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LIFE AT WORK, AND MORE

FINDING THE RIGHT BALANCE
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Changing times

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A wise man once told me...

Nuggets of wisdom from Uncle Iroh

KAREN SAYS

MITOSIS ME

THERE was a time I worked in a non-governmental organisation, which ran five shelters for our beneficiaries. The people who ran them just blew me away in the way they approached each day, totally dedicated and joyful in the face of everything that was thrown their way.

Attached to the main office, was also a nursery for infants and toddlers. Moms would often say that when they were having particularly trying days, it was always a treat to be able to hop down, pick up their bundles of joy and feel the stress ebb away.

So when we learnt of the companies in Malaysia that are blazing the trail in introducing innovation – not just in terms of products and services for their customers – but innovation focused entirely on creating an environment for their people to “be all they can be” at work and at home, we were very glad to share the news with you, our readers.

I was fortunate to have met up with some of the senior leaders of organisations who won accolades at the recent Life at Work Award 2014, and could hear the conviction they felt in developing meaningful options for their teams. Innovators, change agents, champions – these leaders shone for all the right reasons.

I find myself being the ambidextrous economist/public health person again (on the third hand?).

On the one hand it makes perfect economic sense to be able to retain executives who have amassed great experience and developed expertise in their fields (not to mention the impact on productivity that comes with better work-life balance).

On the other hand, the impact on their families at present time and into the future is immeasurable.

It was great to also have met the people who have opted for flexible work arrangements and for a moment, I imagined the movie *It's a Wonderful Life* with George Bailey running through the streets of Bedford Falls in a parallel dimension brought on by his angel Clarence – to show him how the entire community would have been different had he never existed.

Imagine if we didn't have the benefit of key researchers in R&D teams of different industries, or the movers and shakers in the financial world, education or healthcare.

This week, Dr Yvonne Sum also addresses the need for a global mindset. And last but not least, we have another installment of Movie Wisdom with punny Sarah Tan.

Akin to healthcare, where two people with the same diagnosis may not necessarily be prescribed the same treatment, it is heartening to see that some organisations and their leaders recognise that their people face the difficult choice of work or family at certain points in their lives, and go to great lengths to ease that burden. The hope is that many more organisations follow suit.

Kick back and relax with your family, friends and loved ones this Saturday. Savour the moments and recharge!

Have a fantastic weekend all!

KAREN NEOH
Editor
leaderonomics.com

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WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

By SARAH TAN
sarah.tan@leaderonomics.com

UNSURE as to whether the work stress you experience is of a healthy amount? Or if it's normal to work the number of hours you do?

Here are a few questions to ask yourself to ensure the presence (or absence) of work-life balance in your life. Keep in mind that this cannot lead to a proper diagnosis.

If you are feeling overwhelmed with your work to the point of hardship, please seek professional advice. Work-life balance is crucial to avoid serious health issues.

AM I ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT WORK?

You've spent your required time in the office productively and effectively. Once you pack up and go home, do you leave your work behind?

Recently, I spoke to a friend who has a busy schedule and was constantly on the go.

When I asked him how he coped with his work and activities, he told me that he has mastered the ability to “switch off” his working mind.

Once he's in the car and driving home, he “switches off” his thoughts about work and focuses instead on the rest time that awaits him.

DO I HAVE TIME FOR MYSELF, FAMILY, AND FRIENDS?

Or is my time filled with work, work, and more work? Another good indicator is if your family and

friends have mentioned that you haven't been able to spend quality time with them.

Every week, allocate some time to spend recreationally. On the weeks you need some “me time”, spend it on a hobby. On other weeks, make time for your family and friends.

Go hiking (exercise has been said to help combat stress), watch a movie, have a meal together, or just do anything you feel up to on that day.

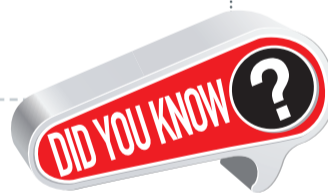
DO I EAT IN FRONT OF MY COMPUTER?

Personally guilty of this, some of us might think that working through our lunch break isn't a big deal. However, skipping lunch can take a toll on us.

Remember, “lunch break” doesn't mean just eating! It's a time to rest and recharge. Grab a bunch of co-workers and go out for a nice lunch in a nearby restaurant.

Take this time to connect and build on your workplace relationships. There's nothing wrong with having fun at work – use your one hour break wisely!

Here is a quiz from the Canadian Mental Health Association that checks your work-life balance: http://www.cmha.ca/mental_health/work-life-balance-quiz/#.Vct7lmeSzy0



The opinions expressed in this career guide are those of the writers or the people they quoted and not necessarily those of Leaderonomics.



- 1 “It's all about quality of life and finding a happy balance between work and friends and family.” – **Philip Green**
- 2 “You will never find time for anything. If you want time you must make it.” – **Charles Buxton**
- 3 “We have overstretched our personal boundaries and forgotten that true happiness comes from living an authentic life fueled with a sense of purpose and balance.” – **Dr Kathleen Hall**
- 4 “You don't have to make yourself miserable to be successful. It's natural to look back and mythologise the long nights and manic moments of genius, but success isn't about working hard, it's about working smart.” – **Andrew Wilkinson**

EDITORIAL
Adviser
ROSHAN THIRAN
Editor
KAREN NEOH

Contributing editors
PREMA JAYABALAN
HYMA PILLAY
LIM LAY HSUAN

Sub-editor
LEE KAR YEAN

Layout, Art & Design
TUNG ENG HWA
ZULHAIMI BAHARUDDIN
AHMAD FADZUL YUSOF

ADZNAM SABRI
HAFIS IDZLA
SHANKAR

MOHD KHAIRUL
MUHD HAFEZ
RAZZIAH

Writers & Contributors
SARAH TAN
LIM CHIN HAN
DR YVONNE SUM



IS YOUR ORGANISATION FUTURE-READY?



THE landscape of work in Malaysia is rapidly changing in comparison to a decade ago. Developments in technology have not only facilitated innovation and efficiency in the workplace but has also given birth to highly mobile and digital-savvy workers.

With the increase of Gen-Ys or Millennials in the workforce, both public and private sectors in Malaysia are experiencing shifts in the workplace from workers traditionally focused on job stability and linear career progression to an increased demand for customised careers and work-life practices such as flexible work arrangements.

In Accenture's 2014 report, *Building the Future-Ready Organization in Southeast Asia*:

Re-inventing Work in ASEAN, these shifts are not only seen in Malaysia but across ASEAN.

As ASEAN becomes increasingly diversified in the workplace, this will require business leaders, policymakers and education institutions to review their approach to talent management in order to seize opportunities.

WORKPLACE TRENDS IN ASEAN

Accenture's research identifies five major shifts that are reshaping work in ASEAN which are in line with some of the initiatives launched by Malaysian companies and national programmes.

5 MAJOR SHIFTS THAT ARE RESHAPING WORK IN ASEAN

WORKPLACE TRENDS



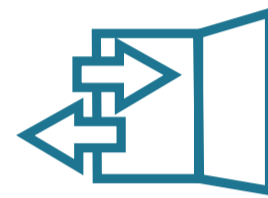
Highly customised work experiences to address the desire for meaningful, flexible work and continuous development.



Multi-generational and diverse workforce that includes previously untapped talent as well as the need to have **more women in the workforce**.



High levels of **digital competencies and a mindset of collaboration**.



Leaner, less hierarchical organisation structures with collaborative groups of leaders leading to flatter organisation structures and lines of reporting.



Flexible approaches to sourcing talent with increased leverage of freelancers and partnerships with external players.

LEADING THE WAY IN MALAYSIA



TalentCorp promotes the adoption of flexible work arrangements by Malaysian employers by providing best practices, tax incentives, and implementation support. As one of the best practices showcased on *flexWorkLife.my*, **Agilent Technologies'** Malaysian operations offers several options to help employees balance work and personal life, including flexible work schedules, part-time work and working from home.



All public listed companies on Bursa Malaysia must **disclose diversity policies** covering gender, ethnicity and age for board and workforce for annual reports issued on or after Jan 2, 2015. Companies such as **Sunway Group** have already started disclosing their workforce diversity demographics.

flexWorkLife.my has examples of diversity disclosure from leading organisations, as well as other best practices.



In Penang, a **Northern Women's Network** was formed in Jun 2014, led by **Dell Malaysia, Intel Malaysia, Agilent Malaysia and AMD Malaysia** in collaboration with TalentCorp. The objective of the network is to drive programmes that will enhance the participation of women in the workforce focusing on three areas:

- Developing leaders
- Sharing best practices
- Establishing family-friendly facilities, e.g. childcare facilities



Career progression and leadership pathways are not linked to experience or age, but instead to capabilities; which leads to a more meritocratic approach. **"For us, if you're good enough, you're old enough."** says a human resource director of a Malaysian regional company.



Malaysia is oDesk's 7th fastest growing market, where the company connects more than 4.5 million freelancers with 900,000 clients.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESSES TO BECOME FUTURE-READY

AS companies prepare for the future of work, some Malaysian companies are taking the lead through their innovative programmes to promote diversity and inclusion (D&I), flexible work arrangements (e.g. work from home), family-friendly facilities (e.g. childcare centre) and work-life benefits (e.g. extended maternity leave).

These work-life practices aim to retain and attract the best talent by building a flexible and customised work environment.

Develop differentiated talent management strategies

Employers should invest in building 'job-ready' workers by reaching out to potential candidates while they are still in school.

Tap into an extended workforce

Companies that come out ahead will be those that find a way to constantly source the right workers at the right time. For example, operational or administrative tasks can be done by contract workers (e.g. women on career break), or even volunteers.

Build a flexible operating model

A flexible structure enabling a 'buy, borrow, build, move' talent model will help build agile organisations that draw on diverse talent pools, internally or externally. Organisation structures will also need to evolve to become flatter.

Evolve the right management mindset

Leaders and management teams will need to welcome and invest in an extended workforce. Companies will also need to create champions for change – leaders who embrace change, collaboration and innovation.

Examples of Initiatives that are Future Ready

The FasTrack programme by TalentCorp is creating a pool of industry-ready talent in the electrical and electronics (E&E) industry in Penang. Public and private-led collaborations between TalentCorp and MNCs (multinational companies) such as Intel and Motorola provide problem-solving, digital and R&D (research and development) relevant competencies.

BASF Asia-Pacific Service Centre Job Sharing Pilot
The pilot converted selected full-time positions into two part-time job sharing positions to attract a wider pool of talent. The pilot targets women who have previously been on a career break.

Shell Malaysia Gender Diversity
The Malaysian operation has recruitment targets to hire females in technical and commercial skill pool and sets targets for percentage of women in senior leadership, which is in line with its global targets.

PwC Malaysia D&I Champions
The company's leadership team drives D&I in Malaysia which is reflected in their employee programmes. For example, the Talent Development Council ensures that the talent pool is well represented by female talent.

"As work is transforming rapidly both locally and regionally, companies must proactively plan and adjust to the significant shifts in worker's expectations and skills. Building a diverse and collaborative workforce utilising technology will be key in helping companies at all stages of maturity navigate through these changes and grasp the opportunities generated by these shifts in work."

– Janet Yap, country managing director, Accenture Malaysia

MAYBANK PAVING THE WAY FORWARD

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE WORK ENVIRONMENT

MAYBANK, winner of the Best Malaysian Organisation category of the Life at Work Award 2014 at the 12th Women's Summit, was recognised for its programmes and initiatives in creating a family-friendly workplace.

Nora Abdul Manaf, group chief human capital officer of Maybank Group says, "Women currently form 58% of our workforce and have played an important role in the progress and development of Maybank."

Furthermore, Nora adds, "To date, we have 46% female representation at the senior and middle management, and 29% at the top management level."

"It is clear that they are increasingly shouldering the challenge of leadership roles in the group."

"We continuously focus on identifying issues related to women and sustaining efforts to create an inclusive and equitable work environment."

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Maybank has implemented an integrated approach of flexible work arrangements (FWA) to ensure it is inclusive and beneficial across gender and demographics.

The FWA include flexible schedule, flextime, flexible work location and conversion to part-time employment.

As a result of the people transformative efforts driven by top man-



Nora Abdul Manaf, group chief human capital officer, Maybank Group, and mentor of Women in Leadership Malaysia receiving the award from Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

agement, **Maybank's key retention rate is currently at an impressive 85%, a significant increase from 52% in 2008.**

BEING AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

Diversity and inclusion is a key priority for Maybank as it assists with closing the talent gap and ensuring the organisation culture cares about the needs of diverse employees and women employees.

Research on the availability of such facilities in the workplace links it with improved productivity.

Thus, having the Maybank Tiger

Cubs Childcare Centre (MT3C) facility exemplifies Maybank's focus on productivity improvement, employee morale and reduced turnover or absenteeism.

The initiative also targets women returning to work after maternity leave to support their transition back to work. It will support Maybank in growing women leaders by enabling them to have work-life integration.

As a family-friendly employer, Maybank aims to strengthen its employer value proposition and position the company as an employer of choice.

INTO THE FUTURE

Moving forward, Maybank expects to improve the facilities over time and aims to focus on identifying issues related to women and initiate change efforts, integrating diversity with Maybank's core values to ultimately create an inclusive, high performance and equitable work environment.



"FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN SENIOR MANAGEMENT POSITIONS IN 2009 STOOD AT 15% AND HAS SINCE GROWN TO 31% IN 2013, RECORDING 7% MORE THAN THE GLOBAL AVERAGE OF 24% IN THE 2013 GRANT THORNTON INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS REPORT."
- NORA ABDUL MANAF

DID YOU KNOW?

FEE ASSISTANCE AND INCENTIVES FOR ESTABLISHING CHILDCARE CENTRE IN THE WORKPLACE

(a) PARENTS

- Fee assistance for low income families of up to RM300/month, granted on a sliding-scale basis based on household income, number of dependants, and special needs of child
- Fee-paying parents exempted from tax up to RM2,400/year

(b) COMPANIES/EMPLOYERS

- Double tax deduction for provision and maintenance of childcare centre
- Double tax deduction for childcare allowance (employees given tax exemption up to RM2,400/year)
- Industrial building allowance at 10% annually

(c) CHILDCARE CENTRE OPERATORS

- Tax exemption on statutory income for five years
- Industrial building allowance at 10% annually

For more information, please visit <http://flexworklife.my/tax-incentive/>

MAYBANK TIGER CUBS CHILDCARE CENTRE

TRAILBLAZING their way in their diversity and inclusion agenda is the establishment of Maybank Tiger Cubs Childcare Centre (MT3C) on Jan 6 this year, believed to be the first of its kind to operate on a purely emergency basis in Malaysia.

Parents who face unforeseen challenges when it comes to securing childcare services can utilise the facilities in this drop-in childcare facility with ease of minds and hearts for a temporary period while they source alternative childcare services.

Having an in-house emergency childcare facility supports Maybank's focus on productivity improvement, as it addresses the productivity loss when an employee does not turn up for work, and the added loss when others are redeployed last minute to cover the employee's workload.

LET'S HEAR IT FROM THE PARENTS AT MAYBANK



"It is indeed a great relief to have an emergency childcare centre like MT3C to mind my child when the babysitter is not available. I am satisfied with MT3C's physical set-up. The environment is also safe and conducive for children."

I really appreciate that all of my son's daily activities such as his meals, diaper change and learning are all recorded for my reference.

MT3C is definitely a great help for working parents like myself to balance family and career needs."

- S. LOGANATHAN



"Words cannot express how grateful I am to have a childcare centre like MT3C at my workplace. It is such a relief to have MT3C to turn to for emergency help whenever our babysitter is not available."

Now, no more taking emergency leave for me. I can focus better at work as I am relieved that my daughters are in good hands at MT3C.

In addition, healthy interaction with the professional caregivers and other children has helped my daughters acquire basic social skills like sharing and taking turns when at play. I will definitely recommend MT3C to my colleagues."

- NUR HASYAREENA HASSAN



"I am glad and thankful to Maybank for setting up an emergency childcare centre here. It would definitely be of great help to us, working mothers who are in urgent need of the services."

I feel safe that my child is being taken care of by MT3C's well-trained caregivers. Overall, the service is commendable. I will surely recommend MT3C to my colleagues."

- CHEW LAI PENG

SHELL MALAYSIA

LINKING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TO BUSINESS PERFORMANCE



SHELL Malaysia won the acclaimed International Organisation category of the Life at Work Award 2014 at the 12th Women Summit.

The company has been consistently receiving recognition as an employer of choice with its wide range of benefits for employees for the last few years.

Shell implemented flexible work arrangements which caters to the needs of its employees as it strongly believes in providing a healthy balance between work and personal life.

It has implemented a diversity and inclusion (D&I) policy that links diversity to business performance while focusing on diverse talents as a source of potential contribution to the business.



"My career in Shell has been very much a part of my life. I started my journey as a Shell scholar and I have had an exciting career with the organisation for 18 years, with 7 different roles in various locations – local and abroad. Years ago, I was one of the pioneer committee members of Shell Malaysia's first women's network and we put forward proposals on flexible working practices. Shell's flexible working policy has helped me a lot in managing work-life balance; especially the flexibility to work from home when I need to attend to my family, and when I return from a business trip."

– Rafidah Jumal, cluster finance manager,
South-East Asia-Global Commercial

The objectives of the D&I policy are:

- attraction and retention of top talent
- increased productivity
- stronger customer/market focus

WORK-LIFE INITIATIVES

In order to achieve its aim, a project team which works to oversee the programme development and implementation has been assembled by Shell.

The following are among some of the options provided by Shell for its employees, in terms of providing a work-life integration.

1 CAREER BREAK

Employees are allowed to apply for a long-term career break with no pay, should they require a leave of absence between three months and three years because of family needs or personal development.

2 FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

All employees have an expected number of hours of work each week as

stated in the contract of employment. Flexible working hours is dependent on each work group and nature of job.

3 HALF-PAY LEAVE

This benefit is available to employees who require leave of absence to fulfill personal or family obligations, under two situations, which are caring for immediate family members and as an extension of maternity leave beyond the 60-day standard leave provided.

4 LEAVE BANK

Employees are given the option to store their additional leave days which they were unable to take due to business or work-related matters and carry them forward to the following year.

5 CO-SHARE PROGRAMME

This is where two employees share a same full-time role, and they can take turns, where one of them works twice a week and the other three times a week.

6 PART-TIME WORK

This allows employees to manage their work and personal work-life balance, while also giving them employment opportunities if they are not able to work on a full-time basis.

RECRUITMENT HAS A VERY SPECIFIC D&I TARGET TO HIRE WOMEN IN THE TECHNICAL AND COMMERCIAL SKILLPOOL. EVERY LEADER IS ALSO REQUIRED TO SET KPIS TO ENSURE THAT THEIR BUSINESS OR FUNCTION D&I PLANS ARE ACHIEVED ANNUALLY. WE ESTABLISH ANNUAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (D&I) PLANS, GOALS AND TARGETS FOR IMPROVEMENT; AND WE REGULARLY REVIEW AND REPORT PROGRESS WHICH APPEARS IN OUR ANNUAL REPORT.

SIMON ONG, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SHELL GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

What is the impact you have observed since the introduction of the flexible work arrangements in line with Shell's D&I policy?

Through our Shell people survey, an internal key measurement, a large percentage of our employees are proud to work for Shell and would recommend Shell as a good employer.

The work-life balance indicator also shows improvement with a vast majority indicating positively that they are able to balance work and life. Managers and team leaders are fully supportive of the work policies and the D&I initiatives that we have put in place.

Shell's attrition rate is well below the industry's average. We strive to create a work environment that makes Shell a great place to work.

The percentage of our women in managerial and leadership positions is steadily on the rise. We have targeted career development programmes and women's networks to support, guide and inspire our women employees.

Could you cite an example of a colleague who has been impacted on a personal level?

Shell's flexible work policies include working part-time and the option to apply for career breaks.

As an example, Perpetua Bandan, currently the team leader of Flow Assurance Systems for Shell Projects and Technology in Asia-Pacific, is a mother of three young children.

She was one of the few Malaysians who was selected to be part of the pioneer group that received deep water development exposure in Houston from 2001 to 2005.

Bandan was able to work on a part-time basis from a remote location when her children were younger. In 2010, she took a career break for two years.

Bandan rejoined us in 2012 and it was a seamless integration back into Shell. The company supported her throughout her journey and enabled her to return to work on a full-time basis.

Do you have any advice for Malaysian companies interested in introducing flexible work programmes?

The world is changing, and the work environment is changing with it. Companies need diverse groups of people to allow the business to grow, and in exchange companies must offer wider life experiences.

As a manager, listening to your employees is important. Find the time to engage with them and understand the challenges that they are facing.

Offer win-win solutions for both the company and the employees. Your human resources department should gain insights on some of the best practices and benchmark against other companies as one of the key measurements.

Develop policies that enhance your com-



pany's philosophy and belief. Understand your community as a start through staff engagements.

When you have the policies in place, monitor the practices – only then you will know if these policies are the ones you need to attract and retain talent.

For success to happen, leaders must be supportive and committed to implementing and sustaining the work policies.

WINNERS OF THE LIFE AT WORK AWARD 2014



(From left) Prakash Chandran, president and CEO, Siemens Malaysia; Lily Rozita Mohd Khairi, head of legal, Shell Malaysia; Amanda Oh, director, human resources, BASF Asia-Pacific Service Centre; Datuk Sabariah Hassan, secretary-general, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development Malaysia (MoWFC); Nora Abdul Manaf, group chief human capital officer, Maybank Group; Datuk Seri Rohani Abdul Karim, Minister, MoWFC; Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Deputy Prime Minister; Puan Sri Noorainee Abdul Rahman, wife of Deputy Prime Minister; Datuk Azizah Mohd Dun, Deputy Minister, MoWFC; Johan Mahmood Merican, CEO, Talent Corp; Sridharan Nair, managing director, PwC Malaysia; Yap Hsu Yi, senior HR manager, Organisation Capability Asia Pacific, Pepsico Malaysia; Rahima Ibrahim, senior vice-president, head of HR, Siemens Malaysia

LIFE AT WORK AWARD 2014



"THE LIFE AT WORK AWARD HIGHLIGHTS BEST PRACTICES TO ENCOURAGE MORE EMPLOYERS TO PROMOTE WORK-LIFE INTEGRATION AND PARENT-FRIENDLY WORKING ENVIRONMENT. THIS IS WITH THE AIM TO INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE AND TO PROMOTE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT. I HOPE THEIR BEST PRACTICES WILL ENABLE YOU TO MAKE GREAT RECOMMENDATIONS TO YOUR OWN ORGANISATIONS ON STRIKING WORK-LIFE BALANCE."

- Datuk Seri Rohani Abdul Karim
Women, Family and Community Development Minister

CELEBRATING WORK-LIFE PRACTICES

In the war for talent, more and more organisations are recognising the need to retain their employees by addressing their needs at different stages of their career and life cycle. With its inaugural launch in 2013, the Life at Work Award recognises and celebrates organisations with leading workplace strategies which enable employees to achieve better success at work and in their personal lives by promoting diversity and inclusion (D&I), work-life integration and work-life practices.

This will undoubtedly lead to higher employee engagement, a more diverse workforce and ultimately resulting in better productivity and business performance.

This year, the award was enhanced by analysing improving trends of women representation in decision-making roles and women-friendly policies as well as work-life practices.

In addition, the judging criteria gave recognition to the following areas:

- **Best New Initiative**, which is awarded to the company that has the best implemented new initiative
- **Making a Difference**, awarded to the company that has implemented a work-life practice that has significantly impacted its employees

- **CEO Champion**, which recognises the CEO's leadership and commitment to the organisation's D&I initiatives
- With the enhanced judging criteria, six organisations which participated in the Life at Work Award 2014 emerged winners in the following categories:
- Malaysian Organisation.
 - International Organisation.
 - Lean Organisation (less than 500 headcount).
 - New Initiative.
 - Making a Difference.
 - CEO Champion.

HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY INITIATIVES

Maybank Winner Malaysian Organisation

- Female representation stood at 15% in 2009 and has since grown to 31% of women in senior management positions in 2013, resultant of an enabling work climate and "people dashboard" discipline monitoring.
- Flexible work arrangements availed on a case-to-case basis prior to 2013, since formally adopted as a policy and communicated group-wide covering fixed flexible schedule, flexitime, flexible work location and conversion to part-time employment.
- Women Mentor Women Programme (WMW) support platform successfully launched for women leaders to accelerate their development and growth.
- 52% of participants from all the leadership development programmes from junior to the very senior levels are women.
- Maybank Tiger Cubs Childcare Centre, the first of its kind to operate on purely emergency basis in Malaysia, catering to a wider community of staff.

Shell Winner International Organisation

- Shell in Malaysia has recruitment targets to hire females in technical and commercial skillpool which is in line with global targets.
- Senior Women Connect (SWC) is a global Shell network to help senior women support each other with gender specific leadership challenges.
- Option of virtual work arrangements for new parents can be discussed with line managers.
- A private room for nursing mothers with multiple cubicles, equipped with breast pump, steriliser, refrigerator, wash basins and lockers.
- Career break between three months and three years for personal development or family needs, with continuous contractual relationship with the company.

PEPSICO Winner Lean Organisation

- Current general manager (GM) is the first local woman GM for Malaysia.
- Advancement of women jointly driven by both female and male leaders who hold KPIs which include diversity and inclusion targets.
- "One Simple Thing" programme encourages employees to request for simple arrangements that would make work-life easier, which is linked to the manager's performance ratings.
- Online cultural awareness training and cultural calculator tool for employees to build their own cultural profile.
- Annual people planning process identifies female bench strength for key roles, development plans and critical experiences required.

BAS F Winner New Initiative

- Flexibility@Work allows flexible choices including arriving at work anytime between 7am and 10am and working from home.
- Top management gender diversity ratio increased to over 60% since 2011.
- Analytics used to understand demographics of promotees. More than 50% of promotees in the second quarter of 2014 are women.
- Job sharing pilot implementation has led to the recruitment of seven women returnees.
- Qualified people who voluntarily leave their careers for a period of time are encouraged to re-enter the workforce.

SIEMENS Winner Making a Difference

- Globally, Siemens established Global Leadership Organisation of Women (GLOW) to increase the proportion of women holding management and leadership positions.
- In Malaysia, Siemens launched the "PRIDE@Siemens" programme, with its key initiative - "Work from Home" - to promote employee engagement and improve retention rates.
- Through the Diversity Ambassador Network, Siemens appoints Diversity Ambassadors to firmly anchor diversity awareness as part of company culture.
- Attrition rate dropped from 14% in 2011 to 8% in 2013.

pwc Winner CEO Champion Sridharan Nair

- Ensures women are represented in PwC executive board, appointed a woman leader for largest business unit.
- Drives diversity and inclusion agenda for PwC Malaysia and increased people engagement index by 7% in the last two years.
- As head of PwC Malaysia's Talent Development Council, he ensures female talents are well represented, which is currently 47% of the firm's key talent pool.
- Enhanced flexible work arrangements by introducing Flex-Space, Flex-Benefits and Flex-Wear (jeans on Fridays).
- Increased maternity leave to three months and paternity leave to three days.
- Introduced Back2Work programme with a flexible work arrangements package to opt for 2.5 days to four days work week.
- Pioneered The (W)omentum Programme to support potential women talents progressing to directorship.

DELL

Dell's Connected Workplace allows employees to choose where and when to work, which allows them to be most productive.

Dell Malaysia has an Executive Sponsor for Diversity and Inclusion.

WISE (Women in Search of Excellence) champions interest of Dell women and represents women leadership voice.

EY Building a better working world

EY "5 at 5" encourages employees to leave work earlier on the last Friday of the month for better work-life balance.

EY Flexitime allows fluctuating start and end times to cater for lifestyle and commuting needs.

ExxonMobil

Malaysia Women's Interest Network provides support to women employees through education and networking.

"Modified Work Week" programme provides flexibility to work on a modified schedule in the office, maintaining total normal hours of work.

"Adaptable Workplace" programme allows employees to work from home up to prescribed maximum number of days per week.

media prima

Improvement in gender ratio for board level.

Allows for part-time work for translator, newsreader, radio announcer.

Conducted "City Survival Skills" training, attended by 160 women.

celcom

Little Blue Planet childcare centre in the city equipped with library, learning centre and activity area.

Women employees can be granted up to two years of sabbatical leave to look after critical family matters.

TM

Women represent 33% of company's board of directors and 41% of senior and mid-management levels.

Employees are given an option of additional 30 days of paid maternity leave as well as up to seven days of paid paternity leave.

"Teleworking" allows employees the option to work away from the office, initiated since 2010.

IHS

50% of IHS Malaysia's workforce are women, with a retention rate of 90% among women employees.

Women's Mentoring Circle is a development programme for women at senior manager level to rise and advance in their career.

Flexible working arrangements such as flexi hours and telecommuting focusing on results rather than how, when or where the work gets done.

Nestle Good Food, Good Life

Diversity and inclusion measures are tracked, including new hires at managerial level, promotions, succession planning and leadership development programme.

Daycare claims of up to RM2,400 per year for those who are entitled under the Flexi-Benefit plans.

Option of additional three months unpaid maternity leave after 90 days of paid maternity leave.

BRITISH AMERICAN TOBACCO MALAYSIA

"Bring Your Difference" Talent Brand embeds the importance of diversity, beyond just gender and nationalities.

"Women in Leadership" programme is a key diversity pillar, focusing on accelerating performance, unlocking full career potential and enhancing leadership behaviour.

Kimberly-Clark

Maternity leave can be extended for an additional month by working from home to allow new mothers to ease into work.

72% of top management positions are held by women.

Option for flexi hours, staggered hours and telecommuting for all employees.

GE GE imagination at work

GE Malaysia is a pilot location for internship programme for Women in Aviation sector.

Employee assistance programme available to help women grow, with access to support on wellness and career, funded by company.

Training programme developed with the needs of women in mind, encouraging women to speak, learn and encourage each other.

PLUS

43% of women on board with 38% women in top management and a woman CEO at the helm.

Child Development Centre in PLUS compound with 10 Early Childhood Environment (ECE) qualified teachers and 76 children, with classroom environment assessed using ECE rating scale.

PANEL OF JUDGES



Tan Sri Sharifah Hapsah
President, National Council of Women's Organisations (NCWO)



Clare Muhiudeen
Managing director, Talent and Rewards, Asia-Pacific, Towers Watson
Good example of a Malaysian with a leadership role at a regional level but still contributing back to Malaysia while based abroad



Tengku Azian Shahrman
Director, Education and SRI human capital development, performance management and delivery unit (PEMANDU)



Dr Anjli Doshi
Deputy director-general (Policy), National population and family development board, Women, Family and Community Development Ministry



Johan Mahmood Merican
CEO, TalentCorp Malaysia

Organised by **TalentCorp MALAYSIA** TOWERS WATSON

In collaboration with

SIEMENS MALAYSIA

RETAINING TALENT THROUGH WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY

ANOTHER organisation that stands proud for breaking conventional work practices is Siemens Malaysia, which walked away with the award for "Making A Difference" category in the Life at Work Award 2014 at the 12th Women's Summit.

Established in 1972, Siemens Malaysia appreciates the diversity in all employees as this fosters a culture of creativity and innovation, an essence to its business. A total of 40.5% of the employees in Siemens Malaysia are women.

ENGAGING AND RETAINING TALENT

In tandem with promoting a sense of work-life balance to enhance engagement and retention of employees, Siemens Malaysia launched a "Work from Home" pilot campaign as part of its PRIDE@Siemens initiative in 2012.

The campaign was introduced after having two-way dialogues with employees and

receiving constructive feedback from them.

The "Work from Home" pilot campaign was established to allow employees the choice to work in their preferred setting, which has enabled them to give more focus on their responsibilities and tasks. The policy allowed employees to work from home one day a week.

Another key element was to ensure that employees who worked remotely were equipped with the necessary technology to do their work. That comprises of a laptop, remote access to SharePoint or shared folders, and efficient connectivity.

In terms of connectivity, Siemens Malaysia provided employees with Internet access subsidies which allowed them to claim 50% of their home Internet connectivity packages.

Towards the end of the "Work from Home" pilot campaign, about 60 employees from across the business had participated, and positive feedback was reported by both managers and staff.



Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (left) presenting the award to Prakash Chandran, president and CEO, Siemens Malaysia

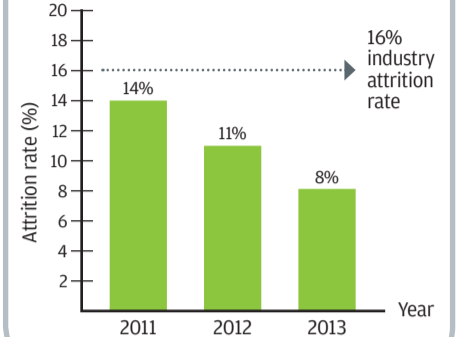
There was no drop in productivity or quality of work. There was a healthy rise in engagement as employees could spend more quality time with their families. Even managers were able to handle their teams better.

With all these positive outcomes, the "Work from Home" policy was fully implemented in Siemens Malaysia in 2013.

IN MALAYSIA, SIEMENS LAUNCHED THE "PRIDE@SIEMENS" PROGRAMME, WITH THEIR KEY INITIATIVE - "WORK FROM HOME" - TO PROMOTE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND IMPROVE RETENTION RATES.



ATTRITION RATE FOR SIEMENS MALAYSIA



Today, 13% of the workforce utilises the "Work from Home" benefit. The attrition rate has dropped progressively from 14% in 2011 to 11% in 2012 and to 8% in 2013, far below the industry attrition rate of 16%.

More importantly, Siemens Malaysia believes that it has successfully retained key talent and maintained a positive employee engagement score.



PEPSICO MALAYSIA

WOMEN AT THE HELM

WINNER in the Lean Organisation category at the recently held 12th Women's Summit, PepsiCo was the first multinational company to welcome a woman, actress Joan Crawford to sit on its board of directors, back in 1959.

Today, this successful establishment is run by Indra Nooyi, a dynamic woman who holds the position of chairman and CEO.

Women made up 31% of the board of directors in PepsiCo. In fact, the current general manager of PepsiCo Malaysia is Jocelyn Ng, the first woman and local general manager for the company in Malaysia.

This clearly depicts PepsiCo's commitment towards creating opportunities for women to take the lead on a global level and to develop women in corporate leadership.

Here, the amalgamation of culture, emotional and business intelligence is seen as an essential factor that results in successful achievements for leaders. PepsiCo believes that the advancement of women in its organisation is driven by both the men and women leaders.

RETAINING WOMEN TALENT

To retain its top talent and to encourage its women employees in reaching the top, PepsiCo has invested in various programmes to develop and nurture leadership qualities as well as for career advancement purposes in their women talent.

Here are some of the programmes:

- Powerful Woman, Diamond Edge and OPAL (On the Path to Authentic Leadership)

Programmes help women associates to recognise and maximise their potential to develop leadership qualities.

- The Asian Leadership Programme focuses on providing support to Asian talent in adapting towards becoming authentic leaders in a western MNC (multinational company).
- Asia-Pacific Inclusive Mentoring Programme helps match a pool of diverse, high-potential talent with the 14 members of the Asia-Pacific executive committee.
- Various events and career forums are hosted in local offices to celebrate International Women's Day and World Day for Cultural Diversity.

PepsiCo is fully aware of the challenges faced by women in terms of flexibility and mobility when it comes to accepting international career experiences.

To this end, the organisation provides flexible working hours and work from home arrangements through initiatives such as FlexTime, FlexPlace, part-time work arrangements, summer hours and birthday leave.

Another initiative, One Simple Thing is a commitment between the manager and employee to improve employee's work-life balance. One Simple Thing encourages employees to request simple arrangements that would make work-life easier, which is in turn linked to the manager's performance ratings.

"FLEXIBLE WORK PROGRAMMES NOT ONLY BENEFIT WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE. MEN AT PEPSICO ALSO BENEFIT FROM THESE PROGRAMMES BY UTILISING OUR FLEXTIME AND FLEXPLACE INITIATIVES, SUCH AS ADJUSTING WORKING HOURS TO ALIGN WITH CHILDCARE RESPONSIBILITIES."

- JOCELYN NG



PepsiCo Malaysia general manager Jocelyn Ng Performance with Purpose (PWP) is PepsiCo's promise to deliver top tier financial performance by running a responsible, sustainable and inclusive business.

PWP is driven by three pillars: human sustainability, environment sustainability and talent sustainability. Talent sustainability means providing a safe and inclusive workplace globally and respecting, supporting and investing in the local communities where we operate.

A key component of this is our formal and informal flexible working arrangements. "We're trying for flexibility to be 'embedded' into our culture, and an essential component of this is to set the tone from the top and ensure that the senior leadership team are aligned."

Flexible work programmes not only benefit women in the workplace. Men at PepsiCo also benefit from these programmes by utilising our FlexTime and FlexPlace initiatives, such as adjusting working hours to align with childcare responsibilities.



PepsiCo Malaysia insights manager Alison Chang

Following the birth of her daughter, Ava, Chang utilised a number of different options from our flexible working toolkit. She extended her three-month maternity leave to five months and when she returned to work she entered into an agreement with her manager that she would work from home once a week to take care of her baby.

She also uses the lactation room that is available in the office building. "I am grateful for the flexibility that PepsiCo has provided me following the birth of my first child. Under PepsiCo's flexible working arrangements, I have been able to balance my work and family responsibilities and I know that this hasn't negatively impacted my career with the company," says Chang.

For more information, please visit www.flexWorkLife.my

Brought to you by TalentCorp

BASF ASIA-PACIFIC SERVICE CENTRE

HIRING WOMEN ON CAREER BREAKS



In line with the company's strategic principle to form the best team, BASF Asia-Pacific Service Centre Sdn Bhd is focused on providing its employees with career development opportunities while ensuring work-life balance is achievable among them.

KP Lau, the Managing Director of the company, is a firm believer of creating a sustainable working environment for employees at the Shared Service Centre.

Lau believes that the "Diversity + Inclusion" business principle within BASF Group promotes a corporate culture that embraces diversity through adopting practices that promote trust and respect for people with different needs, and enable flexibility as well as sustainability.

"At the Shared Service Centre, one of our key focuses in driving workforce engagement is creating opportunities for work-life integration whereby more diversity is encouraged in the workplace, enabling employees to fulfil their personal commitments which vary between individuals.

"Hence, we fully endorse and support the hiring of off-rampers in line with the national agenda to bring individuals on career break back to the workforce. This provides opportunities to the likes of mothers with children and those who are ready to return to the workforce to develop their careers with BASF," said Lau.

The strong commitment to improving the quality of life among its employees is evident through the company's Flexibility@Work practices which include Flexi-work Hours, Work from Home and a newly implemented job sharing programme.

JOB SHARING PROGRAMME

BASF pilot job sharing programme has led to the world's leading chemical company being selected the winner for the "New Initiative" category at the Life at Work Award 2014 in the 12th Women's Summit. This award depicts the efforts taken by the company to tap on a wider talent pool in line with its strategy to cultivate a diverse workforce.

The job sharing programme which kicked off in January 2014 is a work arrangement that adopts the concept of a full-time job being tasked to two employees on a part-time basis.

This concept encourages individuals who are keen to return to employment but unable to work full-time to get back into the working world. The flexibility allows them to manage their personal commitments while having the opportunity to continue being employed.

As of June 2014, this programme has successfully filled three full-time vacancies with six job sharers.

The job sharing programme requires

JOB SHARING @ BASF ASIA PACIFIC SERVICE CENTRE

What is job sharing?

Part-time work where **two employees share the responsibility** and **similar compensation** for a **full-time position**

Example of job sharing schedule

Days	Hours	Number of working hours				
		Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Partner A	8.30am-12.30pm	4	4	4	4	4
Partner B	1.30pm-5.30pm	4	4	4	4	4

BASF The Chemical Company Job Sharing Pilot Programme

- ✓ Job Sharing Pilot between **April-June 2014**
- ✓ Piloted in few **core functions** within the organisation
- ✓ As of June 2014, **7 women returnees** hired, **6 on job sharing basis**

individuals to work only for half of the total working hours of a full-time employee.

This programme displays BASF's initiatives to promote workforce diversity by adopting practices that respect and cater to individuals with different needs. It also shows the company's aim to maintain sustainability through flexibility.

The job sharing programme is a good option for women who are on career

breaks. It can be a good starting point before heading back full-time into the workforce. BASF's job sharing programme has attracted and tapped into a new talent pool which is women on a career break who want to ease back into the working world.

With this programme, BASF has managed to recruit seven women returnees, out of which six of them are in the job sharing programme.



Pauline Teo, analyst, HR services

"Companies should consider providing flexi-work and training opportunities to women returnees so it would make it easier for them to re-enter the workforce after being away for some time," says Pauline, who works on a four hour a day shift.

Pauline was in the workforce for eight years before taking a seven year career break. She decided to take a break when she discovered that her son required frequent therapy sessions. During her time-off, she took courses in graphic design as an additional skill to be added to her portfolio as she believes that women should continue to stay relevant. When

her second child arrived, she found it more difficult to cope and hence, decided to then go on a full-time break to focus on her children.

"As my children grew older, I began thinking about returning to the workforce but it was not an easy decision because it requires me to thoroughly think through the support structure needed to be able to balance both work and family. The journey is not easy as not many companies in Malaysia offer such flexible opportunity," says Pauline. Luck was however on her side when she first heard about the Career Comeback Networking event organised by

TalentCorp which she subsequently attended and landed a HR services role in BASF.

Pauline's determination and willingness to learn is key to her being able to adapt to the working world so quickly and effectively. "Although I have no experience in this role but I am eager to try it out as I know most jobs will be different now from what it was seven years ago," says Pauline. Her team's unquestioning support and willingness to share and impart their knowledge boosted her morale.



Rosilah Hasan, analyst, accounts payable

Rosilah Hasan, an accounts payable analyst with BASF, who is also employed under the job sharing programme is thankful for the learning opportunity given to her at BASF.

Prior to returning to the workforce, Rosilah made arrangements for her mother and children to ensure that they were well taken care of. The flexibility of working four hours a day has helped her focus on work as her attention is not divided between work and family. With a greater work-life balance, she finds herself able to perform her work more efficiently and effectively.

"Very frequently family priorities cause women to sacrifice their career. Hence, women initiatives carried out by organisations such as BASF are highly relevant to women," concludes Rosilah.

DID YOU KNOW?

● Employers can refer to flexWorkLife.my portal to apply for **tax incentives** for:

- > hiring and **training women who returned to the workforce**
- > consultancy and training cost to **implement Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA)**

● flexWorkLife.my portal also offers **free job** posting through myStarjob.com for employers who provide flexible work arrangements, family friendly facilities and work-life benefits in their workplace



For more information, please visit www.flexWorkLife.my

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CEO CHAMPION

LEADING THE WAY ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



Sridharan Nair, managing partner of PwC Malaysia recently won the Life at Work award as the "CEO Champion".

"PwC Malaysia recognises that retaining qualified women professionals is a critical business imperative and there is a need to provide flexibility for women to balance work and family commitments," said Sri.

More than a decade ago, PwC Malaysia first considered implementing flexible work arrangements (FWA) to retain a key female talent who announced her decision to leave due to family commitments.

a week, she chose to stay for seven more years.

In recognition of FWA being a good retention strategy, PwC started with a FWA policy in the early 2000s for working mothers with good performance ratings, paving the way for more women to take up FWA. As interest increased due to changing demands of the workforce as well as the advent of enabling technology, an enhanced FWA policy was launched in 2012, which is open to both women and men.

The Work Life Plus Programme (WLPP) enables employees to spend their time participating in engaging activities that

facilitate personal and professional growth as well as quality time with family.

"PwC has introduced mentoring, sponsoring and development programmes for high potential women talent who are partnered with leaders of the firm with the view of developing a larger pool of women who can take on these leadership roles.

In the past the challenge was convincing fellow partners that FWA are workable, but today most have bought into it. At the same time, we must convince employees that the FWA are workable propositions," says Sri.

AS HEAD OF PWC MALAYSIA'S TALENT DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, SRI ENSURES FEMALE TALENTS ARE WELL REPRESENTED, WHICH IS CURRENTLY 47% OF THE FIRM'S KEY TALENT POOL AND ENSURES WOMEN ARE REPRESENTED IN PWC EXECUTIVE BOARD.



Sridharan Nair, managing partner, PwC Malaysia awarded CEO Champion

The Work-life Plus Programme (WLPP)

New initiatives include 'Flex space', where managers may choose to work remotely in an environment they feel comfortable in.

The 'Back2work programme', which allows experienced managers to rejoin the workforce after having taken time off for a career break.

OBJECTIVES

The WLPP was developed to create a flexible work environment that enables PwC Malaysia to respond in the most agile way to the demands of their clients, as well as attract the best talent.

OUTCOME

In PwC Malaysia, the WLPP has played a piv-

otal role in the increase of engagement scores by 7% in the last two years.

The WLPP also offers:

Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA)

Employees from all levels may opt to apply for a 2.5-day, three-day or four-day work week.

The Time Out programme

Allows employees to plan in advance for additional time off beyond the annual leave entitlement.

Career Break

Gives employees the flexibility to apply for one continuous month or up to three months in a year for personal and professional development.

GREAT CHAMPION

"PwC provides me work-life balance by allowing me to take on a FWA where I work four out of five days in a week. This way, I can still do what I'm passionate about, which is CR, and spend time with my two children. It also means that I don't have to put my career on hold.

"Sri has been a great champion. He started implementing these initiatives seven to eight years ago – before most companies. He has made FWA available for all, not just working moms at PwC. "Sri looks out for the people in the firm – he challenges you to do something you may not believe you can," Tan says.



Florence Tan, corporate responsibility manager

LEADING THE WAY

On the role of PwC Malaysia in initiating FWA, Chin Suit Fang says the firm has been supportive in giving colleagues the trust and flexibility they need to bring out the best in them, taking into account the different circumstances at each stage of their lives.

"The FWA has worked well for my colleagues, demonstrating that focused outcomes and deliverables are better measures of performance, compared to face time. The FWA has been one of the key reasons some have stayed on after starting a family," says Chin.

"Sri's leadership reflects his values on diversity and inclusion. When he



Chin Suit Fang, markets and diversity leader

was head of PwC's financial services sector (before becoming managing partner), he supported his manager, who was the first from client service to take up FWA as a new mother. Today she has three children and continues to benefit from FWA." For Malaysian companies interested in intro-

ducing FWA, Chin advises, "FWA isn't a human resources (HR) practice that caters exclusively for women, but cuts across the board and is increasingly gender neutral. The CEO needs to lead the conversation on FWA programmes, instead of delegating this responsibility to HR which is often the case."

Echoing what Sri himself said, Chin suggests, "Start with small steps – get the staff/ leaders used to it – and learn from it. Encourage team leaders to regularly engage with their teams to get their pulse on how they adapt to a team member on FWA. There is no cookie cutter approach. You need to tailor FWA to fit your business and workforce."

WHY SHOULD CORPORATE MALAYSIA CARE ABOUT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION?

'DIVERSITY' IS WHAT YOU HAVE, 'INCLUSION' IS WHAT YOU DO WITH IT

By LIM CHIN HAN

editor@leaderonomics.com

RAPID technological change, globalisation, the demand for skills and education, and greater inclusion of women and Generation Y in the workforce have forever changed the employment landscape in Malaysia.

The definition of diversity and inclusion now extends well beyond the traditional view that was once focused primarily on gender and race.

It's all about creating an environment that maximises the potential of all employees.

It's about encouraging and enabling all employees to draw on their talents, skills, and experience for the benefit of

business.

HR (human resources) plays a key role in diversity management to create and empower an organisational culture that fosters a respectful, inclusive, knowledge-based environment where each employee has the opportunity to learn, grow and meaningfully contribute to the organisation's success.

There are, though, still barriers to implementing diversity in practice. At a recent Engagement Network seminar run by Towers Watson, more than half of HR specialists (57%) felt traditional structures – including factors such as a fear of change and an unconscious tendency for those in the majority to surround themselves with people of a similar background – were

the biggest block to implementation in their business.

More than one-fifth felt the biggest barrier to diversity is down to a range of misconceptions, such as the view that diversity can lead to impaired organisational effectiveness, that some groups lack commitment, or that it may drive up the overall cost of employment.

FOSTERING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

An inclusive culture occurs when differences are valued, people are treated fairly and feel accepted and respected, and opportunities are open to all.

Explicit policies and programmes create the infrastructure for such an environment. Senior leadership and middle management set the example, while clear expectations for behaviour and actions help all employees to "walk the talk" on a daily basis.

Over time these efforts result in an inclusive culture recognised internally and externally (see graphic).

Forward thinking companies are taking a leadership role to maximise the benefits of a diverse workforce.

An effective diversity and inclusion strategy results in motivated and engaged employees that power creativity and innovation.

It leads to a better understanding of the different needs of customers, better marketing strategies and improved sales performance.

It enhances the employer brand attracting high quality talent. It also leads to reduced reputational, legal and financial risk.

All of these combine to deliver a strong competitive business advantage.

■ Lim Chin Han is managing director of Towers Watson Malaysia. To connect with Lim please email editor@leaderonomics.com

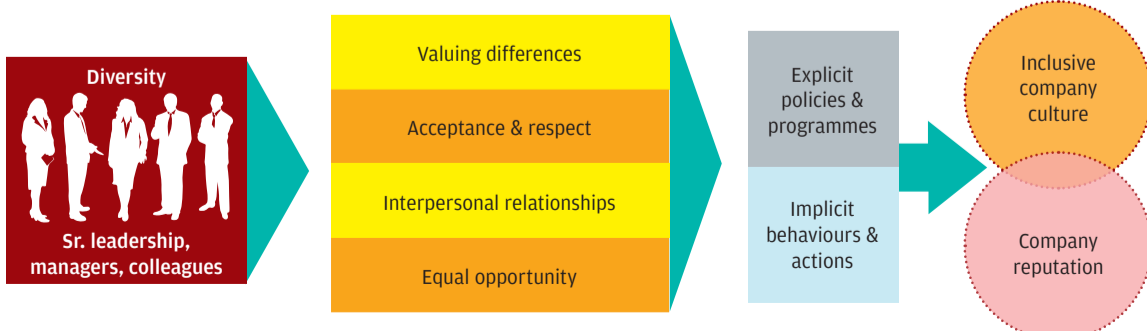


Managing director of Towers Watson Malaysia, Lim Chin Han

"Towers Watson research of high performing companies has shown that Diversity and Inclusion is one of the key drivers for employee attraction, engagement and retention resulting in improved business performance.

This can also play a key role in winning the war for talent, reduce brain drain and contribute to the success of the Economic Transformation Programme and turn Malaysia into a high income economy by 2020.

We are privileged to partner TalentCorp to conduct the Life at Work Award 2014, which is a timely initiative to encourage Malaysia-based companies to lead with workplace strategies to further the diversity and inclusion agenda."



AVERTING A CRISIS OF GLOBAL PROPORTIONS



By **DR YVONNE SUM**
editor@leaderonomics.com

As the world gets more connected and multiple cultures come together to execute across the globe, the way we think and do things continue to evolve.

How we think in business today may be obsolete tomorrow. Best practice is contextual and co-created.

How do we keep up with the diverse and ever changing needs in our world? Why is it important to embrace them?

The key to avert a crisis of global proportions in this so-called Asian century is to move beyond the mindsets that have been built over time.

No longer will a western, or an eastern, mindset alone be sufficient to build successful organisations across east and west. Nor will the traditions and wisdom of old be enough.

We are traversing for the first time a dissonance between the learned tried-and-true experience of pragmatists with an “upstart” smart new generation accessing open source knowledge from the world wide web and socialised from home in a highly connected online global network.

Whilst reconciling these different attitudes poses challenges in a global world, there is an underlying element which compounds the challenge.

Whilst often not spoken about, the shadow of colonialism and post-colonialism, and the fight for tribal authoritarian tradition, still have a major impact on the thinking of people from the east and the west.

Understandably from a historical perspective, these mindsets and pre-conceived views can limit the success of individuals and organisations as they look to prosper in a world with far less boundaries than at any previous time in human history.

THE URGENT NEED FOR A GLOBAL MINDSET

What is needed now is a global mindset that

boldly transcends culture, gender, and age.

It is a mindset that is rooted neither in the west, nor the east; celebrates neither colonial nor post-colonial; worships not only traditional nor idolises only the modern.

It is one that takes the best of both the east and the west and combines them with a higher understanding of our human being and doing to allow business, organisations, countries and individuals to flourish in this brave new world of the 21st century.

UTILISE UFOS (UNIDENTIFIED FAMILIAR OBJECTS) IN UNCERTAINTY

Are you...

- leading multicultural teams on location or virtually?
- having difficulties bridging the needs of different generations – from Baby Boomers, to Gen-X,Y and Z?
- trying to balance the gender diversity in your team?
- finding that shifting the context makes it hard to reproduce your previous successes?

If the answer is in the affirmative, then your contextual intelligence needs some tweaking. Let us invite you to suspend judgment and think counter-intuitively.

As the situations get more complex we need to think simple and no simpler.

According to Tarun Khanna, director of Harvard University’s South Asia Institute and co-author of the *Harvard Business Review* article titled “Contextual Intelligence”, it is ‘the ability to understand the limits of our knowledge and to adapt that knowledge to an environment different from the one in which it was developed.

This intelligence is critical when expanding our business to other regions of the world (even to different parts of the same country), e.g. different markets have different intellectual property rights laws, aesthetic preferences,

attitudes toward power, beliefs about the free market, and even religious differences.

What if...

- we should expect the unexpected?
- fast is slow, and slow is fast?
- it is not about east or west, but east and west?
- it is not about bridging a generation gap, but celebrating a one-ness of mindset?
- it is not about being masculine or feminine, but embracing both qualities in all?
- what is familiar in one context is strange in another?

In the uncertainty, UFOS need to be recognised in order to be utilised.

This is simply what we must do:

1. Lose our (usual) mind to business-as-usual: expect the unexpected.
2. Be mindful and “sense-able” to possible UFOS.
3. Suspend judgment.
4. Share authentically with savvy.
5. Synergise to a new solution.

Beginning to feel like you are *Alice in Wonderland*? Just keep an open mind, a generous heart and take courage to boldly step out into frontiers where no one has ever been.

If we can all do this, then another global crisis will be averted.

■ *Dr Yvonne Sum currently spearheads a team with cultural diversity, breadth of capability and depth of experience to support accelerated leadership development at all levels with a specific focus on high performing teams. To engage with her, email us at editor@leaderonomics.com*

DON'T DEFER DEVELOPMENT DURING DIRE DISTRESS

MOST organisations defer development when crisis hits. Necessity is the mother of invention. What if we could leverage the pressure of the situation to develop a high performing team?

Particularly in those situations where interventions to date have yielded unsatisfactory results, there is a looming deadline to deliver to, and the decision-maker(s) are at their wits end.

Under “fair weather”, time can be spent to consult, run assessments and focus groups to diagnose the situation, brainstorm options, design, plan and deliver the best solution.

In this “stormy weather”, the circumstances change on-the-fly, so any measurements and data collected would be superseded.

By facilitating a collaborative laboratory, the crisis can be leveraged to stimulate innovation and sustained learning on-the-go.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Rangsan Thammaneepong and Yvonne Sum navigate an “Urgent need for a global mindset” of success to avoid “The Five Deadly Sins” of doing business in the East in their chapter of the same name in the newly published *Emerging Trends in Leadership & Strategy, Trend Business Publishing 2014*.

DIODE CAMPS

Camp season is here! Join us as we journey together with you to discover your leadership potential and how we can work together to build a community of love and transform the nation!

Open for youth ages 12–19, DIODE Camps are specially designed to give youths a head start to become the leaders of tomorrow.

Packed with games, projects and interactive sessions to equip youth with the skills needed to be a super leader.

Hurry! Limited seats are available. Sign up now at <http://leaderonomics.org/youth> or e-mail us at diode@leaderonomics.com

DATES:

- Dec 1–6, 2014 | Dec 15–20, 2014 [Youth Leadership Camps: 14–16 years old]
- Dec 3–6, 2014 [Twins Leadership Camps: 12–13 years old]
- Dec 8–13, 2014 [School Leavers Camp: 17–19 years old]

VENUE:

- Starfresh AgroPark, Seremban [Youth Leadership Camps & Twins Leadership Camps]
- SUFES Campsite, Tapah [School Leavers Camp]

QUALI-TEA LIFE LESSONS

LEARNING FROM UNCLE IROH

MOVIE
WISDOM



By SARAH TAN
sarah.tan@leaderonomics.com

In this article, we will be dissecting fiction, both new and old, to reveal what golden nuggets of wisdom lie beneath.

We will look at a beloved character from a cartoon series that will always hold a special place in my heart, *Avatar: The Legend of Aang* (A:TLA).

For those who have never heard of Avatar, it is not to be mistaken with the dramatised movie with Dev Patel, nor the movie about blue people with hair that can connect to plants.

This animated series, created by Michael Dante and Bryan Konietzko, focus on an ancient time in which the world was divided into four different parts: the Water Tribe, the Earth Kingdom, the Fire Nation, and the Air Nomads.

The people who inhabit this world fall into two main categories: the benders and the non-benders.

The benders have the ability to control one of the four elements: water, earth, fire, or air, whilst non-benders don't.

Among them also exists an Avatar, who is the human incarnation of the Spirit World, and the only one who can master all four elements.

In this thoughtfully-written and produced series, there are many lessons to be learnt. However, today's article will draw wisdom from a quirky, tea-loving character – Uncle Iroh.

Aang: So, Toph thinks you give pretty good advice. And great tea.
Iroh: The key to both is proper ageing.

Here are a few life lessons we can learn from Iroh. From here onwards, there will be spoilers!

PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE

Having to deal with his nephew, Prince Zuko, who can be very hot-tempered (pun intended), Iroh nevertheless remains calm and patient with him.

Throughout the series, Iroh teaches Zuko how to improve himself as a fire bender and as a person, which eventu-

ally influences much of his actions in the future. This ultimately helps Aang in his mission to achieve peace among the four nations.

Likewise, many of us may still have difficulties with being a patient person – especially me! Despite that, as I go through situations that come to test my patience, I'm discovering new capabilities in me to step back and look at the bigger picture, as well as the circumstance of the other party.

[Zuko tries to contain his anger, ultimately releasing a gout of flame from his mouth that touches the ceiling. Scene cuts to a smiling Iroh, who is soon clouded with smoke]

Iroh: I'm lucky to have such an understanding nephew.

HUMILITY IS ESSENTIAL

In the last season, Zuko finds the Avatar and offers to help him defeat Firelord Ozai.

After some conflict, both parties eventually find the humility to admit that they need each other in order to prevent further destruction of their world's peace. This humility found in Zuko, who was originally stubborn and intent on defeating Aang, was developed through years of support from his uncle.

This is because Iroh knew the importance of depending on help from others when you need it, and not letting your pride get in the way of that.

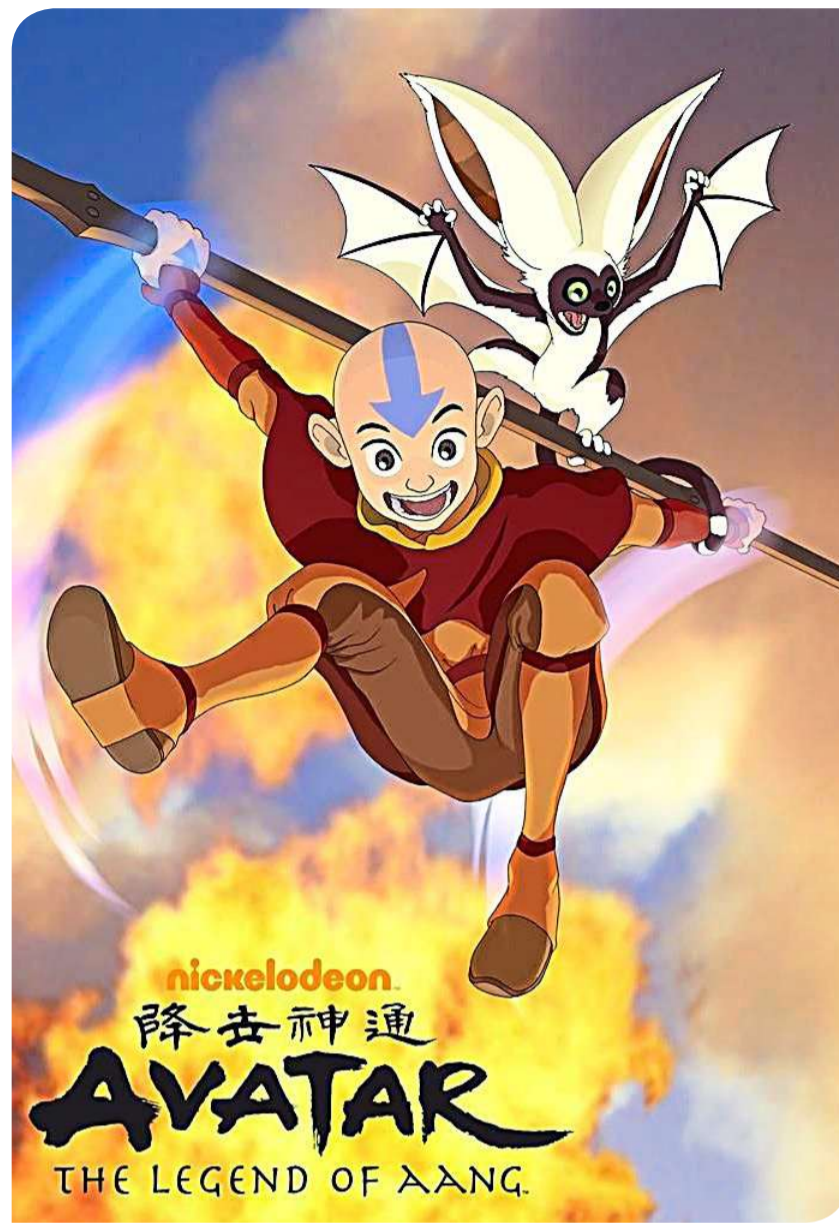
Similarly, in a workplace situation, the humility to admit that you are unable to do certain tasks and ask for help is important for success.

"While it is always best to believe in one self, a little help from others can be a great blessing." – Iroh

GRIEF CAN GROW YOU FOR THE BETTER

After losing his son in a siege that he led, Iroh dropped his position as the Fire Nation general and went on a journey around the world.

Iroh's decision to take a break after fac-



ing much trauma and sadness led him to experiences which shaped his thinking and perspective.

To turn our bad experiences into something good is definitely easier to say than do. The healing process needed is different for everyone.

However, just like Iroh, we should learn to open up ourselves to the possibility of healing, and then move forward once we reach a place in our lives where we can look back at our grief from different angles.

"You must never give into despair. Allow yourself to slip down that road and you surrender to your lowest instincts. In the darkest times, hope is something you give yourself. That is the meaning of inner strength." – Iroh

Time and time again, art has imitated life. It reflects the feelings, and sometimes even experiences, of the artist and can represent many valuable lessons.

Iroh is an example of such an imita-

tion, as with many other characters from A:TLA.

Whilst we might not bend fire nor have a moody nephew, we are still able to relate to these characters.

They show real human feelings and overcome problems that we may have to go through as well – be it the loss of a loved one, having to let go of past bitterness, or finding a family among your friends.

■ Sarah enjoys both fiction and non-fiction although she seems to have an inclination for the former. If you love A:TLA too, drop her an email at editor@leaderonomics.com. You can read more articles at www.leaderonomics.com

EDITOR'S NOTE: CORRECTION

Last week's pullout on page 8 should have read "Malaysia's 100 Survey" and "Malaysia's 100 Leading Graduate Awards" and not as reported. We apologise and regret the error.

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Predicting the future: graying populations in Asia



Vitality in the golden years



Ageing gracefully is in our hands



Life lessons from Up! (bring tissues)

