or not as much as we would like to think it does.

NEGOTIATION

Research shows that men are four times more likely to negotiate a higher pay, and if granted, it can create the disparity of female to male salaries across the board. You probably think a few thousand dollars make no difference in the scheme of things, but that difference can lead to larger raises and bigger bonuses annually, not to mention a higher starting rate at their next position. Once the gap widens, it makes it so much harder to catch up or remain on par.

HOW WOMEN REACT DURING NEGOTIATIONS

So many emotions – like fear – come into play when leaning in to negotiate. Often, female executives don’t have the skills to negotiate for themselves and are too scared to make the first move.

They would prefer their employer to offer a higher salary or hand them a bigger project rather than go out of their way to ask for it. It is not that men are better negotiators, as there are many empowered women doing it successfully already.

It is the fact that men are almost expected to negotiate so the well-trod path makes the journey easier. Female executives often feel like they have to negotiate the bram-ble before the pathway is clear. Women face both unconscious and conscious biases when it comes to their salary negotiations. They are being evaluated under a separate set of circumstances entirely. Female executives and leaders are afraid of offending their employer. Will they think of you differently if you ask? Will you be labelled as demanding or challenging for violating non-traditional gender norms?

These can have real and disastrous consequences if the situation is not right. And not every situation will be right. You may have heard the story of an aspiring female professor who challenged a job offer with the Nazareth College in the United States.

She asked for a higher salary, paid for maternity leave, a pre-tenure sab-erday. She rescinded their offer and wished her the best in finding a new position. Too much? Too early? Who knows, either way, they withdrew their job offer.

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Sonia’s full article on www.leaderonomics.com. To scan the following QR Code
KNOW WHO TO HIRE AND HOW TO DEVELOP:

THE LEADERONOMICS TALENT ASSESSMENT APPROACH

For an organisation, being able to identify and understand your people (even potential talent!) is valuable information. It allows the right people to be hired and utilised in the right way to achieve organisational goals.

Leaderonics’ Talent Assessment team works with organisations to better select, assess, identify and develop people to their full potential. Using both traditional and innovative means, our Talent Assessment solutions deliver insight into the strengths, competencies and development gaps of your workforce.

We understand that demands for talent differ from one organisation to another. As such, our Talent Assessment solutions are crafted to best suit your company’s needs.

OUR TALENT ASSESSMENT TEAM CAN HELP YOUR ORGANISATION:

SELECT TALENT
- Increase the probability of selecting the right candidate for hiring
- Assess the job and culture fit of an individual
- Go beyond an interview to evaluate behavioural capabilities and personality
- Determine internal talent readiness to be promoted to new roles
- Determine internal talent readiness for succession planning and talent pipelines

DEVELOP TALENT
- Better understand the strengths of individuals and groups, and leverage on them to maximise returns from the talent pool
- Identify gaps to direct targeted development plans
- Understand the bench strength of employees within the organisation
- Identify key talent and high potentials
- Provide objective feedback of performance to employees from a third-party perspective

To schedule a free consultation, e-mail info@leaderonomics.com

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