Walking the talk When it comes to company culture

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Revolutionising the poultry industry using technology

Characteristics of a great CHRO

Celebrating HR Excellence

Recognising the Best Employers of 2018

Pages 5–8
By CHRISTIE CHUA
christie.chua@leaderonomics.com

WHAT comes to mind when you hear the term ‘human resources’ (HR)? If your first thought was paperwork and other administrative tasks, you still have a very old-school impression of HR.

These days, HR is widely viewed as key partners in managing change and a catalyst for business growth, making their role more of a strategic one and less maintenance-oriented.

It plays a vital role in each of the different stages of a company’s growth.

Needless to say, practices that worked for a business in the early stages will not necessarily work for one that is mature, and it is up to HR to come up with updated policies that set the direction for the business.

We recently spoke to Plus Solar Systems chief executive officer and co-founder Ko Chuan Zhen, who shared his experience in leading his company through the different stages of growth.

He says that getting people to join the company when they first started was tough because of credibility – the founders themselves were quite young, and their office facilities were extremely basic, making it difficult to convince others to follow them.

Ko, who doubled up as the company’s HR manager at the time, shares that their recruitment strategy was to focus on people who had the passion for renewable energy, and who shared the same vision.

“We were selling our dream to people,” says Ko. “During the final interview, we would ask the candidates to do a presentation on their life story, and from there we were able to tell who was really passionate – this is something you can’t hide.”

BRANCING OUT

Ko says that when the industry started growing rapidly, the team grew larger and the company opened a branch in Penang. It was then that he realised the company needed to move beyond the basic HR practices that had served them well during the start-up phase.

“We had some structure in the company at the time but I felt that in order to grow further, we needed to get some professional to join us. And so the first person we hired who came from an HR background was actually for the HR role, a HR manager.”

As a result, better processes were implemented and new practices such as monthly town hall meetings and learning and development opportunities for employees were introduced.

About a year later, the business experienced rapid growth – their revenue doubled within one or two years, and so did the number of employees.

However, this brought on its own set of challenges. With the sudden growth of the team, the company was now divided between hitting employees who were used to the old company culture, and new people from various organisations with their own cultures, thus creating a mixed culture within the company.

Ko says that the accelerated growth was an issue on the people side of things as they needed time to adapt, and so the founders decided to buy out company-wide alignment exercise, starting with the company’s vision, mission and core values.

“We sought our people’s opinions and crafted our new vision and mission from there. As for the core values, we’ve come out with a survey to see what people liked, taking into account past achievements that made us an industry leader as well as what we needed to improve on so that we can go further.”

“Everyone may be able to understand why these corporate people need to join us if we don’t communicate it well. People could perceive it as a road block for them, and might think ‘I can’t be a manager or I can’t be a leader’ in this case.”

Plus Solar prioritises learning, which is why the company set up an in-house academy called +UNIVERSE, with programmes such as +DEAL (an acronym for ‘drop everything and learn’) to groom internal talent.

This upskilling of existing talent enables Plus Solar to promote loyal employees when the opportunities arise, instead of recruiting new people to fill the higher positions.

“We want to cultivate a learning culture and environment in the company, and we’re aware that if we want to scale our business, we need to close a lot of gaps for our people first,” states Ko.

It is because of this that Plus Solar encourages a lot of coaching and mentoring through one-to-one sessions between managers and their direct reports, and lays out clear career pathways for its people.

“For example, a manager might tell an executive: ‘I want to promote you next year’, and at this stage, you must be able to accept and accomplish all these challenges. When you’re able to do so, we’re going to promote you,” shares Ko.

Plus Solar is invested in the personal development of its people, and its ultimate objective is for the internal talents to achieve their full potential in their careers and lives.

Through the company’s coaching and mentoring efforts, it has been able to upskill and promote several young talents to roles at the managerial level.

“We (the founders) also spend a lot of time with our managers, discussing our own behaviour and bad habits. We identified the top three behaviours that we as leaders must practise together, and from time to time we will gather to discuss how we’re doing.”

For Ko, striking a balance between the structured corporate systems and the entrepreneur spirit is the key to ensuring the company is able to grow quickly and adapt to the rapid changes in the industry, brought on by technolog-ical advancement and government policies.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Ko believes that the people in an organisation are the biggest potential, and also the biggest limitation for its growth. “The challenge that many companies face is that the company wants to expand, but the people need time to grow – so the company ends up hiring external people as a quick fix. This works in the short term, but we need to find a balance. That’s why it’s important for us to go back to the growth of the people.”

When asked about the challenges that SMS face in moving their HR function away from purely administrative roles, Ko had this to say: “It comes back to the leader’s mindset. I think most of the chal- lenges are due to business people being driven by numbers – which is important but the essential parts all come from humans.”

He continues: “That’s why a lot of M&As (mergers and acquisitions) don’t do well. You can get the company, but you’re probably just getting the caging; you can’t get the spirit of the people in the company.”

Building a good company culture takes patience, but sometimes the business environment does not accord leaders the luxury of time. Since many businesses in Malaysia are still stuck in the survival stage, it is rather difficult for them to invest money and time into creating a healthy culture.

However, Ko says: “To build a good culture, we don’t actually need to spend a lot of money – all we need is to spend some time and care. I think it is very important to start by walking the talk. The people are able to tell if what the leaders are doing is just for show, or if it’s real.”

“You can’t say that you’ll have a successful business first before you talk about culture – both have to run concur-rently. When we have the right culture and the right talents to help us to grow, the business will flourish,” says Ko.
BRIDGING THE GAP

WHY WE NEED MORE WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

By ROSHAN THIRAN
rshan.thiran@leaderonomics.com

A leadership event in Paris, former United States President, Barack Obama, offered some interesting thoughts on a hot leadership topic — who makes better leaders, women or men?

According to Obama, the world needs more women in leadership positions "because men seem to be having some problems these days", adding — “Not to generalise, but women seem to have a better capacity than men do, partly because of their socialisation”.

When it comes to the ‘Who is better?’ question, there are some drawbacks; it’s a question that creates unnecessary division and encourages sweeping generalisations.

We might as well ask which of the sexes makes better drivers, or which makes better cooks. Of course, on the micro level, it depends on the individual.

Some women are far better drivers than some men; similarly, some men will cook up amazing dishes compared to some women.

Having said that, there continues to be a glaring gap in leadership when it comes to the number of women in lead roles compared to men. What’s more, research seems to back up the opinion of Barack Obama and many others, that the world could do with having more women in leadership roles.

Surveys conducted by leadership development firm, Zenger Folkman, showed that while women in America have been contributing significantly to the nation’s gross domestic product, they have been conspicuous by their relative absence in the boardroom.

Folkman’s study of over 60,000 leaders across America and internationally found that women are considered to be more effective leaders than men (refer to Table 1).

According to Barack Obama, it is women’s ability and willingness to ask the right questions that, in part, accounts for their capacity for success in leadership roles.

For example, women leaders often place a strong emphasis on empowering those around them; not only are they interested in their own success, they also have a powerful desire to lift everyone else in turn.

Women are also (generally speaking) better organisers than men, which means that they have a stronger ability to inspire everyone to pull their weight in the same direction to achieve shared goals.

Here in Malaysia, there is still much work to be done in getting more women into leadership roles. However, there has been some great progress made which continues to shine a light on the importance of women leadership and how closing the inequality gap can make a huge difference to the nation’s productivity, progress and overall well-being.

In an insightful article by Johan Merican and Shareen Ghani, they write, “The importance of advancing women at work and in leadership is that it is good for everyone (both men and women). Malaysia will not emerge a high-income nation if we do not optimise the half of the population, especially when the fairer sex is emerging as the more educated cohort.”

IN CONCLUSION

Traditionally, leadership has been centred on ‘The Great Man’ model, which began to erode during the Second World War when women were needed to fill in for men as they headed off to battle.

It was during this time that the capability, resourcefulness and agility of women in the workplace was truly noticed, and rightly so. Since that period, the advancement of women in leadership roles — slow as it’s been — has increasingly demonstrated the futility of leaving women on the sidelines.

When organisations truly embrace the leadership potential of women, everything improves. Engagement soars, efficiency increases, inequality decreases, and the organisation as a whole becomes more emotionally intelligent and socially aware.

When the views of world leaders align with research data, as business leaders we cannot afford to ignore the message that this sends: If our businesses, communities and our nations are to thrive, we must not only do more to encourage talented women into leadership roles, but we must also act faster to ensure we close this gap of inequality.

By doing so, it will benefit everyone and make us stronger.

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Table 1

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<tr>
<th>Leadership Competencies</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<td>48.5</td>
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<td>53.2</td>
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<td>54.3</td>
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<td>53.4</td>
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Leadership Score by Competency

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Roshan Thiran is the founder and CEO of Leaderonomics — a social enterprise working to transform lives through leadership development.

Connect with Roshan on Facebook or Twitter (@lepaker) for more insights into business, personal development, and leadership.

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www.leaderonomics.com
By TERRY SMALL
editor@leaderonomics.com

FLUID intelligence is your ability to reason and solve new problems. It does not rely on memory and is often thought of as having a strong hereditary component. Such intelligence is considered one of the most important factors in learning and is linked to academic and professional success, according to researchers. It is critical in leadership, parenting and learning. Strong fluid intelligence is essential in healthy relationships as well. Researchers have discovered that your brain can get a lot better at this.

BRAIN EXERCISES
An intense game of Concentration or other demanding memory task might kick your intelligence up a notch or two, and the more you engage your brain this way, the smarter you might become. Researchers reporting in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences say that brain exercises designed to improve working memory also increase scores in fluid intelligence. The findings challenge current beliefs that the only way to increase fluid intelligence scores is by directly practising on the tests used to calculate the score. Until now, there has been no evidence to suggest that other types of brain training would increase such scores in adults.

“We demonstrate that the extent of gain in intelligence critically depends on the amount of training – the more training, the more improvement in fluid intelligence,” the researchers write in the journal article. The team says their findings suggest that such memory training appears to strengthen the brain’s many ‘executive processes’ responsible for problem solving. The score improvements were not due to pre-existing individual differences in fluid intelligence. The idea that it’s possible to improve fluid intelligence without directly practising on tests themselves opens a wide range of applications in education, according to the researchers.
Malaysia—International HR Awards

Recongising Commitment to Human Capital Development

By ROUBEEN MOHAN
roubeen.mohan@leaderonomics.com

B

utilising a very dynamic and innovative selection process, Malaysia Institute of Human Resources Management (MIHRM) identified organisations that are championing better work and working lives by enhancing business performances and the engagement of employees, customers and the nation at large.

With a panel of judges with vast exposures in the human resources (HR) profession, the Malaysian International HR Awards offer significant value to organisations and individuals who are part of the process. Enthusiasts were given the opportunity to showcase the work of HR and learning and development (L&D), how they added value to their organisations, how initiatives were conceived, how they aligned with the overall business objectives, the challenges encountered and the successes achieved.

The MIHRM Malaysia International HR Awards 18th edition encapsulates many success stories in the Malaysian HR landscape.

MIHRM President J. Aresandiran highlighted that the number of entries increased from 42 in 2017 to 46 in 2018. This increase was achieved with additional categories catering for international recognitions, which are Best Employer (Asia), Best Employer (Global), HR Leader (Asia) and HR Leader (Global).

Furthermore, there were a few outstanding elements that shone in the 18th edition. For example, the use of digitalisation to quantum leap efficiency, productivity and effectiveness in HR was evident and showcased at the HR Best Practices Seminar 2018. Aresandiran further adds, “This year the companies that entered have displayed a strong drive for talent and retention. Greater emphasis was placed on performance management and talent retention. There were also newer HR practices seen among the companies that entered in 2018”.

The awards ceremony was held yesterday at the Sunway Resort Hotel and Spa. Spacious to all the MIHRM Malaysia International HR Award Winners!

Refer to Table 1 for the full list of winners.

About MIHRM

To cater to the ever-changing needs of the marketplace, MIHRM has trained more than 20,000 competent human resource professionals and practitioners, in both private and public sectors, since its establishment in 1976. With the illustrious title of being Malaysia’s first professional body promoting the practice of human resource management, MIHRM is a voluntary non-profit, non-governmental organisation, registered under the Societies Act. Council members, who are elected biennially from members attending a general meeting, manage the institute.

Besides its collaboration and association with other similar organisations, MIHRM is also affiliated with the Asian Regional Training and Development Organisation, Asia Pacific Federation of Human Resource Management, International Federation of Training and Development Organisation, and World Federation of Personnel Management Associations. MIHRM has been organising the Malaysian HR Awards since 1999. It is a nation event with international status and global recognition. The honourable Minister of Human Resource is the Patron of the awards and it is strongly supported and endorsed by the human resource community.

MIHRM judges shortlisting companies at the first stage of judging for the 2018 HR Awards.

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A COMPANY GROWS ONLY AS MUCH AS ITS PEOPLE

“Riding from the thought that ‘everyone has the right to learn, earn and develop opportunities, then the organisation, and equally to all associates, regardless of level, should have the right to learn, earn and develop opportunities’...”

First Solar’s HR team

HR LEADS PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE A GREAT FUTURE

In the past two years, the HR team at First Solar has focused on developing several initiatives that are directly aligned with the mission of the company. First Solar has a vision to be the world’s largest grid-connected solar company - to find new ways to make the necessary changes to remain a market leader and a player in the industry.

In addition, First Solar also uses its leadership skills to align and galvanise its employees with a common purpose. The team’s goal is to create a sustainable, cost-effective, and safe workplace that is attractive to associates. This goal is reflected in the company’s ongoing commitment to excellence in safety and environmental performance.

ENGAGING THE HEART AND MIND

In our SLT every quarter, 40 team members earn points through our Strategic Leadership Training program. These points are used to drive home the messages and goals of the company's strategic direction. The program is designed to engage the minds of team members and inspire them to take action. Through the program, we are able to reinforce the values of the company and its commitment to excellence.

ENGAGING THE PEOPLE TO DEVELOP AGILITY

“Two things are necessary to change a culture; first, reposition the people, and secondly, align the people with the company’s vision and goals. This is how we have managed to maintain our edge in the industry.”

First Solar’s HR team

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Another factor that drives First Solar as a Truly Great Place to Work is that their associates feel they are a part of the company’s mission and values. The company has a strong commitment to employee development and career advancement. This is reflected in the company’s ongoing commitment to excellence in training and development.

First Solar’s HR team

SETIA HARAUMAN

Setia Haruman also sells parcels of land to the community for development purposes. The company has also been involved in various community development projects, such as the construction of schools and clinics, and the provision of clean water and sanitation facilities.

The company has also been involved in various community development projects, such as the construction of schools and clinics, and the provision of clean water and sanitation facilities. The company has also been recognized for its efforts in these areas, winning numerous awards for its community development initiatives.

First Solar’s HR team

FIRST SOLAR MALAYSIA: INNOVATION IS THE KEY TO MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

First Solar, a global leader in hi-tech, high-performance, and highly efficient solar panels, recently received the Prime Minister’s Hibiscus Awards for its contributions to the nation’s sustained verticality and horizontal growth. Together, as a team, First Solar has achieved a number of significant milestones, including the development of a state-of-the-art manufacturing plant in Malaysia, which has been recognized for its innovative design and operational efficiency.

FIRST SOLAR MALAYSIA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Setia Haruman’s vision for the future is to continue to build on its strong foundation and to maintain its commitment to excellence in all areas of the business. The company is committed to advancing the town of Cyberjaya to become the technology capital of Malaysia.

First Solar’s HR team

EMERGING TRENDS IN PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

“Executing our SLT proved to be a success where junior leaders were able to develop their skills and knowledge. This is how we have managed to maintain our edge in the industry.”

First Solar’s HR team

THE LEADING EDGE OF TECHNOLOGY

First Solar, a leading company in the design and manufacture of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, has been at the forefront of the industry's growth in Malaysia since it was established in 2014.

First Solar’s HR team

THE FUTURE TECHNOLOGY CENTER

First Solar, a world leader in the design and manufacture of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, has been at the forefront of the industry's growth in Malaysia since it was established in 2014. The company has been recognized for its innovative design and operational efficiency, and has been awarded numerous accolades for its contributions to the nation's sustained verticality and horizontal growth.

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First Solar’s HR team
By THYVIA SADIDHAN and CHRISTIE CHUA
editor@leaderonomics.com

AVE you ever thought of the processes that occur behind every meal that we have, from the grains in the paddy fields to the rice in our bowls?

The agriculture industry is more often than not associated with getting our hands dirty under the sun. In the past, agriculture practices revolved around hard labour – be it ploughing, seeding, watering or harvesting.

It is not industry one would typically associate with digitalisation, but how has the world of automation and digitalisation transformed a traditional sector like agriculture?

Processes within the industry have been revolutionised today with the use of the internet of things (IoT) and big data. An example would be the installation of sensors for temperature, relative humidity and pressure in chicken farms, enabling the system to detect minute changes in the surroundings.

Connecting poultry and data will result in the ability to optimise the genetic potential of livestock such as chickens. Businesses will also be able to predict the time it will take for the chickens to reach the critical weight range that is required by different restaurants, thus maximising efficiency.

Malapang Flour Mills Bhd (MFM) managing director, Teh Wee Chye says that once a business can predict that, the entire planning process to meet customer requirements will become a lot smoother, and that is what the company is trying to develop.

MFM started with one core competency – flour milling – but over the years they have evolved to include poultry integration, and are now looking into aquaculture as well.

Expanding into new subsectors enables the company to benefit from the economies of scale, but they realise that to become truly successful, they need to integrate technology, processes and people.

MFM director of business development and corporate affairs, Azhari Arshad says: “Previously, those who possessed the knowledge did it all by their own. Today, those who possess the information possess the wealth. That’s why in our organisation we’re making sure that people are getting our people to accept being data-driven.”

PARADIGM SHIFT

“Out with the old, in with the new” is a phrase that applies to processes in the industry as well as the mindset of the people. Teh says that the key to thriving in the business environment is to remain competitive and sustainable, which is why they decided to lead the change by developing their people.

He states that motivating people and aligning them with the vision, mission and the company’s new strategies are important, and human resources (HR) plays a vital role in changing people’s mindsets and aligning these changes. Believing in the need to put people first and knowing that there was no way they could be successful, they developed a traditional mindset, MFM started coaching programmes for all employees – from the top tier all the way to the bottom.

These HR initiatives are indirectly the driving factor that led them to win the HR Asia Award recently, which named them the best company to work for in Asia from 2018.

“Leadership is about influence. It’s about working through people and getting things done,” says Teh. “Our vision is to create pinnacle leaders, who in turn develop other leaders.”

THE SCIENCE OF GROWING FOOD

The MFM team at the recent HR Asia Awards ceremony, where they won the ‘Best Companies To Work For In Asia 2018, Malaysia Edition’ award

COLLABORATIONS FOR THE GREATER GOOD

In line with developing leaders, MFM is keen on providing exposure of the industry to the young generation out there. They have been actively giving career talks in universities where they engage with undergraduates and academicians on the current situation of the industry.

This enables graduates to realise that there is more to being merely academically-inclined, they must also be tech-driven and go beyond classroom-based learning.

MFM general manager of group human resources, Carol Chan, adds that such invaluable exposure changes people’s perception that things in the industry are done on a small scale in the backyard. “We want to show them there’s a lot more to it, and develop them by providing structured industrial-related programmes,” she says.

Azhari adds: “We realised that we have to get to the future before everybody else – that’s our priority, which is why we identified key institutions in the United States who are champions in our fields and partner with them.

The company’s collaboration with the Center of Excellence for Poultry Science, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville (UAF) aims to encourage growth and learning within MFM, and on a larger scale, linking UAF up with the region’s premier agriculture university, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) as a model for strategic academia-industry partnership.

“There through these partnerships, we will bring in things that are still relatively new in Malaysia, courses such as poultry science. These will teach our people new skills, which will create new opportunities for new types of graduates,” Azhari elaborates.

The partnership programme between the universities and their arrangement with MFM has opened up opportunities to students from a range of disciplines that are not from the agriculture field, such as engineers, business analysts, data science analysts, nutritionists, veterinarians, food technicians and microbiologists, which form part of the Industry Revolution (IR) 4.0.

ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

Carol says that they are always seeking employees who possess critical thinking and problem-solving skills, are passionate, and have the hunger to learn, regardless of which discipline they come from.

“We even have engineers in our purchasing department,” she shares. “They have analytical skills which they may have developed elsewhere, that we can leverage.”

Carol adds that employees should also be technology-inclined and keep abreast with global issues to navigate IR 4.0. Employees should aspire to apply the knowledge they have acquired in the field and constantly leverage technology to the fullest.

The company’s commitment in encouraging critical thinking and developing people can be seen through their internal practices, such as by cultivating innovation competitions.

Carol shares that last year, MFM saved potentially RM7 million as a result of their employees’ creativity – they created a simple tool that is able to remove the tendon from the chicken fillet, saving critical man-hours and improving fillet meat yield recovery. “The tool is made using recycled material, and each piece only costs RM10 to produce, but it can save us millions – that’s really amazing,” Carol marvels.

THE FUTURE OF FOOD SUPPLY

According to the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the world will have to produce 70 per cent more food by 2050 to feed a projected extra 2.3 billion population.

However, the total amount of agricultural land in Malaysia is decreasing by the year due to rapid urbanisation and industrialisation.

Azhari explains that this shrinking space is all the more reason to practise business forecasting and proper supply chain management, so that all processes can be optimised.

“We see the nation in the countryside being headed, so we’re pairing people with technology to come up with best practices to achieve that,” says Teh.

The business that pioneers these initiatives has its ups and downs, but Teh says, “If we do it well, we certainly have the competitive edge.”

Opening up the agriculture sector would certainly increase demand and provide more opportunities. As much as automation plays a huge role, human analytical skills are still the most vital in understanding data, predicting market trends, and optimising technology to achieve desired results.

The saying “the company is only as good as its people” certainly holds true – MFM’s strength lies in its people, and when Teh says, “if we do it well, we’re actually in the business of feeding Malaysia – we’re the ones going to make sure there’s enough food for the Table for Malaysians to eat, That’s our business.”
WHAT MAKES A GREAT CHRO?

EVOLVING WITH THE GROWING DEMANDS OF THE ROLE

By Dr CAROL HOOI LAI WAN
editor@leaderonomics.com

It was the end of a long and stressful day in the midst of a multi-day strategic planning session. Most of the C-suite executives had headed out, ready to dine at a barbecue dinner by the beach. Closing a drink in her hand, chief human resource officer (CHRO), Kristabel, strolled along the shoreline, the cool waves against her feet. Yet, her heart was heavy as the harsh words of her executive officer (CEO), Adam, kept ringing in her ears. She had tried her best to contribute to the sessions, but Adam was obviously dissatisfied with her. She just couldn’t understand his actions and wondered why.

TODAY, the CHRO sits at the same table as other C-suite executives and holds one of the most influential positions within senior management – a trusted partner to the CEO. How can Kristabel make an impact at the sessions and ensure that she is contributing optimally? To keep up with the growing importance of the CHRO role, Kristabel has to develop the traits of an excellent CHRO. So, beyond handling the usual human resources (HR) responsibilities, what else should Kristabel do to be an exemplary CHRO?

VALUE PEOPLE

Great CHROs are astounding people managers. They have the ability to connect with a diverse workforce and can read workplace dynamics well. They possess the foresight to predict and diagnose problems. They believe that people are the bottom line of any organisation. They take a strong stance on happiness at work. In this, they value not only the well-being of their employees, but also justice, ethics and trust. To generate happiness at work, great CHROs strive to understand the minds and hearts of their employees. Knowing employees’ needs and expectations helps them understand how both relate to business goals and financial health.

Happiness at work is important as it fosters employee engagement, job satisfaction and affective commitment. To keep the best and brightest talents, CHROs work hard at keeping them happy. Great CHROs make every effort to promote a conducive and win-win working environment for everyone. As role models, they lead by example and work as equals. Great CHROs develop deep, trusting relationships within the business, and employees trust them with their feedback. They love being around their employees and relate to them. They connect people and bring everyone into the same sandbox.

KNOWLEDGE OF FUTURE JOBS AND COMPETENCIES

Great CHROs keep up with social, political and business trends to enhance their knowledge of future jobs and competencies. A profound understanding of this enables them to get the right people in, as well as a capable human resource force that will achieve business objectives. Great CHROs are able to examine the gaps between the current capabilities the organisation has and its future needs. They have the foresight to take actionable steps to address and bridge the talent gap. They make sure that their organisation has a talent pipeline that is readily available.

Knowledge of what other companies are doing enhances a CHRO’s comprehension of what is trending in human resource. Competitive job postings can be a good indicator of how jobs and competencies will evolve in the future.

Great CHROs develop deep, trusting relationships within the business, and employees trust them with their feedback.

This provides CHROs with an insight on whether they should keep up with what is trending to outperform the competitors. Knowledge of what non-direct competitors are doing is crucial too, as they can learn from these companies.

STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING BASED ON DATA ANALYTICS

Great CHROs are able to make decisions based on data and analytics. They have the ability to leverage data to give the right answers and ask the right questions. Data-driven and assertive CHROs use relevant facts to drive the message across. Using both intuition and insight backed by people analytics, they build work environments that incentivise people to stay. They are talent magnets and take a strong stance on talent management. They have good insights as to whom to hire, whom to promote and what salaries to pay.

In line with increasing technological advancements, great CHROs are aware of the technology evolving within HR. They continuously keep up with cutting edge technology in order to improve HR processes and analytic capabilities.

BUSINESS STRATEGIC AND FINANCIAL ACUMEN

Great CHROs understand the entire business ecosystem. They possess business strategic and financial acumen to achieve business success.

They have knowledge, experience and insight of not only the organisation’s people-related matters, but also other aspects such as finance, operations and marketing. They understand the numbers and contribute directly to business performance.

As business will benefit from the better management of its human capital, it is time that CHROs be accorded the same priority as the CFO.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

To be recognised as a strategic partner of the organisation, CHROs have to be ready for that role. CHROs have to function beyond administrative tasks and demonstrate that they do understand the business. Focusing on the business side of the human capital, great CHROs help the organisation through better management of its human capital.

As business will benefit from the better management of its human capital, it is time that CHROs be accorded the same priority as the CFO. CHROs oversee the complete human component of an organisation and should play a central role in strategic decisions and be a true partner to the CEO.

As CHROs are focused on everything that is people-related in the organisation, many consider it as a stepping stone towards becoming a CEO. Alan Guarino, founder of Guarino Guarino & Partners, recently asserts that “Next-generation CHROs will perform like the CEO of an HR solution as companies restructure their human capital solutions for their company. They are not administering programmes. They are creating impact and a return on the money invested in the company’s talent systems.”

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‘Business savviness in some human resources (HR) is likely to be a shock. Many HR practitioners still adopt the paternalistic approach; that they know best and line management must be trained to conform to HR’s ‘best practices’. After all, we know better, right? We need not, don’t we? Check out why this isn’t so, bit.ly HIREntrepreneurs.

Dr Carol Hooi Lai Wan is an Associate Professor of Human Resource Management and Organisational Behaviour at The University of Nottingham. She specialises in global human resources and her current work is on competencies in the digital world. She is the author of Human Capital Management Practices in Malaysia: Local and Foreign Perspectives and Governance and Citizenship in Asia: Organisational Justice and Leadership Behaviour in Malaysia. Currently, she is the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Manpower. To connect with her, drop a note at editor@leaderonomics.com.
CRASH COURSE: SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

5 BASIC STEPS FOR ENTREPRENEURS TO FOLLOW

By JONATHAN YABUT
editor@leaderonomics.com

The buzzing trend in the corporate world these days is entrepreneurship. Start-ups which allow you to book the nearest taxi or invite the person nearest to you for a date now pop up like mushrooms left, right and centre.

Food and clothing stores previously limited to brick-and-mortar stores are now flourishing thanks to e-commerce. Selling is not only easier – advertising and promotions have become more convenient and cheaper too. Promoting your product or service through Facebook or Twitter is practically free, but the catch is to use it wisely and strategically.

If you’re a budding entrepreneur who’s only just discovered the wonders of social media for your business, here are 5 crash course tips for you.

1. CREATE THE BASICS, AND COMMIT TO A CONTENT PLAN

Create your Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts for starters. Once done, connect to the lowest hanging fruit – your own personal network (friends, relatives and loved ones, including that old neighbour of yours you’ve been ignoring on Facebook, but is now your potential customer). Require (or beg) them to share, retweet, and repost to their own personal networks. This is where you start growing your network.

Keeping your social media accounts active may be tedious, but it’s all about content planning.

Content usually come in 3 types:

A. A promotion (Example: Retweet this message and stand a chance to win free tickets to a concert!)  
B. A shareable third-party information (Example: If you’re a travel agency, repost an article by TripAdvisor about the Top 10 Countries to visit in 2014)  
C. Your own, organic information (Example: If you’re a retailer distributing concert tickets, remind your customers about other means of contacting you: “Got queries or suggestions? We’re also on twitter@ticketplanet!”)

It may be exciting to post on social media for the first few weeks, but it can get tiring after a while. Create a calendar if you must, and follow it. This is not a diet plan, so don’t cheat.

2. POST SMART, NOT HARD

It’s not the volume, but the quality of posts that will keep your customers engaged. Posting ten times on Facebook or Instagram may irritate your followers, so keep it to a maximum of two or three. Be smart with your timing. Post during strategic times when customers are online. Based on studies, people usually check social media accounts in the morning before work (8-10am), after work (5-7pm), and before bed (9-11pm). Posting during dead times will only bury your post!

Now, if you want your customers to see your posts more often, you need to make them ‘like’ or ‘comment’ on your posts more often, too. Here’s why: Facebook’s newsfeed intelligence works so see your posts more often, too. Here’s why: Facebook’s newsfeed intelligence works so see you on their newsfeeds.

Here’s why: Facebook’s newsfeed intelligence works so see you on their newsfeeds.

5. UNDERSTAND YOUR CUSTOMERS BETTER

The most beautiful thing about online marketing is that they are measurable. You can measure your visitors’ age, gender, location, time of visit, etc. instantly. Take advantage of this feature because it can lead you to where more money is.

Facebook pages give you a breakdown of how many people ‘liked’ or commented on a post. This tells you which information is popular.

You will also see which type of people visited your site the most. Are you getting a lot of comments and posts from City X? People should sell more in that city.

Confused why there are more males versus females commenting on your posts? Maybe that female perfume you’re selling is becoming a bestseller among males – you should talk to them more.

Always keep score. Check the numbers, smell where the money is coming from, and follow where it goes. You will start realising that marketing is also a science, not just art.

IN CONCLUSION

These are just the basics and we are barely scratching the surface. There are so many things to learn (and take advantage of) with social media. Remember, you’re just one of the hundreds or thousands of people they’re seeing every day on Facebook and Twitter, so work hard to get through that clutter! You need to stand out!

Good luck, and may you be the next entrepreneur who will make it big.
THE MANY ILLUSIONS OF FULFILMENT

By DAN ROCKWELL
editor@leaderonomics.com

THE illusion of fulfilment causes leaders to crash and burn.

POWER AND AUTHORITY
Power and authority feel like fulfilment but the feeling is actually intoxication. Those worthy of power and authority feel humility and responsibility when they receive it. Those unworthy, feel arrogance.

RELAXATION
Don’t confuse fulfilment with relaxation. Relaxation and fulfilment feel almost the same but they’re separate experiences. Sitting on the beach with your toes dangling in the water feels relaxing. Sacrificing in service to others feels fulfilling.

The danger you face is that relaxation often times feels like fulfilment. Although relaxing feels good while you’re doing it, working through tough challenges feels fulfilling after you do it. A team that sticks together through conflict feels fulfilled when they work together.

PREPARATION AND WORK
The excitement of being successful without doing the work is like getting away with speeding. But it’s not fulfilling.

The difference between relaxation and fulfilment is that relaxation soon turns to boredom. Preparation and work lead to fulfilment. The sense that you did your best is fulfilling. But showing up unprepared felt good while you were dangling your toes in the water. Enjoyment isn’t fulfilment because fulfilment has costs and enjoyment is easy.

The opportunity of leadership is feeling self-respect and gratitude for paying the price. Fulfilment is inconvenient.

IN CONCLUSION
The pursuit of happiness backfires – and what we can do about it in the jobs we already have. Read about it here: bit.ly/unfulfilling

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

For other great leadership insights, including those by John Maxwell, visit www.leaderonomics.com. If you missed any of our past issues, go to www.leaderonomics.com/publications and download for FREE!

Fun Fact

In 2013, Leaderonomics spread its wings to Thailand where we set up our first international joint venture. Not only that, we also had our first international projects in Japan, Australia and Papua New Guinea.

The term ‘comfort zone’ is regarded lowly in today’s context. However, comfort zone can also denote the much-needed point of stability in order to grow further. The question is, how do we have both at the same time? Leaderonomics director of client engagement, Caroline Ong, discusses the need to increase performance by expanding our comfort zone: bit.ly/TRYcomfortzone

For more digital content, check out our online exclusive: bit.ly/Top5SkillsHR

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Online Exclusive

Working in today’s environment, we need to have many skill sets, and each sector would need a different set of skills. To know the top five skills needed to work in human resources, read: bit.ly/Top5SkillsHR
There is a whole new cohort of soon-to-be employees. Who are they? The most technologically savvy generation to make it to employment to date, they are called the Generation Z or Gen Z.

Generation Z is defined as people born from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, generally those aged 22 and younger.

This latest batch of employees is definitely very different from the slightly older millennials and it's important to understand their attributes and wants to ensure the workplace is a more conducive work environment.

So what do Gen-Zers look out for when looking to apply for a job?

**Job Security**

Most of the Gen Z were raised during the Great recession – the sharp decline in economic activity in America from December 2007 to June 2009. Though it was in America, other countries were also severely affected by it.

That being said, most of these young kids would have seen their parents take great financial hits and a portion of their lives may have been defined by those struggles. Hence, this generation would be more tempted by the promise of job security. That’s not to say they aren’t idealistic or motivated by purpose over a paycheck, but in comparison to the older millennials, they are ultimately motivated by ensuring they have a secure life outside work.

**Independence and Flexibility**

In a recent study conducted by CNBC, 41 per cent of Gen Z respondents said that a corporate office is their top work preference as they believe their peers become their motivation to do better. They want to collaborate and learn from their peers, especially those who are willing to work as hard – if not harder – than they do. However, despite their desire for a corporate office, flexibility has displaced health care coverage as their top employee benefit. Flexibility in the sense of the comfort to take time off in an emergency and working remotely is important to them. This is also because Gen Z is a cohort that believes in work-life balance.

**Supportive Leadership**

A recent study, *The Voice of Generation Z: What Post-Millennials are Saying About Work*, explored the attitudes of more than 4,000 current and future workers and found that the top priority of Gen Z in finding a prospective job is supportive leadership.

Gen Z-ers carefully evaluate and prioritise the quality of the people around them in the office. They thrive in an environment that puts aside hierarchies and have a flat organisational structure. Gen Z believes such a structure will ensure their ideas are heard and allows them to work independently to a certain extent.

Surrounding them with people who challenge them intellectually and mentors who spur conversation and enable them to see the broader impact of their work will bring out the best in themselves.

In short, Gen Z will redefine the conventional workplace culture, with their clear intent on halting, and repairing, the ills they see within the work culture.

It’s safe to say that tweaking the work culture in a company to adapt to them will be massively beneficial to both the employer and these new recruits.

*By ROHINI RAJARATNAM*
*editor@leaderonomics.com*

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Rohini is a law graduate and freelance writer. Her areas of interest are personal development, social rights, and reflective writing. Share your thoughts with us at editor@leaderonomics.com.