MOVING FORWARD AS A NATION

2 LESSONS ON UNITY FROM THE RUKUN NEGARA

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5 TENETS OF THE RUKUN NEGARA

HOW CAN WE APPLY IT TO ORGANISATIONS?

By RUPA SIVANOLI
editor@leaderonomics.com

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OP quiz: See if you can recite the five principles of the Rukun Negara without reading fur-
ther. Growing up, this was the mantra that was recited during school assemblies; it was printed at
the back page of every exercise book I ever owned.

It is now only as an adult that I truly appreciate the value of these principles and how it has shaped us as a nation.

The Rukun Negara was crafted in 1970, as a set of national principles to give
Malaysians a common course of conduct. This was triggered by the racial clashes
that took place on May 13, 1969.

Following the riots, the government imposed curfews and declared a state of
emergency nationwide, invoking the 1948 Emergency Ordinance.

Parliament was suspended and the National Operations Council (NOC) head-
ed by the then Deputy Prime Minister
Tun Abdul Razak, served as the temporary government of Malaysia.

It comprised many legendary lead-
ers who saw fit to ensure that Malaysia
remained a nation united and focused in
times of adversity.

A Department of National Unity and
a National Consultative Council (NCC)
were set up. The Department of National
Unity, under the direction of the NOC,
spent nearly a year drafting a national
ideology meant to bind Malaysia’s
diverse population.

This draft was then deliberated by
the NCC, which comprised of community
leaders, businessmen, academicians, reli-
gious leaders, teachers, journalists, and
politicians from the government and the
opposition.

After discussions and amend-
ments, the Rukun Negara was formally
announced on Aug 1, 1970.

A TIMELESS CREED

The Rukun Negara consists of five prin-
ciples:

1. Kesegaran Kepada Tuhan (Belief in God)
2. Kesetiaan Kepada Raja dan Negara (Loyalty to King and Country)
3. Ketuhanan Perlembagaan (Supremacy of Constitution)
4. Rukunat Undang-Undang (Rule of Law)
5. Kesopanan dan Keusilaan (Courtesy and Morality)

As we know, the red hibiscus or Hibiscus
erosa-sinensis is the
national flower of Malaysia. But why
was it chosen? Red symbolises courage
and life, whilst its
five petals repre-
sent the five princi-
les in our Rukun
Negara.

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download your copy. Don’t forget to check out our
e-books, Leadership Nuggets and What’s
After SMRT while you’re there.

Rupa Sivanoli is a faculty member of Leaderonomics and is passionate about
driving change in New Malaysia in a
structured and sus-
tainable way. To get
in touch with her, email us at editor@leaderonomics.com.
HOW WILL YOU SERVE YOUR COUNTRY?

READY TO TAKE ON THE #MALAYSIANSBOLEH CHALLENGE?

By ROSHAN THRAN
roshan.thiran@leaderonomics.com

On May 9, 2018, we Malaysians carried out our duty at the polling stations and voted for a future, better, and more just country—one with greater opportunities for all. As we watched the historic results coming in, we all felt renewed hope and a sense of possibility: the possibility of a brighter future as a newly reborn nation. Our 14th general election was a true triumph for hard-working, warm, decent people across the country who, in a singular fashion, decided to create positive change for their lives and the lives of their children.

We were one as Malaysians—a concept that became the unifying symbol for all of us who stood up for democracy in a collective effort to plant the seeds for a better tomorrow.

As expected, many people experienced a whole range of emotions as we heralded in the new era and saw out the old. Some were angry (and still are), others were relieved, most were overjoyed, and many were unsure about what the new changes would mean for the future of our country.

But the promising feeling I observed in the aftermath of the results was that everyone, now more than ever, felt deeply proud to be Malaysian.

More importantly, we saw each other as fellow Malaysians with the same values, striving to work together towards the great future we’ve always been capable of achieving.

DOING OUR PART

“Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.” — John F. Kennedy

Although it has been more than 100 days since that momentous day, we are now at the beginning of a new road.

We know deep down that life won’t magically get better simply because we have a new government in place.

In fact, a huge part of our future is yet again in our hands, and not just with the new government.

To borrow from former United States president, John F. Kennedy, we Malaysians surely have a duty that extends beyond the ballot box; a duty that calls on each of us to make our great nation even greater than it is.

Our country has an abundance of talent and potential, and I truly believe there is nothing we can’t do to empower each other, make our communities stronger, and help transform Malaysia in a way that consistently shows the best of who we are and what we can achieve together.

No country is perfect, and no country’s leaders are perfect—neither in government nor in business. It’s understandable that people might desire to focus on what went wrong in the past and who’s to blame, and certainly, we’re all entitled to whatever feelings we hold about certain people and situations.

Personally, I prefer to focus my energy on the contributions I can make. In light of Malaysia’s historic election on May 9, 2018, I’m inspired (as I’m sure many of you fellow Malaysians are) to help others around me in whatever way I can offer my service.

Surely, it takes a strong government to help a nation rise, but it takes each of us to offer our own contributions through our strengths and talents to build up our communities and the people around us.

THE #MALAYSIANSBOLEH CHALLENGE

With this in mind, I thought I’d like to issue a Malaysia Day challenge to everyone who reads this article. Let’s call it the #MalaysiansBoleh challenge.

Let’s work together to help everyone heal, help, heal, support, and build up our communities and the people around us.

THE POWER TO CHANGE IS IN YOUR HANDS

Whenever ruling government is in place, we all have the power to help transform Malaysia.

While some might feel apathetic towards politics and politicians, we should never be indifferent towards each other.

When we make the effort to help, to connect, and to empower others, we directly make a positive impact on someone’s life, right there and then.

To me, that’s what being Malaysian is all about: coming together in solidarity as one community, where people are always ready to lend a helping hand where it’s needed.

Surely, it takes a strong government to help a nation rise, but it takes each of us to offer our own contributions through our strengths and talents to build up our communities and the people around us.

Of course, being Malaysian is often about coming together over good food, too! (And treating some of the poor amongst us may be part of your #MalaysiansBoleh effort.)

Just after the elections, I read a book about trauma and suffering. There has been much pain and suffering for many in Malaysia over the past years.

How do we heal the racial pain? How do we heal the pain of poverty? How do we help heal the educational woes? There is much for each of us to do.

The interesting thing about trauma survivors is that they can either bounce back (to their old lives and pain and depression) or they can bounce forward (to positivity and a new life).

Let’s work together to help everyone ‘bounce forward’ and not bounce-back. We need to forgive. We need to not only think positively, but also have reality thinking—knowing that everything will not be fine simply because we think it will, but face the situations we are in and help fix it.

TYING IT TOGETHER

That is what #MalaysiansBoleh is all about. It’s a challenge to be ‘real’ and not just positive. Being real means making a difference, even in a small way.

Even having honest conversations with the people who we are upset with starts the process of helping to rebuild this nation, one person at a time.

So, as Malaysians move forward into this new chapter of our great country, I hope some of you will join me in the #MalaysiansBoleh challenge.

Some of you might enjoy giving back more and decide to extend it beyond the weeks and months ahead.

However you choose to proceed, it’s all about continuing the spirit of togetherness and community that has strengthened over the last few months.
So much data is now stored online that we’re constantly exposed to cyber security threats. Which country is the least cyber-safe? And which country has the least internet freedom? Check out this infographic:


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**Cyberspace Risks**

By CLEMENT ARUL
editor@leaderonomics.com

We live in an age dominated by technological improvements, feeding on our desire to be ever-more connected. With this, comes an expectation that access to systems and data will be available from anywhere, at any time.

However, it is precisely this demand for real-time access from any location that dramatically increases our risk profile. This makes controlling corporate data one of the most painful yet vital challenges for cyber security today.

In short, convenience exposes more attack points – decreasing our defence systems against malicious entities. Cyber security is always in the headlines due to increasing global data breaches and exploitations.

**ROADBLOCKS TO CYBER SECURITY**

The common reasons for the current state of security are:

1. **Growth of new threats**
   - Organisations are not able to keep pace with the volume, velocity, and variety of threats that are emerging every day. They must guard against rapidly changing threats, ranging from traditional malware to sophisticated, state-sponsored attacks.

2. **Emerging risks**
   - Mobile applications, third-party cloud-based services, outsourcing, Internet of Things (IoT), Industry 4.0, digital transformation, and more put key business initiatives in direct conflict with cyber security policies.
   - Organisations must quickly respond to these conflicts, assess potential threats, and allocate resources to minimise risk and ensure compliance and security.

3. **Technology-driven threats**
   - Most organisations have invested in various security technologies to protect their infrastructure and data, putting in place solutions such as firewalls, Intrusion Prevention System (IPS)/Intrusion Detection System (IDS), encryptions, and many more.
   - However, many of these same organisations have failed to address the human element. People, just like computers, store, process, and transfer highly valuable information. Yet, people remain highly insecure, since so little has been done to educate them. As a result, cyber attackers are actively targeting the human element. Until you address the human issue, technology alone cannot secure your organisation.

4. **Lack of resources**
   - Organisations have limited IT resources, lack of internal security expertise, insufficient funds, and struggle to hire security talent.

**THE WEAKEST LINK**

With all the news stories about hackers, botnets, and breaches involving personal information, it’s easy for the security message to sound over-used and tired.

It’s easy for people to say, ‘It won’t happen here.’ Yet, studies and surveys repeatedly show that the human factor (what employees do or don’t do) is the biggest threat to information systems and assets.

Clement Arul is the chief operations officer – technology and R&D at Vigilant Asia (M) Sdn Bhd. He is an award-winning cyber security professional with 20 years of experience across the APAC region. He will be speaking about best practices for cyber security in business at The Climb - a two-day workshop specially designed for SMEs on 19-20 Sept, 2018. Visit [bit.ly/TheClimb2018](bit.ly/TheClimb2018) for more information and to register.

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8 WAYS TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS

WHEN PRAGMATISM COMES INTO PLAY

Business is not for the faint-hearted. With all the skills and experience, it is still a day-to-day risk.

Protect your investment from those close to you. Remember that for every spin-off, there is someone feeling ripped off.

8 ACCEPTANCE

‘Business is business’ is a mantra that can become an excuse for an unwarded outcome when saying goodwill to a team member, acknowledging that a friendship has ended, or even a treacherous stealing of a customer.

It is also a motivator in that when you enter business, you need the maturity to understand that it is not a social club you are joining.

So, whether your day be good, bad, or indifferent, you can always take comfort in the knowledge that no matter what happens, someone, somewhere will declare that it all happened because business is business.

IN CONCLUSION

The decision to go into business is as exciting as it is frightening. It is not a social club, but more of a social order.

The satisfaction of setting and achieving your own business goals is all the more so because most people don’t have that privilege.

The frustration may well be that many don’t understand when someone says ‘business is business’. However, someone who has dared to take the plunge and set up a business will know deep down that there is no sympathy from anyone.

After all, business is business.

By ALAN MANLY
editor@leaderonomics.com

NC of the good things about being in business is that no one expects you to say sorry.

The default mantra when delivering disappointing news is a practised recital of that catch-all phrase, ‘business is business’. This mantra is a window into other characteristics of successful people.

Below are eight traits which while needed to succeed in business, would not be recommended in polite company. Let’s take a look at them:

1 TEAM BUILDING

To build a business up to its full potential from the launch stage to a going concern, a business will sooner or later require the assembling of a team.

Building a team demands that the leader appoint people who have the best available skills to contribute to the business. Team appointments, omissions, or dismissals are merit based and the decision is openly declared as ‘business first’.

That’s because successful people build teams to achieve a business goal rather than to collect friends.

2 DELEGATION

Having appointed a team, the business person must now relinquish control and delegate authority and responsibility to a team member.

This is the hardest thing for most entrepreneurs who are driven to set up a company to achieve business goals – their way. Herein lies the challenge: Do they trust their own recruiting skills to have the confidence in the team members that they appointed? On the other hand, too much delegation could mean abdication.

Responsible leadership dictates that suitable structures be put in place to review and cross-check that tasks are on target.

3 NETWORKING SKILLS

Some would suggest that business people are only charming when it suits them. Charm and committed business types are not always synonymous.

This observation should not be taken as disparaging. It is a statement of fact that in business, it is necessary to do what it takes to succeed — including being charming, if that is what it takes to make a sale.

4 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

In financial matters unexpected success can breed failure.

This can happen when sales are booming with customers buying more and more, and a management team is measuring success by sales orders placed and goods delivered. However, the true measure of a sale is when the account is paid in full.

Managing this is usually the task of the accounts department. Guarding cash as if their lives depended on it earns few thanks, but if they get it wrong, the company is dead. Hence, the mantra of a successful business is always cashflow, cashflow, cashflow.

5 RISK-TAKING

Business is not for the faint-hearted. With all the skills and experience, it is still a day-to-day risk.

Even the great have bad years: Warren Buffet, one of the richest men on earth, has made poor choices. According to Business Insider, as of May 2017, he had lost about US$800 million on IBM.

In Feb 2018, Bloomberg reported that he had cut his stake in IBM by 94 per cent during the fourth quarter of 2017. You win some you lose some, it’s just how it goes.

6 PRAGMATISM

The great unspoken in business plans is plan X. Boring as it may sound, the reality is that the ultimate goal in business is to survive.

That means stepping back from the excitement of making this current venture work and assessing whether it is really likely to work: Is this business worth the heartache? Is this the best opportunity that I could get?

Pragmatism is strength. Remember, retreat is not defeat, it is a strategy.

7 HUMAN NATURE

To err is human, to overtrust is dumb. Never underestimate human nature.

Having built up a business with a personally selected team can give a false sense of self-worth. New ideas and refinement of current ideas are what great teams are all about.

Until of course some members of your team feel that your contribution is less than it used to be. That disjointed collection of individuals may now know as much, if not more, than you do. Some will see an opportunity to launch a spin-off and make their own fortune.

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By ALAN MANLY
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Want to learn what the bare essentials are to succeed in business? Check out Gary Vaynerchuk’s secret to success here.

Alan Manly is the founder and CEO of Group Colleges Australia, one of Australia’s largest private education institutions. He also recently launched a private MBA school, the Universal Business School which is a high-school dropout to successful entrepreneur. Alan is a true disrupter in the private education space. He is the author of two books, The Unlikely Entrepreneur and Why Three Are Too Many Lawyers There is No Justice. To get in touch with Alan, email us at editor@leaderonomics.com.
CELEBRATING A NATION’S HISTORY

By CREAN, CHERL
editor@leaderonomics.com

5 SKILLS FOR FUTURE-READY TEAMS

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**A helping children grow through competition**

**By ROSHAN THIRAN and EVA CHRISTODOULOU**

A number of years ago, when imparting life advice to a child, a well-known US President, when he was asked, ‘what is the most important lesson you would want your children to learn?’ he said, ‘How to lose.’

This is competition bias and fail for happy.”

It is this article of parts of articles that motivated us to publish the study, authored by the Leaderonomics Research team to understand the impact of sibling and leadership development amongst children. In this article, we’ll be looking at the importance of identifying the motivation of our children, and look into how competition can develop our children in this process.

**Mastery and cooperation**

**Helping children grow through competition**

Girls who fall behind, generally ask for help, whereas boys do not. Six per cent of respondents said that it was situational, while one per cent mentioned that competition was only good for those who won.

Most respondents mentioned that competition is not critical, and children need to understand its purpose and have proper guidance to deal with failures and succeed in a competition.

**The science behind competition**

In an article on emotion sciences, a motivation to perform in a specific task is based on an external reason, with the hope of getting a reward at the end.

Psychologists argue that a fundamental characteristic of all incentive is that they only work as long as the promise of an incentive is valid — without the reward in the end, the behaviour will not continue.

**Boys vs girls**

Boys and girls have the same parents. This is competition which affects people in a vast society, and knowing the type of competition a setting differs according to gender.

In a field study conducted on ten-year-old children, German researchers in 2002 found that when children are asked to compete, their level of performance is affected in competitive environments.

Boys improved their performance 

Boys found that when getting on base, younger brothers did well and showed the ability to focus on winning instead of being the best in the competition.

However, he added that competition also serves as a tool to help children grow. Sibling rivalry is a training ground for children in a competitive world. It helps them deal with failure and competition.

Sibling rivalry is the term used for a child who outcompetes another child. In a study conducted by the researchers, the study established that rivalry among siblings helps them compete more and become better parents.

When comparing on competition, three per cent of parents had a negative perception, seeing competition as unnecessary and unhealthy. Three per cent saw it as necessary and something unreason-

When questioned on competition, three per cent of parents had a negative perception, seeing competition as unnecessary and unhealthy. Three per cent saw it as necessary and something unreasonable.

When surveyed on competition, 20 per cent saw it as good, whereas 20 per cent saw it as bad.

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POWER EARNED OR POWER GIVEN?

WHICH ONE CARRIES GREATER CREDIBILITY?

The best managers not only act with integrity but also display the humility, intellectual honesty, interpersonal sensitivity and behavioral consistency to perform effectively.

To know more about the power of great managers, read it here: bit.ly/leadwithouttitle

The great iconic leaders create goals that followers believe in and commit to. In simple terms, a cause or a system of ideals and beliefs is more powerful than a person.

In 2018, the number one leader according to Fortune Magazine was not a person—it was the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas and other schools in their fight against gun violence.

In second and third place were Bill and Melinda Gates, co-founders of the Gates Foundation, and the #MeToo movement.

Power earned or Power given?

These stories lead one to a simple question: if your CEO (or boss) did not have their granted position of authority, would you still admire, follow, and listen to him or her?

To understand the dynamics of leadership, I interviewed Dr Ken Siegel, president of The Impact Group, Inc., a Los Angeles-based group of psychologists who consult management. Siegel has coached executives across the globe on becoming better leaders.

He explains that there is a true difference between power and authority: "Authority is something bequeathed to someone, or comes with a position such as the CEO or vice president. Power is something that is much more self-originated and comes from within the person."

Many of us reject authoritarian people. Siegel says that the more a person relies on authority given to them, the less effective, admired, and influential they ultimately are. "They may be able to get by for a period of time using the power of their position or the trappings of their job but that oftentimes breeds resentment and resistance," he noted.

People who abuse authority to gain power, abuse it in one of two ways: It is either oppressive, abusive, or some combination of the two.

Conversely, Siegel says that true power emanates from within. It is earned power.

Great leaders are credible, knowledgeable, and/or display appropriate demeanor. Through their actions, they earn trust and the credibility needed to influence others.

CAUSE TRUMPS PEOPLE

"Those with true power have, as their goal building, mutual outcomes that have meaning. These are benevolent leaders who view their role above and beyond themselves to create commitment for a cause. And typically, the leader is not the target of what is going to get better—rather, they share in the goodness of achieving a common goal," Siegel adds.

In a corporation, the more you are able to use influence as a source of power (how you interact with other people, building mutual outcomes that have meaning) the more sustainable your power is (the more powerful you will be) and the less likely anyone can actually take it away from you, he explains.

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FIGHT, FIGHT, OR FREEZE?

But few of us get to work with great leaders. We tend to work with leaders who need some improvement. With that in mind, if you are subjected to abusive power, Siegel says there are three things you can do: 1) commit – you can join in; 2) comply – go along with it; or 3) fight it.

Siegel notes that it is human nature to have a fight, flight, or freeze response to danger. And, an abusive boss is danger.

When we think about today’s leaders and contrasting styles, who would you likely follow: Donald Trump, Angela Merkel, Pope Francis, Barack Obama, Xi Jinping, Vladimir Putin, Justin Trudeau, Benjamin Netanyahu? Who do you consider abusive? Who do you consider inspiring?

Now, thinking about your daily life, if your CEO (or boss) did not have their granted title of authority, would you still admire, follow, and listen to him or her?

If you would not follow your boss, then he or she has authority, but no influence/power over you. My recommendation is that you take flight.
WHEN CURiosity LEADS YOU ASTRAy

By DAN ROCKWELL
editor@leaderonomics.com

NOT all questions express genuine curiosity.

1 CURiosity AS rEsistance
Perfectly intelligent people feign ignorance as an act of subversive resistance.

“When I don’t want to do something, I ask my boss lots of questions. Usually he ends up giving the assignment to someone else. Or he does it himself.”
— Anonymous employee

I’ve seen smart people play dumb because they didn’t like what they were hearing.

Politically savvy leaders disguise resistance by asking detailed questions about execution. They don’t like the resistance they see from others talking about themselves.

2 CURiosity AS cONTrol
Leaders ask questions as a form of control. They don’t want to overtly take control but they have opinions about the best way to do things. They want people to think for themselves—as long as people think like them.

3 CURiosity AS dEFlection
I use questions to keep people talking about themselves. I don’t want to talk about myself so I keep others talking about themselves.

4 CURiosity FOR cLarITY
Experienced leaders ask questions because they see dangers that novices don’t see. Questions give others the opportunity to think about the future and consider unexplored options. Some questions are designed to help others discover why their plan won’t work.

Ask questions when you hear lots of questions
● What concerns you about this project?
● What dangers do you see ahead?
● What do you need to know to move forward?
● What am I missing?

CURiosity FOR clarity
People who like to get things done need a clear path forward. They don’t like building the airplane in the air. They ask questions because they prefer planning ahead. Curiosity for clarity feels like resistance to dreamers. If this is you, you’d be smart to work out a better plan with the people who need greater clarity.

Don Rockwell is a coach and speaker, and is freakishly interested in leadership. He is the author of a world-renowned leadership blog, Leadership Freak. To get in touch with Don, write to us at editor@leaderonomics.com.

The best way to develop curiosity is to start asking ‘why’ a lot more. In fact, ask ‘why’ about everything. Check it out here:
bit.ly/LDRcuriosity

Curiosity arises when there is a gap between what someone knows and what they want to know. That is, individuals are intrinsically motivated to seek out information. Here’s why curiosity is the key to workplace innovation:
bit.ly/inspirecuriosity

It’s Leaderonomics’ 10th anniversary this year! As we celebrate our 10th year of building communities of love, growing people into leaders, and transforming the nation, let us share some facts about our company which you may not have known.

Over a decade ago, our co-founders, Roshan Thiran and Ang Hui Ming, had a vision to transform developing nations through leadership development. They believed (and still believe) that leaders can profusely affect the social, economic and spiritual health of the individuals and communities that they influence—and if they helped grow just one person from a challenged community, that one person can go on to change the lives of those in the community.

And so, the work to create Leaderonomics began.

Leader-raw-noh-mix
That’s how our name is pronounced in the Northern Hemisphere.

Leader-noh-mics
how they say it in the South!

We understand that our name is hard to pronounce due to its uniqueness, but it gets easier when you keep practising—just like leadership.

Motherhood - whilst rewarding - is one of the toughest jobs one will ever undertake; and for many, the thought of trying to integrate work and motherhood is both terrifying and overwhelming. Leaderonomics’ learning and growth partner, Laura Yee (who is also a full-time working mother) shares her thoughts on the challenges mums face upon returning to work. Listen to the podcast here:
bit.ly/RYG6thTrimester

Mutual leadership is a team dynamic where members quickly claim project roles based on skills and expertise, and take on a leadership role in these areas to find an optimal solution. When skills are needed that team members don’t possess, they recruit another member. To understand further how mutual leadership works, read: bit.ly/MutualLeadership

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IS THERE A ‘BEST WAY TO WORK’?

HERE’S WHY EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY VARIES SO DRastically

By DR TOMMY WEIR
editor@leaderonomics.com

If two employees were doing the exact same task – I mean like-for-like work – would you expect to get the same results? The same productivity?

Your instinct probably tells you yes, but in reality, it’s not the case at all. Why? Logic dictates that two employees doing the same work at the same time should do it the same way, they rarely do.

THE NUMBERS DON’T LIE

Recently, our team of data scientists used machine learning algorithms to analyze nine million employee interactions. The results revealed a 2.5 variance in how long it took them to do the same thing.

This means that if it takes you 10 minutes to do a task, it might take the guy beside you an additional 25 minutes to complete the identical task. What’s more, the exercise highlighted a daunting variance in quality too.

Delving deeper, we limited the artificial intelligence (AI) parameters to look at the variance between the 25th and 75th percentiles so that the outliers would not skew the findings. We removed those who were ridiculously fast and those who were tortoise-like slow in order to improve the accuracy of the observation.

Even then, the alarm bells still rang loudly, with the variance in productivity stark. It was a troubling discovery, especially when, in reality, there isn’t a good excuse for employee productivity being so different.

EMPLOYEE VARIANCE

Employee variance can take on many forms, but we concentrate on productivity so that companies can expand their capacity in a given period of time.

With margins collapsing, the idea that labour is cheap is a complete myth, so we’re finding that many companies want to know how to get more from every hour worked.

This begs the simple question: how long does each and every task need to take for you to improve the overall speed and ultimately, do more per hour worked?

Employee variance measures if you’re using your workforce in accordance with your expectations. If you think something should take 10 minutes, does it? AI can be used to determine things like this. It is also useful for spotlighting areas where you’re wasting time and for predicting how you can use your workforce better.

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Variance measures how spread out a data set is and enables you to measure how far each number in the set is from the mean. This is calculated as the difference between the actual labour hours used to complete a task and the standard number of hours that should have been used.

For example, if the 25th percentile is 10 minutes, the 50th is 17 minutes and the 75th percentile is 35 minutes (2.5 times the 25th percentile), then the variance is 18 minutes. Minutes may not seem like much, but those minutes add up to hours – sometimes in the hundreds of thousands.

Variability in how long it takes to complete a task is regularly overlooked by leaders – excused with explanations or, worse, accepted as normal. Yet, it is actually costly to your bottom line so you need to act.

It is important to reduce the variance to extract maximum productivity from your employees.

For the employees who unfavourably diverge from the mean – i.e. when they take longer – you need to improve the way they work. Here, don’t focus on merely making them better than they were, they need to match your mean.

IN CONCLUSION

Over a century ago, we learned that there was an actual best way to work. However, most employees work differently from the best way and instead argue that their way is better, even when it’s not.

This problem was addressed through the creation of the assembly line and other manufacturing era initiatives that produced standardization.

Despite this, variance lives on and is widespread throughout modern work environments. Measuring productivity and reducing employee variance are two of the practices that never made the transition out of manufacturing.

This begins to explain why two employees doing like-for-like work can produce results that are anything but. Like-for-like work should be consistent in time and quality.

A thinker, speaker, and writer to the core, Dr Tommy Weir holds a doctorate in strategic leadership from Regent University, and is the founder of EMLC where he is the region’s leading CEO coach. In addition to writing a number of books – including the Amazon #1 best-seller Leadership Dubai Style and 10 Tips for Leading in the Middle East Dr Weir is the editor-in-chief of Emerging Markets Business – The Authoritative Review.

JAMIE ANDREW

Leading From The Edge

Despite losing his hands and his feet in a climbing accident at the age of 29, Jamie Andrew has achieved the seemingly impossible: running marathons, completing an Ironman triathlon, skiing, snowboarding, sailing, and of course mountain climbing.

Jamie has inspired people across more than 30 countries through his 13 years of speaking experience where he tells his story with great passion, sincerity, and humour.

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A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT
ENSURING EVERYONE WINS

By DAVID WEE
editor@leaderonomics.com

I n 1945, if you were called a collaborator in France, it was likely that you would be lynched by a mob. Back then, a collaborator was someone who assisted an enemy of one’s country.

Today, if you are labelled a collaborator in companies, you would probably get an award. So what is collaboration? It is not teamwork. Teams are made up of members from the same organisation, brought together to achieve a shared goal and directed by an appointed leader.

Collaboration involves a more diverse cast. Members can come from different organisations or from different components of the same organisation.

They have their own agendas. Typically, they come together because of a belief that the best way of achieving their goals is to collaborate with others.

**Collaboration is unnatural**

Johnny’s challenge explains why collaboration is unnatural. It requires one to put aside one’s own interest and do the right thing for the company. Why would anyone subjugate their self-interest? Biologically we are ruled by the undeniable need for self-preservation. We will not survive a big order but at a prescribed price that will eat into the profit margins.

Johnny wants to agree to the terms – not because of the extra commission he will get from landing this deal, but because this is good business and increasing market share is part of the company’s overall goal.

His challenge is convincing Jenny that she needs to re-tool and change the layout of the plant to accommodate the modification. But that could mean a dip in productivity and increase in cost, and hence would impact Jenny’s assessment and reward.

Johnny also has to convince Henry to agree to the smaller margin but that could lead to a cut in profitability and potentially hurt the value of the company’s stocks.

Can Johnny influence both Jenny and Henry so the company lands the deal, make some money, get a big piece of market share and hence keep potential competitors at bay?

Can Jenny and Henry do what is strategically best for the company given their own personal interests?

**The benefits of mutual interest trump self-interest because collectively we can do more and better.**

**Collaborative Drivers**

Here are some ways to drive collaboration in your company:

- **Focus on mutual interest**
  - Stop arguing about “common good”. It’s naïve to expect that people will subjugate their self-interest for the benefit of others.
  - Instead, rally people around mutual interest by showing how collaboration can bring a bigger win for everyone.

- **Grow collaborative leaders**
  - Collaboration requires leaders who can subordinate their agenda and give up resources for the greater good.
  - These concepts are foreign to many leaders. So help them acquire relevant skills including a win-win orientation and the ability to discover and articulate “mutual interest”.

- **Make collaborating easy**
  - The discovery of mutual interest is most often stimulated by a crisis (being prey) and/or huge opportunity (king of the food chain).
  - The benefits of mutual interest trump self-interest because collectively we can do more and better.

- **Reward collaborators**
  - Companies have historically rewarded achievement-oriented leaders who drive short-term results but collaboration requires an enterprise and longer term perspective.
  - In addition, collaborative projects have a gestation period that is longer than the annual performance appraisal system.
  - So ensure your reward system is calibrated and your collaborators get due recognition.

- **To collaborate or not to collaborate**
  - By the time the iPod was introduced, there were already some 5 MP3 players in the market. In fact, SanDisk Information System created the first digital audio player in 1998, a full three years before the iPod launch.
  - So how could Apple’s iconic product go on to become the “walkman of the 21st century”?
  - Success came from its ability to manage rapid innovation through excellent internal and external collaborative networks.
  - Steve Jobs knew that the MP3 player on its own had little value.
  - The product needed music management software (iTunes).
  - It needed a retail hub where users can purchase music online (iTunes Music Store) and it needed the introduction of broadband so songs could be speedily downloaded online.
  - In short, Apple was not selling a digital device. It was selling a brand new way of selecting, buying and listening to music that consumers would find delightful.

Bringing this together required both internal and external collaboration with Toshiba, PortaPlayer, Pixo, Wolfson Microelectronics and Sony.

For four hours a day, on the first day of each week for 40 weeks a year and for the next decade and more, Jobs got groups of designers, engineers, marketers, and metalurgists together in one room to leverage their collective wisdom and come up with products that delighted the world.

Three years after the iPod was introduced, Sony launched a competing MP3 player. Sony was a formidable opponent. Back then, its revenue was 10 times larger than Apple’s and it owned Sony Music. The product failed miserably.

At Sony, where the culture encouraged internal competition over collaboration, a digital music player did not make as much sense from a P&L (profit and loss) standpoint for any individual business unit.

Sony Music did not want to abandon its traditional business model and had concerns about protecting its copyrights electronically.

So the question is not whether companies should collaborate or not. The correct question you should be asking is what kind of company do you want to lead? A world beater or a “wannabe”?

David Wee is a HR director based in Indonesia who has lived, worked and travelled all over the world. For more leadership articles, visit www.leaderonomics.com. To send your feedback, email editor@leaderonomics.com.
Message from a Millennial

4 Things Young People Should Stop Doing at Work

By Jonathan Allen Yabut
editor@leaderonomics.com

The millennials (or the Gen-Ys) are the most talked about subjects in management today. Yes, that’s us — people born in the 1980s who will soon lord over the workplace in the next 10 years.

We know we are different. We are tech-savvy and dependent on social media. We have a collaborative and time-flexible approach to work.

The question is: how can we use this to our advantage? We see work beyond pay cheques because more than anything else, we’re after personal fulfillment. We seem to be the perfect workers the world has ever known, right? Hold your horses, maybe we’re wrong.

While our generation seems to be unstoppable as we get inspired by success stories of Mark Zuckerberg and Erfong Ngeen, we definitely can improve on many unfavorable traits and habits.

Here are four traits I’ve been guilty of, and most likely you are too:

1. Announcing that you slept at 3am to finish work
Ever heard of work-life balance? That’s probably the one thing your boss has been trying to achieve too. It’s true that your boss appreciates that you’ve chugged bottles of Red Bull to get that presentation submitted on time, but he/she will be more impressed if you can achieve the elusive work-life balance.

I admire an employee who doesn’t need to burn the midnight oil to get work done. She knows which things to prioritise — so she can spend more time on the “life” part.

She takes time off to travel and experience new cultures, making her more creative and open-minded at work. She’s competitive and collaborative because she has time for sports. She definitely sleeps better too.

Yes, we do have all the energy to work longer hours (and the nerve to brag about it) but the sad thing is that I’m not sure if we’re working smart enough to get things done.

Working smart is different from working hard. And please, working 15 hours a day when three hours are spent on the train is not working smart. It’s working hard. And please, working 15 hours a day when three hours are spent on the train is not working smart. It’s working hard. And please, working 15 hours a day when three hours are spent on the train is not working smart. It’s working hard. And please, working 15 hours a day when three hours are spent on the train is not working smart. It’s working hard.

2. Resisting to ask questions during meetings to avoid looking like a fool
My marketing career started as a trainee in a telecommunications company. In this job, I had to understand technical jargons, VAS, churn, USSO, codecs, and what not.

I was the adored management trainee who was hired among thousands of applicants because they all thought I was a smart know-it-all, right? So I pretended to be one.

An engineer would ask me, “Maybe we should switch the network from PSTN to VOP so we can increase the ARPU?” and I casually answered with no idea, “Yeah, maybe we should try that.”

I am thankful I’ve grown wiser. I always ask questions the moment I get confused.

I ask questions to pre-empt problems and challenges along the way — and before they get worse.

Besides, asking a question doesn’t make you stupid. It means you’re curious and attentive to details.

It means you are listening. It means you are taking the task seriously and you don’t want to leave any stone unturned.

Most importantly, it means you are humble, and that you are aware that you don’t know everything but are willing to learn to do better at your job.

To quote the astrophysicist Reina Ryen, “We ask questions not because they matter. We do it because it matters that we ask questions.”

3. Taking sole credit for an achievement
I live by the philosophy that there is no “I” in “team”. For my milestone achievement, I always feel indebted to some- one (even if it was the person’s job to assist me).

Unfortunately, many millennials (and people in general) love taking the limelight alone so they can stand out from the rest.

Why so? Because “We’re impatient, and we always want to get promoted fast.”

Studies have shown (although some may not agree) that every millennial thinks he/she can be a senior manager after working in a company for two years.

At the age of 25, I was a senior brand manager with two juniors reporting to me. One time, my team was assigned to prepare a 50-slide presentation for the chief executive officer (CEO). My two managers diligently helped me finish the deck.

My boss and the CEO were impressed after the presentation. My boss took me out for a dinner treat that night. When I arrived at the restaurant, she asked me if I came alone.

“Are we expecting someone else?” I asked.

“I knew you wouldn’t bring your team. But how I wish I could also pat them on their backs for a job well done. You didn’t finish the slides by yourself right?” she snapped as she taught a lesson I remember up to this day.

We all want to get credit for our achievements, and in wanting to be in the spotlight, we end up forgetting (and sometimes, deliberately discrediting) the people who have been instrumental to our success.

Great leaders always recognise the unsung heroes. They want managers who are not insecure in their power and who can praise and develop others to become like them.

After all, the real work of a leader is to produce more leaders.

4. Keeping critical information to yourself
Here’s a pet peeve that I have about millennials: hiding or keeping information so you can use it to impress senior managers, and (again) get promoted.

You may have heard your boss advising you to “wear a corporate hat.” Wearing one means championing pro- jects that will not just benefit your own career, but the company as a whole.

I worked in a marketing department previously where brand managers had the liberty to choose their own advertising agencies as our projects were small.

One time, a colleague of mine discovered that a reputable agency was offering discounted services.

He kept the information to himself thinking he would be known as the brand manager who spent the least.

Well, congratulations to him if he was after that crown — it only took days for our boss (who he was targeting to impress) to lament that the entire team would have saved more money if he had shared the information.

Wearing a corporate hat doesn’t mean being the sacrificial lamb at all times, it’s appreciating that small details, when shared, can really impact the company.

When scouting for future leaders, senior managers look for millennials who understand the value of standing back, and not just standing out.

At the end of the day…

I honestly don’t think we’ll be able to change these traits easily because this is the very essence of who we are. They’re the imperfect reasons why we’re called the Gen-Ys.

It doesn’t hurt to admit them, fight the feeling from time to time, and change, hopefully for good.

I came up with this list because I noticed these traits among my young colleagues — only to discover my bosses think of the same about me.

I guess the father of analytical psychology Carl Jung best summarises this with his quote: “Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understand- ing of ourselves.”

www.leaderonomics.com, Saturday 15 September 2018

Nowadays, it’s hard to find millennials who remain with an organisation for a long time, especially since they are known to switch jobs rather quickly. Read to find out more about why an employee chose to stay in her organisation:
bcl.ly/3DRtopgingout

Jonathan Yabut is the winner of The Apprentice Asia. Born and raised in Manila, Jonathan is a multi-awarded marketer and HR professional with over 10 years of experience in Southeast Asia. Dubbed as ‘Asia’s Millennial Guru’, he is a leading motivational speaker in Asia on topics involving leadership, talent development of Gen Y workers, and office productivity. Jonathan is the author of two best-selling motivational books, From Grit to Great (2015) and Fast Forward (2017). For more information, email editor@leaderonomics.com.