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upturn the downturn

Better, Smarter Use Of Every Worker

Membership And Re-Employment Are For Keeps

The More The Better... (from left) NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say, NTUC President John De Payva and NTUC Secretary for Financial Affairs Teo Yock Ngee.

Alvin Toh

By **Marcus Lin**

With less than two years before the Labour Movement's 50th anniversary in 2011 followed by re-employment legislation in January 2012, the issues of union membership and re-employment of older workers have an added urgency.

What NTUC President John De Payva calls "the bread and butter of the Labour Movement and that's membership and industrial relations in the area of re-employment of older workers," they were extensively discussed at an intensive Labour Movement Sector Seminar jointly organised by NTUC's Industrial Relations Department and Membership Department on 25 and 26 September 2009.

Going into the fourth quarter of the year, NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say told the more than 400 participants that while the 30-member Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development bemoans a post-war record average unemployment rate of 8.5 per cent and going up, Singapore is holding steady in terms of retrenchments with an unemployment rate of 3.3 per cent. Barring the unforeseen, Singapore should pull through the rest of the year without much ado on the employment front.

Looking ahead, SG Lim said the Labour Movement has to cast its eyes beyond the current world economic downturn, think long-term and be very strategic over the next two years and beyond.

"For the Labour Movement to be strong, two things must be settled. Firstly, union leadership must be strong because without strong union leadership, our unions cannot be strong. Secondly, our membership base must be strong because if our membership base stops growing, a strong leader is like a general charging ahead with no soldier following behind. What kind of movement is a smaller and smaller and weaker and weaker movement? So for us to be strong, leadership must be strong and membership must be strong."

With a current membership of 530,000, SG Lim said the Labour Movement can realise its target of one million members by 2015 if the recruitment rate is high and attrition rate is low. It can be achieved with a net increase of 100,000 members a year "provided we are able to hold on to existing members". Like in football, how many goals you let in is as important as how many goals you score.

SG Lim stressed that re-employment will figure prominently in the new economic landscape that will emerge after the downturn with the renewed emphasis on the productivity of every worker: Young and old, local and foreign.

"In the coming years, while we talk about managing the growth of foreign workers, we have to be mindful that we must not end up becoming less competitive. Otherwise, factories and operations will relocate out of Singapore which will mean fewer jobs.

"Our challenge is how to become cheaper, better and faster by improving productivity, capability and adaptability, while managing the number of foreign workers in Singapore. In many of our minds, the question is, can we have the cake and eat it? Can we not have excessive numbers of foreign workers and at the same time make our economy more competitive? So, productivity, capability and adaptability are the basic issues."

Explaining the concept of "Cheaper Better Faster", he added frankly: "It will not be easy to get companies to become cheaper, better and faster. It will be even more difficult to get small- and medium-enterprises to be cheaper, better and faster.

"My point is, do we have a better choice? Given that the better competitors are getting cheaper, and the cheaper competitors are getting better, we will have to make better and smarter use of every worker, whether local or foreign."

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VROOM With Tripartism

We'll Be There For U

By
Lim Chin Siew
NTUC Competency Director, Administration

The mention of "Administration Department" usually conjures the idea that this team only handles very tedious, mundane, and all other general responsibilities that do not fall under any classified departments. The fact is, the Administration Department carries out key and support functions that are business critical, cutting across all departments but yet, more often than not, go unnoticeable to many.

Epitomising the concept of the 4D framework of doing well together, so as to do more for the good of NTUC, the Administration Department plays the critical role of an "enabler" in all major NTUC events.

The Administration Department works towards the smooth and seamless execution of our May Day Celebrations, National and Ordinary Delegates' Conferences, and all Labour Movement Dialogues. The detailed preparations starting at least six months ahead for some major events will ensure the comfort of every participating union member and guest. Much needed but below-the-line work ranging from logistics, to facilitating preparations, to invitations and individual RSVPs alone will take many man-hours of detailed planning and laborious execution.

The Administration Department team also plays the go-between role in maintaining and strengthening the relationships between the unions and various Labour Movement related authorities, agencies, and organisations. The team at the Administration Department also facilitates the monthly meeting where NTUC policymakers, the NTUC Central Committee, gathers to make decisions that drive and direct the corporate directions of the NTUC-Administration and Research Unit.

From the corporate operation's perspective, just to highlight some of the key responsibilities, the Administration Department team manages the office maintenance, cleanliness and security of NTUC Trade Union House, the NTUC-ARU offices and Business Centre in NTUC Centre to provide a safe and conducive working environment for all staff. There is a significant amount of work behind the upkeep and maintenance of the ins and outs of the two iconic structures that signify the pride of the Labour Movement to enhance the branding of NTUC and retaining the highest asset values of these buildings.

The NTUC Business Centre generates revenue from the renting out of conference/meeting facilities from our class-A rated property in NTUC Centre, which is also known as One Marina Boulevard. It is also our customer touch points where providing top-notch customer services will ensure that NTUC's good image is preserved at all times.

Over the years, carrying out administrative support functions for NTUC's business processes with unceasing fervor, every dedicated member of Administration Department team knows the importance of the immeasurable work they do to ensure the smooth functioning of NTUC ARU, and to uphold the good image of NTUC.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Heroes of the Administration Department for their hard work, commitment and dedication to the department and NTUC.

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NTUC Centre Singapore 018989
Phone 62360555 **Fax** 65381068
Printer Times Printers, Singapore

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$5.4 Million Helps 43,200 Children

NTUC Distributes Remaining U Care Fund To Benefit Children Of Low-Wage Members

While the year-end school holiday is a time for school-going children to relax, their parents, especially those who are low-wage earners, often have worries building up on their minds – how to pay for their children's new year educational expenses?

Mr Amir Paisar Abdul Ghani, 46, had the same concerns last year too. As the sole breadwinner for a family of six, school-related expenses for his five children at year-end were always heavy on him. But the $625 worth of Back to School vouchers from the Labour Movement eased some of his financial burdens, he said.

"From textbooks, school shoes and uniforms, the expenses for the children can really go sky high. The Back to School vouchers are very useful. It is really hard trying to make ends meet but children's education is something which we cannot compromise."

Mr Amir works as a technician with Fujitec Singapore Corporation Limited and takes home about $1,500 a month. As a member of United Workers of Electronic and Electrical Industries, on top of the union's yearly bursary awards, he also received assistance from NTUC's Back to School vouchers for his children, Muhammad Saleem, Munirah, Sulaiman and Muhammad.

This year too, 43,200 children of low-wage union members like Mr Amir will receive $5.4 million worth of Back to School vouchers. Each child will receive vouchers worth $125.

This $5.4 million will be distributed from the remaining U Care Fund, for which, $23.2 million was raised in May this year.

The Back to School vouchers can be used to purchase textbooks, shoes, uniforms and other school-related items from bookshops and authorised suppliers.

Apart from participating retail outlets, union members can also use their vouchers at the Back to School Fairs on 5 and 6 December 2009 at Downtown East, Jurong East and Toa Payoh Central. The vouchers will be valid till 31 January 2010. Subject to the availability of vouchers, union members with a gross household income of $1,800 and below or per capita income of $500 and below can apply for all school-going children within their family.

> **"This year has tested our workers, especially our low-wage workers, with the most challenging times. As a caring Labour Movement, we will extend our efforts to make sure that our low-wage members' children are given equal opportunities to do well in their education and fare better in their lives."**
>
> NTUC Alignment Director (No Collar, Care and Share) Zainudin Nordin

How To Apply

The application period for the vouchers will be from 28 September to 26 October 2009. Ordinary Branch union members can apply directly with their respective unions. For General Branch union members, they can download the application form from http://www.ntuc.org.sg or pick up the application form from the NTUC Customer Service Centre located at NTUC Centre, 1 Marina Boulevard, #B1-01. Further enquiries may be directed to the NTUC Hotline at 6213 8008.

From Page 1

Saying Yes To Union Membership And Re-Employment

More than 400 participants from NTUC, the various unions, affiliated associations, NTUC Social Enterprises and some guests from the Ministry of Manpower and the Singapore National Employers Federation took part in a Labour Movement Sector Seminar jointly organised by NTUC's Industrial Relations Department and Membership Department on 25 and 26 September 2009.

The participants were kept busy throughout with an intensive schedule. It comprised presentations, interactive workshops with free-flowing questions and answers as well as a dialogue session to round things up.

Concerns and suggestions were raised on the topics of union membership and re-employment of older workers, among which are the following:

Membership

Retention

How can we work together to address the attrition challenge?

Proposed Strategies

- Support members during times of hardship and retrenchments.
- Include payment of membership fees as part of retrenchment package.
- Offer members to rejoin as new members, without the need to back pay membership fees upon returning to Singapore to work.
- Retain retired members at affordable fees under U Live (tenure based discounts), NTUC GIFT to cover until age 75.

Recruitment

How can we be better in increasing the unionisation rate of existing branches?

Branch Specific

- Invite union to be present at company's orientation.
- Tie up distribution of annual gifts with recruitment.
- Create friendly competition by setting targets among branches.
- Provide more support for unions to recruit, for example, recruitment funds and kits.

Key Strategies

- Differentiate members' and non-members' treatment = positive discrimination.
- Advertise to create awareness.
- More Benefits: Transport discount.
- NTUC to look into representing contract workers.

How can we be better in organising new branches?

- Work with relevant union branches and industry partners to do joint engagement and activities, for example, uplifting training standards.
- NTUC can link up unions with companies' top management for union organising.

Relationship

How can we create a sense of belonging and emotional attachment among our members to achieve lifelong membership?

- Get existing members to contact fellow members about events and activities.
- Engage students' unions before they graduate and enter the workforce.
- Lend a listening ear.
- Serve members with heart.
- Create emotional attachments, for example, sending members birthday cards.
- nEbO/U Live to pair up with union for events, for example, U Sports.

PMETs Breakthrough

How can we reach out to more Professionals, Managers, Executives, and Technical People through existing branches and professional-based communities?

- Getting information to members faster through new media.
- Social networking sessions among members.
- Corporate sub-committee for members to exchange ideas and workplace advice.
- Professional based community, for example, working with Education Services Union to engage the early childhood educators.
- Amend labour laws to allow workplace representation.
- Increase scope and coverage of existing Collective Agreement.
- Professional development to cater to their needs.
- Set up PMETs resource centre to train unionists to serve PMETs.

Re-Employment

Key Concerns

- Right to collective/individual representation of re-employed workers.
- Are contract workers eligible under the re-employment legislation?
- Three months Employment Assistance Payment may not be sufficient.
- Will EAP be legislated?
- Company may avoid paying EAP by offering workers contract employment before age 62.
- Pay revision not proportionate to jobscope.
- Lowering of job grade will demoralise workers.
- How to seek recourse when re-employment proposal is deemed unreasonable?
- Is the government offering any help to sectors (for example, refineries) that have been exempted from the re-employment legislation?
- Relevance of re-employment in times of economic crisis.
- Premature termination of re-employed contract (with lower salary) resulting in lower EAP.

Suggestions

- Unions reserve the right to negotiate the wage cut at 60 as long as the seniority element is no longer inherent in the wage structure.
- Unions reserve the right to represent re-employed workers collectively or individually.
- Employers should be more proactive in pushing for re-employment.
- Tripartite workgroup should provide more options to support re-employment (for example, flexible work arrangement or part-time work).
- EAP to be invoked only as a last resort.
- To de-emphasise wage reduction in the re-employment legislation.
- To incentivise employers to re-employ older workers (that is, tax incentives).
- Government-sponsored training for workers who are not re-employed.
- Engage and communicate to companies about re-employment.
- More publicity for model companies with exemplary re-employment practices.
- To actively engage mature workers in pre-retirement counselling from age 55 onwards.

The Workshop Endorses

- The proposed Tripartite Guidelines on Re-employment of Older Workers.
- The commitment to push for re-employment initiatives in their respective unions and branches.
- The commitment to help companies get ready for re-employment, and move them up the level of commitment to re-employment.

HSEU Reaches Out To Managers Of Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Recruitment drives held by Healthcare Services Employees' Union have yielded good results.

By
Boh Lilian
Industrial Relations Officer, Healthcare Services Employees' Union

Taking place every two months, the Managers' Forum at Tan Tock Seng Hospital has always been a serious and business–like affair where issues at the workplace are discussed by middle management staff. On 10 September 2009, the forum ended on a high note when the Healthcare Services Employees' Union dropped by to share the relevance of the union and recruit new members.

Industrial Relations Head Charles Ng extolled the array of perks and privileges which the middle managers stood to gain as union members, as well as the various interests groups which could help them achieve better work-life balance.

It was impressed upon the managers that if they became union members, they would be part of an inclusive and caring Labour Movement where their interests will be HSEU's main concern. The fruits of the union's labour, such as negotiated annual increment and bonus payouts would also be enjoyed by all workers regardless of their grades. The managers were also enlightened by the fact that HSEU's presence would be intertwined in most aspects of their lives, be it work or play. In fact, being part of the union would really help them perform better at work.

Explained Tan Tock Seng Hospital's Chief Operating Officer Eugene Fidelis Soh: "The healthcare sector is all about people by people. The union helps the managers understand issues on the ground and they learn how to manage people. Participating in the issues helps to improve their interpersonal skills as a manager. Hence, there is a lot of staff support for the union."

One of the managers who signed up at the booth set up by HSEU and the NTUC Membership Department was Nurse Clinician Gina Gantala.

She said: "I decided to sign up after getting good feedback from other colleagues who are union members. Besides, I frequent the NTUC FairPrice supermarket at Toa Payoh and enjoy using the chalet facilities at Downtown East."

NTUC's Membership Department further explained the various benefits that NTUC provides, and the new sign-ups were treated to freebies from the Membership Department and the TTSH branch. Mr Soh took the lead in showing strong support for the union and signed up as a member, followed by TTSH HR Director Serene Tan and HR Manager Mathias Chay. The strong and synergistic relationship between the union and TTSH was further strengthened, and there is no doubt that the union will continue to make a difference to the lives of TTSH's employees, especially its Professionals, Managers, Executives, and Technical People.

"It is good to see so many Nursing Managers sign up for membership. I am heartened and encouraged to know about union members involved in voluntary work organised by the union."

Serene Tan, HR Director, Tan Tock Seng Hospital

"The membership fee is actually fully optimised with the savings you get from the NTUC cooperatives."

Mathias Chay, HR Manager, Tan Tock Seng Hospital

"The Managers' Forum is definitely a good platform for managers to expand their horizons and learn more about the union."

Catherine Loke, Chairman, TTSH Branch, Healthcare Services Employees' Union

Helping Workers Break Barriers

UCCW Organises First Public Forum In Tamil To Educate 100 Workers On Their Rights

NTUC's Unit for Contract and Casual Workers first seminar organised in Tamil shed light on employment issues for some 100 workers.

By
Tommy Lin
Senior Consultant, Unit for Contract and Casual Workers

Working towards the commitment to break all barriers to improve the lives of contract and casual workers, NTUC's Unit for Contract and Casual Workers held its first public forum, "Excel With U", in Tamil on 13 September 2009.

This seminar was held in partnership with the Singapore Indian Development Association, Ministry of Manpower, Central Provident Fund Board and NTUC LearningHub Private Limited.

The session served to increase workers' awareness on a spread of issues such as their employment rights, benefits of the Workfare Income Supplement Scheme and Central Provident Fund contributions.

About 100 contract and casual workers benefitted from this forum, which also provided an opportunity for them to learn about the various training programmes available.

Said NTUC Alignment Director (No Collar, Care and Share) Zainudin Nordin, who is also Director of UCCW: "Many of the contract and casual workers have little formal education and have poor literacy skills. Naturally, they are also not completely aware of the guidance and opportunities available to improve their employability. Hence, our first step is to create awareness of these schemes among them. And for that, it is important that we deliver our interactive sessions and forums in the four official languages. We want to ensure that no one is left behind in this progressive journey.

"Our next step then will be to help them in overcoming their language barrier, which is also one of their employability barriers. We provide mindset training courses such as the Attitude, Skills and Knowledge workshops and also open up opportunities for them to attend courses at NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) and NTUC LearningHub."

Participants at the forum could also raise issues or seek clarifications on employment terms and practices.

"I found the seminar to be informative and useful. We could discuss issues like our concerns on raising overtime pay and found out more on training progarmmes for us. Seminars like this will benefit workers with little education like us in many ways," said Madam M. Sarojini, 61. She works as a relief security officer.

Madam Sandamani, 59, who is actively looking for a job said she looked forward to more activities organised by NTUC's UCCW.

"The seminar was very effective as I have gained new knowledge like what is covered in the Employment Act. Issues on over-time and termination notice are things that most of us were not very clear on. Now, we are more informed."

She Helped Foreign Workers Recover $1 Million

By
Vanessa Teo

1 August 2009 marked Jennie Yeo's 30th anniversary with NTUC. The Building Construction and Timber Industries Employees' Union's Deputy Executive Secretary has served in the construction employees' union for almost 10 years now, and together with her previous experience as Assistant Executive Secretary and Head, Industrial Relations, in various unions, has stored up a silo of knowledge and skills that has value added to her job duties today.

Through a one-year attachment opportunity to the Ministry of Manpower, Madam Yeo's expertise was not only once again enhanced, but also built up her experience in dealing with foreign workers.

"When I was at MOM, I had to deal with a lot of foreign workers. After coming to BATU, I had many opportunities with them again, and the previous experience really helped. I handled a case at BATU that involved about a few hundred foreign workers who did not receive money that they were entitled to. Every month, the company would ask the foreign workers to deposit a certain amount from their pay, but eventually, the company never returned the money to them. By the time we found out, the amount owed had snowballed to about a million dollars," Madam Yeo said.

"In the end, we had to hire a lawyer to bring the case to civil court. It took us quite a bit of time and resources to solve this, but it was for a good cause. As much as we sympathise with the company, we are representing our workers, and that is our job. We had to try all ways to help the workers recover their money. Thankfully, we were very blessed to be able to get back the full amount for our workers at the end of the day."

Comparing the different experience in NTUC and MOM, Madam Yeo explained the two areas in which MOM and NTUC can help workers, and also emphasised the importance of having the union's support in workplace representation.

"MOM is only able to look at what is within the Employment Act and within the law that they can help to resolve grievances. For instance, if a worker receives a warning letter and he deems it to be unfair, MOM won't be able to help as this is a company's internal matter. However on a union level, the worker is able to look for a union representative or an Industrial Relations Officer to bring up the matter, and management can't just say they do not want to entertain them. This is what most people do not know - that the union actually plays an important role in helping workers."

Through her personal experience, Madam Yeo also reiterated the importance of clear communication. Recalling back to a case involving a Japanese boss and local workers, Madam Yeo learnt how easy it was for a misunderstanding to occur even though without the intention to.

"A Japanese boss wanted to communicate better with the workers through an internal publication. The front page of the publication showed a picture of a dog, and he related the story of a dog in comparison to the workers. The workers were very upset when they saw this, and brought the matter up to the union. We talked to the management, and realised that management was actually trying to bring across the message of loyalty and faithfulness to the workers. Knowing that this was a misunderstanding, it was now on our part to bridge the gap and explain it to our members," Madam Yeo said.

With her 30 years worth of experience with union works now, Madam Yeo cautioned young IROs to not to be too caught up with new technology and stressed the importance of face to face interaction to build up good relationships.

"In the past when technology was not so advanced yet, the relationships between people were closer. But today, we can just contact someone through emails or phone calls. Yes, this may be more convenient for us, but the human touch is still important. We must put in efforts to meet up with our members and not just follow up with a call or email," said Madam Yeo.

Empowering Public Employees

AUPE Celebrates 50th Anniversary With New Logo, Book

By
Vanessa Teo
Pictures by **Chin Boon Lian**

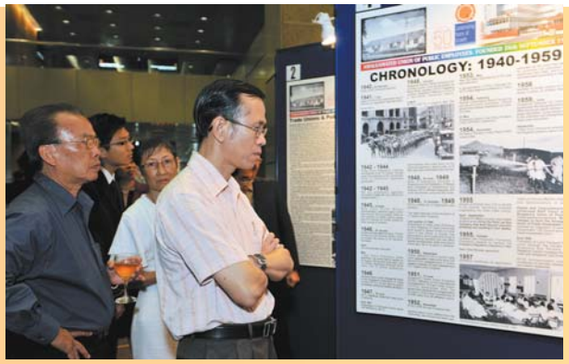
A 30-year marriage would have been a pearl wedding anniversary for some, and a 40-year one would be a ruby anniversary. For the Amalgamated Union of Public Employees, this was a double celebration of its golden anniversary, and also of its sister organisations, as they recounted their success on their 50th anniversary dinner on 26 September 2009.

Together with its coming of age also came a new commitment from AUPE: To continue to strive for excellence.

AUPE General Secretary Teo Yock Ngee said: "It is imperative that the future be seriously looked at, with close attention paid to improving processes, harnessing technology, tapping into the energies of human talent and addressing current needs. Only with this mindset can the union then move proactively in the coming years ahead towards its goals."

The dinner was graced by distinguished guest President SR Nathan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Teo Chee Hean, NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say, Minister in Prime Minister's Office Lim Boon Heng, Minister for Manpower Gan Kim Yong and NTUC President John De Payva.

AUPE President Chattukutty Nair Balan said: "Besides celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the union, we are also celebrating the growth and development of our sister organisations. They are the AUPE Multi-Purpose Co-operative, AUPE General Services Co-operative, AUPE Foundation Co-operative and AUPE Sports and Recreation Club."



The goals of the AUPE is also much in line with the Labour Movement's efforts in areas of encouraging women leaders to step up, and preparing the younger generation to take on the role as union leaders in the future.

Under the Young AUPE Group Corporate Development Team, members have been tasked to build an active community of younger and innovative individuals to ensure the team remains vibrant and dynamic. Through this pool, Young AUPE hopes to develop and nurture young union leaders and staff to spread future leadership. Tapping on new media, Young AUPE aims to reposition itself through channels such as YouTube to generate awareness so as to meet the expectations of technologically savvy youths.

Reaching out to women leaders as well, the AUPE Group Women's Programme seeks to ensure a more effective integration of women at all levels of decision making. It also seeks to develop leadership capabilities of women leaders through the setting up of an alumni comprising of past women leaders, offering training curriculum that includes mentoring, study visits and a retreat with overseas counterparts. In addition, they are making seats available in the Executive Council for Women's Programme representatives.

With the celebration of its Golden Jubilee also came the launch of AUPE's 50th anniversary commemorative book titled, "Empowering Public Employees, 2009 and Beyond", bringing members through its 50-year journey. The new AUPE Group logo was also unveiled, to signify the Group's plans in moving towards excellence.

"The red circle in the logo symbolises a people-oriented organisation, and the boat carrying the AUPE group symbolises a smooth journey towards achieving our organisational goals. Knowing that the success of the Labour Movement is because of the unity among its members, the paddle in our logo also represents the five entities of the group working together to achieve our vision and mission," explained Mr Teo.

In appreciation of the faithful services of branch officials, Executive Council members and staff, Branch Official Recognition Awards and New Service Awards were given out to 49 branch officials who were also rewarded with an incentive trip. Certificates were also presented to 47 Executive Council members and staff members who have served nine years and more.

In his address, Mr Balan reaffirmed AUPE's promise to continue to serve its members the very best they can.

"We've come a long way since 26 September 1959, and collectively look forward to overcoming future challenges as we expand the AUPE Group. Our conviction is to improve the lives of our members," said Mr Balan.

"I am glad that AUPE is working in partnership with the National Trades Union Congress, Public Service Division and other public agencies in drawing up the framework, policies and work processes on initiatives such as Re-employment of Older Workers for Public Sector and Job Re-design to help prepare our workers to embrace change and enhance their job scope. Thus, AUPE is well aligned with the broader national interest to enhance worker employability through skills upgrading, which in the longer term will be advantageous to workers to remain productive in the workforce given our longer life expectancy."

President SR Nathan, in his Foreword in the book, "Empowering Public Employees, 2009 and Beyond".

Better The Second Time Around

By
Marcus Lin

Around the same time and the same place last year at the SingTel Singapore Grand Prix, the unexpected happened. Like in the global economic race where the "favourite" economies were breaking down one after another at the start of the world economic downturn, the favourites at the Singapore GP were also upset by a dark horse.

In a race that had as many twists and turns on and off track as the downward spiral of the world economy, hot favourite Felipe Massa of Ferrari with the advantage of a superior car and pole position at the start, was unplaced due to a pit-stop cock-up and an accident that as it turned out was engineered by the Renault team. And as it turned out, another Renault car driven by Fernando Alonso starting from way behind won the race.

Like the front-running cars in the Singapore GP who were slowed down by the emergence of the safety car after the accident, the Singapore economy, too, was one of the frontrunners in the world economic race in terms of high growth and low unemployment before it was slowed down by the sudden downturn caused by other economies.

This time around, though, there was no surprise at the Singapore GP as the favourites were true to form. In a field comprising 20 sleek, multi-million dollar cars, or shall we say the economies of the G-20 countries, reigning world champion McLaren's Lewis Hamilton led from start to finish. This time around is also time for Team Singapore to make its move.

Picture by **Alvin Toh**

Racing The Tripartism Way

By
Vanessa Teo
Pictures by **Alvin Toh**

The Formula 1 Grand Prix Singapore race on 27 October 2009 did not only give spectators the adrenalin rush, but also created the opportunity for the tripartite partners to come together fulfilling the mantra of working, living and playing together. Almost 800 members of the Labour Movement family and tripartite partners were present, highlighting the strong unity amongst them.

"Watching the race gives us a sense of togetherness. We work together, we tide over difficulties together, we play golf together and now we watch F1 together, and all these signifies the strong tripartism we have in Singapore.

Toh Hong Seng, Singapore National Employers Federation Deputy Director (Industrial Relations)

"Everybody knows this year has been a very difficult year, and we didn't expect that we can watch Formula 1 this year. But just because of this unique tripartite relationship, our members and us got the opportunity to do so."

Fang Chin Poh, National Transport Workers' Union General Secretary

"I feel very happy that we are very united, and we are supporting the Formula 1 Grand Prix Singapore as a Labour Movement. I hope this race will help boost the economy of Singapore and everyone watching the race will be in high spirits."

Rajendran s/o Govindarajoo, Chemical Industries Employees' Union President

"The Labour Movement is not all only about resolving grievances and handling employment matters. Our spirit of tripartism also encompasses working and playing together. So watching the race together is one of the areas where the play part comes in."

Tan Chai Kun, Metal Industries Workers' Union General Secretary

"It is really amazing that our members are involved in the F1 race again. It is another new area as compared to last year, and it is good that we are learning something new and doing a different type of duty. We have also received feedback from the ground that our security officers have done well."

Nakalingam Silva, Union of Security Employees President

"The fact that not only the tripartite partners, but also the union leaders coming together to watch the race shows a good spirit of solidarity. It also shows that we can work and go through the downturn together, but when there is a good occasion like this, we can also enjoy and strengthen our friendship as well."

Ong Ye Kung, NTUC Assistant Secretary-General and e2i Chairman

"It's exciting to watch the Formula 1 Grand Prix Singapore race with the tripartite partners. We work together to upturn the downturn, and now we can get together to watch the F1. This shows that in good times and bad times we can be together."

Cham Hui Fong, NTUC Competency Director (Industrial Relations)

"It is always good to be together, uniformed and united as a force. Therefore, it is of good spirit that the Labour Movement is together watching the race, and always being a team to work towards the betterment of the Labour Movement."

Terry Lee, Singapore Insurance Employees' Union President and Labour Nominated Member of Parliament

Security Officers Shine For USE

Mr Satheesh Noel (centre) at work at F1grounds, taking in a first-time experience at the race at same time.

By
Vanessa Teo and Muneerah Bee Mohamed Iqbal

When thousands are flocking to one place all at the same time, it is definitely no easy feat to ensure a smooth flow of human traffic, at the same time making sure that no threat is brought along with them. However, this did not pose as an obstacle to the 138 security officers from Legend Security Services Private Limited, as they served their duty well in controlling the crowds at the Formula 1 Grand Prix Singapore race on 27 October 2009.

Unionised under the family of the Unions of Security Employees, Legend Security Services Chief Executive Officer Randy Chua, was delighted to be involved in such a massive nationwide event, and commended USE's efforts in supporting their security officers.

"I feel very proud that Legend is involved in this, and for all mega shows that our company does, we take it very seriously because it not only represents my company but also Singapore. Being involved in F1 proves to people that we are capable of handling a major event. USE has also played an important role in helping us, by constantly providing feedback on how to improve security, and this helped the security officers improve their working styles," said Mr Chua.

Being able to be involved in the F1 was also a pride for some of the security officers present, and this was the case for 20-year-old Satheesh Noel who was working at the F1 event for the first time.

He said: "The experience working here has been great and being a union member has actually helped me to be more confident in my role and in carrying out my duties."

Mr M Sundarasegaran also echoed this and reaffirmed his support for USE.

"I feel really good to be involved in this event as we can actually do our part for Singapore. Not only do I want to do my best for this race, I also want to do my best for the union, to let it know that we are in this to make our union proud," said Mr Sundarasegaran.

Since the issuance of the new security identity card recently, being able to be involved in F1 has definitely elevated the status of security officers once again.

Mr M Sundarasegaran, standing up proud for Singapore as he performs his crowd control duties at the F1 race.

Exciting, Exhilarating, Electrifying

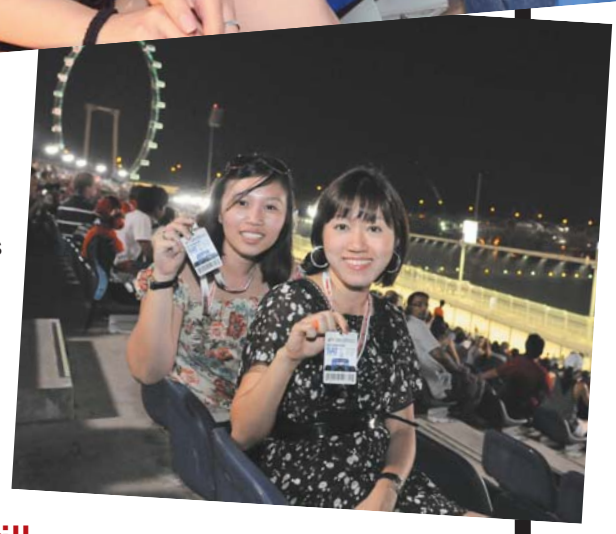
Staff Of NTUC-ARU Enjoy A Night Out At The F1 Grand Prix

By
Nicolette Yeo and Naseema Banu Maideen
Pictures By **Chin Boon Lian and Nghai Chee Wah**

The smile on a worker's face when his life turns around for the better is all the reward that staff of the NTUC-Administration and Research Unit ever want for a job well done. This year, NTUC decided to put the smiles on their faces in recognition of their exemplary efforts at upturning the downturn.

About 200 NTUC-ARU staff were given an unexpected surprise treat – and deservingly so – to catch the 2009 Formula 1 Singtel Singapore Grand Prix on 25 and 26 September.

Seated at the Bay Grandstand (Marina Bay Floating Platform), NTUC-ARU staff could not get enough of the super-fast car action, heart-stopping turns, and exhilarating atmosphere. The loud roars of the engines and sizzling sounds of burning rubber got the adrenaline pumped even more. Many NTUC-ARU staff also felt that Formula 1 made the perfect platform to enjoy some much deserved time out, as well as bond with fellow colleagues.



Fast Cars, Stars, And More…

"This was my second time at the Formula 1 Singapore Grand Prix. I had not planned to watch it 'live' this year as tickets are expensive. So when NTUC gave me the chance, I was of course very happy! I caught a glimpse of Lewis Hamilton as he zoomed past the Bay Grandstand."

Billie Anne Lyou, Specialist (Programme and Outreach), Family Development Unit

A 'Boomz' Experience

"There were performances by international stars, and lots of food. Everyone was excited and it just made the whole experience 'boomz'. I never expected the roar of the engines to be so loud!"

Nicholas Benjamin Paul, Senior Executive, Youth Development Unit

Moments Of Thrill

"The excitement was just starting to build up as this was the first of the three days of the Singapore season. Even then, it was thrilling to be right here feeling the momentum of Singapore's night race scene."

Sammi Loa, Category Manager, NTUC Fairprice Co-operative Limited, who was there on Practise Day

A Dream Come True

"It was the first time that I caught Formula 1 'live'. The speeds and the sounds were awesome. I truly enjoyed drinking beer while watching the race – something I had been dreaming of doing for a long time. I was amazed at how the drivers managed the turns at high speeds."

Spencer Teng, Consultant, Unit for Casual And Contract Workers

Time To Party

"The atmosphere was electrifying. The roar of engines zoomed by every other minute. The various events happening around the circuit park added variety and raised the level of excitement. It was party, party, party."

Tricia Loh, Industrial Relations Officer, United Workers of Electronic and Electrical Industries

行政署时刻为U家庭服务

撰文：**林挺秀**

一提到行政署，人们的脑际马上浮现这样的想法：他们只是负责处理很乏味的、例行的和其他不属于任何部门的一般职务。然而事实是他们所执行的是跨越所有部门的关键性和支撑性职务，只是经常不受到人们注意罢了。

在体现4D概念，即做得好、做好事、一起做、多做事，以促进职总的利益这方面，行政署扮演了“实现者”的关键性角色，把所有重大活动办得有声有色。例如行政署的同仁以顺畅和完善为工作目标，成功筹办了每年的五一劳动节庆祝大会、全国和普通会员代表大会，以及所有职工运动的对话会。每一次活动至少在半年前便开始筹备，确保到时能够使每一个到会的工会会员和宾客感到舒适。其中所涉及的必要工作十分琐碎，从后勤服务到发请帖到接收回执等，都费事耗时，需要调动许多人力。

行政署的工作团队也扮演中间人的角色，负责协调和促进职工运动与当局、机构和团体之间的关系。他们也负责安排常月会议，让职总决策者与职总中委制定方向，促进职总行政研究署的发展。

在企业营运方面，我们可以举出一些例子来说明行政署所负责的具体工作。例如他们须负责管理办公室的维修，职总大厦、职总行政研究署办公室，以及商业中心的清洁和保安工作。他们保养好显现工运荣耀的两座标志性建筑物，为的是增强职总的品牌地位和维护大楼的产业价值。

职总商业中心依靠出租会议设施获益。这些设施位于“滨海林荫道一号”的全国职总中心，属于A级产业。职总中心也是工运与顾客的联系站。行政署必须提供一流的服务，确保职总的良好形象时刻得到维护。

多年来，行政署的每一个职员都恪尽职守，热情服务，因为他们知道自己的工作，对于行政与研究署顺畅执行任务和维护职总的良好形象，具有无法估量的重要性。

在此，我想衷心感谢行政署的同事们多年来秉持认真负责、勤奋献身的精神，出色地完成本署和职总交待的任务。

公共雇联努力招募会员

王得天报道

公共雇员联合会目前的会员人数虽然不能和19年前的2万3000人相比，但也有1万6000名左右，而且组建工会率仍然保持在65%的水平。

这是公共雇联会长查图库帝在2009年9月26日，于该会庆祝成立50周年的晚宴上透露的数据。庆祝会在新达城国际会议中心举行，大会的主礼嘉宾是纳丹总统。

查图库帝指出：“我会自90年代初期便开始积极招募会员，在大家的努力之下，我会属下合作社的会员人数猛增1万人，使得总人数达到1万5000人。在此，我要向各届执委、工会干部和英康保险的组织员致谢。”

为了配合这次的庆祝活动，该会出版了一本名叫《赋权公共雇员》的著作，记录该会在过去50年来的奋斗、成长和成就。我国总统纳丹特为这本书写序。

与此同时，该会也在庆祝会上发布新会徽和发展蓝图。

颁发服务奖

公共雇联在举行周年志庆的同时也颁发分会干事嘉许奖和新服务奖，以感谢那些为工运做出贡献的同志。共有49名分会干事在授奖仪式上领奖。他们将在今年10月23日到25日到胡志明市或到香港旅游。

除此之外，公共雇联也推出甘达沙米奖学金计划，以鼓励工会领袖到受承可的大学和学府深造。

查图库帝表示，随着市场和工作环境越来越充满挑战，工运人士必须提升素质才能跟上时代发展的步伐，否则便会脱节。

陪同总统参加公共雇联庆祝活动的嘉宾包括副总理兼国防部长张志贤、总理公署部长林文兴、职总秘书长林瑞生和人力部长颜金勇等。

> **我会自90年代初期便开始积极招募会员，在大家的努力之下，我会属下合作社会的员人数猛增1万人，使得总人数达到1万5000人。在此，我要向各届执委、工会干部和英康保险的组织员致谢。**
>
> **—查图库帝**

《赋权公共雇员》记录公共雇联在过去50年来的奋斗、成长和成就。纳丹总统特为这本书写序。

纳丹总统（右四）为新书《赋权公共雇员》主持发布仪式。

在男性世界闯天下

吉宝船厂欢迎女性加入电焊工行列

当诺尔到职总就业与职能中心参观由造船与海事工程雇员联合会和吉宝船厂联办的职业展前，绝对没想到会从事传统上以男性为主的职业——电焊工。

她回忆当时的情形：“那里有几种工作给我选，但我要做一些有挑战性的工作，于是便选择了电焊工。我知道这一行很少女性要做。”

造船与海事工程雇联是鉴于近来电子行业裁员，便决定和造船与海事业者合作，重新设计工作，以期吸收这批失业的女性。

造船与海事工程雇联会长黄荣康指出：“船厂将安排培训，让女性电焊工在车间工作。基本上，她们的工作环境并不恶劣。”

然而，女性毕竟较少愿意从事电焊工。但经过一番的解释之后，20名女性知道船厂已经重新设计工作，于是答应一试。不过面试的时候，只有6名出席，最后2位录取，诺尔是其中之一。

黄荣康指出：“女性求职者对于船厂的工作仍然认识不足，须要改变观念。她们以为电焊工还是在船上或钻探平台上工作呢！”

> **那里有几种工作给我选，但我要做一些有挑战性的工作，于是便选择了电焊工。我知道这一行很少女性要做。。**
>
> **—诺尔**

540万元协助4万3200名学童

职总分发余存的U关怀基金给低收入会员子女

虽然年底是学校放大假、学生放松身心的日子，但对于低收入者家长而言，却是他们张罗新学年儿女教育费的时刻。

艾米尔（46岁）一家六口，只靠他一个人的收入维持生计，四个孩子的负担常常让他烦恼。今年工运分发625元“开学了”购物券，让他减轻了负担。

“新学年孩子须要买课本、校鞋和校服，费用不少。因此“开学了”购物券帮了我很大的忙。我们不能不照顾孩子的教育啊！“

艾米尔是Fujitec新加坡有限公司的技师，每月收入1500元。除了每年领取电子与电器业工友联合会分发的助学金之外，他的四个孩子莫哈末沙林、幕尼拉、苏来曼和莫哈末也获得职总的“开学了”购物券。

今年，共有4万3200名低薪家庭的会员子女获得总值540万元的“开学了”购物券。每一名分得125元。

这笔540万元的购物券来自U关怀基金的余款。U关怀基金在今年5月筹集到2320万元捐款。捐款者包括职总工会、社会企业和新加坡劳工基金会。学童领到“开学了”购物券之后可以凭券到书店和指定的商店购买课本、校鞋、校服和其他教育用品。

工会会员除了在零售店购买教育用品之外，也可以从今年12月5日起到6日前往职总Downtown East娱乐城、裕廊东和大巴窑中心举行的“开学了”展览会选购。购物券的有效期到明年1月31日。每月家庭总收入不超过1800元或人均收入在500元或以下的工会会员都可以提出申请，先到先得。

没有人应该被遗弃

低薪工友今年的日子并不好过。很多工友的收入减少了，一些人完全失去收入。有鉴于此，我们很快便设立U关怀基金。作为关怀工友的工运组织，我们将不遗余力，确保低薪会员的子女在学业和生活上享有同等的表现机会。

—职总关怀与分享暑暑长再努丁

化学业雇联
即时援助会员

化学业雇员联合会明白对抗经济不景气须要劳资政伙伴的同心协力。

从今年第一季开始，除了药厂之外，化学行业内的公司几乎都遭受全球经济不景气的严重打击。为此很多公司决定缩短工作日、暂时解雇职员，一些公司甚至削减工资。

面对这种不利局面，化学业雇联毅然挺身而出，协助处境艰难的公司管理过剩人力，以减轻经济不景气对工友造成的打击。此外，他们也积极推动技能提升与应变计划，鼓励公司派送员工参加培训，获得热烈的响应。在这个困难的时刻，职总也伸出援手，联合化学业雇联推出不同的援助计划，像U关怀即时援助金、U惠券、奖学金和助学金等。以U关怀即时援助金来说，每一个因公司削减工资而收入减少的会员都可得到100元至300元不等的援助款。

化学业雇联会长拉詹德南告诉记者，对于职总和工会的援助，会员们无不感激在心。

他表示化学业雇联也密切关心属下分会和公司的互动。“我们支持公司通过削减成本的措施来保住工作。管理层伙伴也愿意跟我们携手合作。”

经济形势好转

2009年的第二季末经济形势出现好转，一些削减工资的公司开始在第三季恢复支付原有的工资。

拉詹德南向会员指出：“跟今年初比较，目前的商业前景似乎有所改观。但人们还是持谨慎态度。不过我们还是希望最糟糕的情况已经过去。”

他表示接下来化学业雇联将继续跟管理层和政府紧密合作。

“经过危机以后，我会同仁更加体会到劳资政协作的重要性。若三方没有紧密的合作，我们将无法很快地应对经济不景气。今后化学业雇联肯定将继续加强跟会员、管理层伙伴和政府的关系，确保三方协作不受忽略。”

他也表示化学业雇联将尽力保持会员人数不会下降。

“我们在努力保住工作的同时，也会积极招募新会员和设立新的分会。我很开心化学业雇联在这次经济不景气中会员人数保持不变。”

化学业雇员联合会

成立于1981年，代表在化学、煤气、药剂、塑胶和橡胶行业工作的雇员。目前该会拥有7459名普通分会会员和7964名一般分会会员。

一级方程式车赛

体现劳资政和谐

9月27日在我国举行的世界一级方程式（F1）夜间车赛，不只给观众带来心跳加速的刺激，也构成一幅劳资政三方共同工作、生活与娱乐的和谐画面。当天约有800名来自职工运动的成员及劳资政伙伴共同观赏车赛。

“工会、政府和雇主的代表一起出席这个极具代表性的盛会，显现了劳资政协作的精神。我们不只让国人，也让全世界的人看到我们的劳资政三方和谐共处、一起观赛的特色。

—人力部人力资源处处长刘碧琴

“能与劳资政伙伴一起观赏世界一级方程式车赛是一件令人开心的事！之前，我们一起推动U转乾坤协助工友度过经济难关；而现在我们齐聚一堂，这说明不管怎么样，我们都可以和睦相处。

—职总工业关系署署长詹惠凤

“一起观赏车赛让我们感受到亲密无间。我们一起工作，一起在危机中同舟共济；我们一起玩乐，共同观赏世界一级方程式车赛。这意味着，新加坡的劳资政三方关系牢固和紧密。

—全国雇联副署长（工业关系）卓鸿生

“我很高兴，大家团结一致。我们支持世界一级方程式车赛有如支持职工运动一样。希望这场比赛能够促进新加坡的经济。每个人都兴高采烈。

—化学业雇联会长拉詹德南

“除了劳资政伙伴之外，工会领袖也到场观赏车赛，说明了大家团结一致。这也表示我们不但能在经济低迷时期同甘共苦，也可以在今天这样的开心场合同欢共乐，促进彼此的感情。

—职总助理秘书长兼就业与职能培训中心主席王乙康

“团结相聚共进退永远都是好事。所以今天能在一起观看车赛很值得开心。希望大家发挥团队精神，齐心协力推广职工运动，创造更美好的生活。

—新加坡保险业雇联会长兼官委议员李国华

“每个人都知道今年经济不好，真的没有料到还能够在一起观赏一级方程式车赛。我想这是因为我国具有独特的劳资政关系，才造就今天的机会。

—全国交通工联秘书长范清坡

“职工运动不单是处理劳资纠纷和会员事务而已。劳资政协作的精神也包含一同工作、一同娱乐。大家聚在一起观赏车赛就是一种共同娱乐的方式。

—金属业工联秘书长陈再坤

职能培训员
引领失业者另谋出路

屈美伶和萧慕贞协助过许多工友提升技能、转换行业

王得天报道／摄影

屈美伶和萧慕贞都是职总属下就业与职能培训中心的职能培训员，专门协助失业人士参加培训，以及为他们配对工作。屈美伶帮助的对象是专业人士、经理、执行人员和技师（英文缩写为PMET），而萧慕贞帮助的对象却是普通工人。

屈美伶年纪轻轻，性格爽朗，待人和善。

“我接触到的专业人士、经理、执行人员和技师，大多数已经失业了一段日子，但他们的技能又与我们介绍的工作不符。为了协助他们掌握有关的技能，我便根据需要，安排他们上课。课程的内容有技能提升的部分，也有最基本的履历写法、面试技巧和调整心态等。当我说学习写履历的时候，可能你会想，写履历不是简单的事情吗？事实上，我发现有些女性在写履历时往往不懂得突出自己的强项，结果不容易引起雇主的注意。”

询及如何协助失业者调整心态时，屈美伶表示：“很多专业人士无法接受突如其来的改变，进而产生了消极情绪。毕竟他们过去的收入比较高，要他们从头再来，肯定很难过。以我的观察，即便他们完成了培训，掌握了新工作所需的技能，心里还是愤愤不平的。所以当我告诉他们新工作的待遇时，有些人便按捺不住大发牢骚，甚至对我发脾气。”

去年举行的一个资讯科技职业展，一名前公司总裁到场后发现参观者众多，心里不爽，便当场责怪屈美伶没有认真筛选求职者，甚至怪罪屈美伶把他遗忘了。后来经过屈美伶一番解释他才知道事实并非如此，有好些人一样具备条件可以申请同类的工作。

不过并非所有的人都这样急躁不安。同样热情，一样开朗的萧慕贞接着告诉记者：“记得有一位50多岁的妇女，她在今年初被裁退之前已经在公司担任了几十年的行政工作。我安排她参加电脑培训课，但六个月过后她还是找不到工作，心情很坏。有一天，忽然接到她的电话，告诉我她已经在一家托儿中心找到了一份教师助理的工作。不久后我路过那里，她很客气一定要买水给我喝。”

虽然屈美伶（左）和萧慕贞（右）经常跟失业者接触，面对许多挑战，但为失业者安排了培训和工作之后，满足感是非笔墨所能够形容的。

屈美伶也遇见过懂得感恩的人。一名前银行经理因为公司破产而失业。他想继续在金融界发展，但苦于本地没有适当的课程。在交谈的过程中，屈美伶发现他的口语表达技能很强，于是邀请他参加专业人士转业计划。一个星期之后，他终于得到一家公司的赏识，担任了顾客服务员。为此他特地向屈美伶表示谢意。

工友还是希望做回同样的工作

无论是萧慕贞或是屈美伶，她们都得花时间说服工友接受过去从没做过的工作。

萧慕贞表示：“我在公司裁员之前便向工友介绍哪里有空缺，可以学习什么技能。但部分工友还是希望做回以前的行业，并且坚持不轮班或者不在周末上班。要说服他们真的很不容易。另外一部分工友的问题是不想参加培训。我曾经遇过一位50多岁的工友，好说歹说就是不想去上课，后来必须动员他的同事来劝服才行。”

记者猜想既然那么难劝服这类工友，一旦劝服成功了，心里的工作满足感一定很大？

“是的。其实工友一旦掌握了技能，以后即使再被裁员，还是能够很快找到工作。”

屈美伶也表示同意：“我衷心希望更多专业人士知道就业与职能中心的培训和就业计划。能够帮助她们就业，心里感到很大的安慰。”

跳出框框帮助会员

她向会员说话时小心谨慎，而且直入主题。作为教育服务雇员联合会的一名工业关系员，黄愈敏经常跟受过良好教育的会员交流，从他们那里了解最新的情况。

她说：“我会的会员大多数是知识分子，他们懂得到哪里找资料，因此刚开始工作的时候，我的心理负担很大，常常要做好充分的准备才敢向他们讲解与会员相关的事宜。可是我毕竟是新手，该怎么在一个月内熟悉所有的资料呢？这就是我面对的挑战。”

虽然如此，黄愈敏已经事先从父亲的口里知道工业关系员本来就不是容易做的工作。她的父亲是新加坡劳商工友联合会的助理秘书长黄捷文，常常工作到很晚才回家，而且经常和会员通电话。

她说：“其实在申请工业关系员这份工作的同时，我也考虑过申请其他的工作。但最后我还是选择了工业关系员。父亲知情后提醒我这份工作充满挑战，但我知道这绝对不是一份枯燥的工作，更重要的是工作非常有意义，因此便来了。”

教育服务雇联的会员虽然不受裁员或削减成本的措施所影响，但也有他们的问题，比如助学金等，必须想方设法满足他们。

“我在去年负责颁发助学金的工作。一名会员拿了厚厚一叠的文件给我看，里头有她孩子的医药文件和她的薪水单等。阅读了文件之后我发现这名会员真的需要援助，可惜她的孩子学业成绩达不到申请助学金的条件，让我左右为难。”

于是她便向教育服务雇联的副执行秘书陈清珠和一些执委求助。

“经过一番商量和讨论之后，我们改个方式推出了特别教育补助金，把援助款直接交给会员而不是他们的子女。”

通过这件事，黄愈敏上了宝贵的一课。那就是：穷则变，变则通，不能拘泥于既有的框框。

黄愈敏担任工业关系员已有一年的时间。她总结这一年的工作时说：“每一个个案都不同，这里有学不完的东西。我选择的道路是正确的。”

> **“部分工友还是希望做回以前的行业，并且坚持不轮班或者不在周末上班。要说服他们真的很不容易。另外一部分工友的问题是不想参加培训。**
>
> **—萧慕贞**

> **“很多专业人士无法接受突如其来的改变，进而产生了消极情绪。毕竟他们过去的收入比较高，要他们从头再来，肯定很难过。**
>
> **—屈美伶**

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职总周报

售价60c | 网址 http://www.ntucthisweek.org.sg | MICA (P) 079/10/2008 2009年10月2日

善用每一名工友

会员事务和重新雇佣是工运接下来的核心业务

逆势转

林瑞生（持麦克风面向与会者）：工运若要强大就必须做到两件事：首先，工会的领导层一定要强大，否则工会不会壮大。其次，会员人数必须众多，否则等于光有将领在前线冲锋陷阵而没有士兵跟随。

王得天报道

再过两年（2011年）就是我国工运五十周年志庆，而隔年（2012年）1月，重新雇佣法令即将生效，因此会员事务和重新雇佣年长工友这两大课题便显得愈加须要关注。

为此，职总会长德培华在2009年9月25至26日举行的“工运研讨会”上指出：“会员事务和年长工友课题是工运的核心业务。”该研讨会由职总工业关系和会员署联合主办。

职总秘书长林瑞生在会上告诉400多名与会者，正当经济合作与发展组织的30个国家悲叹他们的平均失业率高达8.5%，创下战后的新高时，我国的裁员率却能保持稳定，失业率只是3.3%。若没有意外，今年内我国的就业形势应该不会发生什么状况。

至于接下来的日子，林瑞生表示工运必须思考两年之后的策略。

“工运若要强大就必须做到两件事：首先，工会的领导层一定要强大，否则工会不会壮大。其次，会员人数必须众多，否则等于光有将领在前线冲锋陷阵而没有士兵跟随。这样的组织将会越变越小，越小就越弱。所以说，我们的队伍若要壮大，领导必须强大，会员人数一定要多。”

职总目前有53万名会员。林瑞生认为，要是入会率高，流失率少，职总可以在2015年之前实现100万名会员的目标。他的估算前提是“留住现有会员”，然后每一年争取10万人入会。如此就可以像足球运动一样，每踢进一个球即等于得到一分。

重新雇佣将是一大景观

林瑞生强调，经济不景气之后，重新雇佣将成为我国经济的一大景观。到时不管是什么年龄、什么国籍的工友，都须要提高生产力。

“在接下来的几年，当我们谈到引进外国工友的问题时，必须小心翼翼，以免影响竞争力。否则，工厂和公司将离开新加坡，使得工作减少。

“摆在我们面前的挑战是，在控制外国工友的人数时，也应该同时注意如何提高生产力，加强能力和适应能力，从而实现“更好、更快、更省”的理想。我们会想，能够做到鱼与熊掌兼得吗？是否能够在不拥有过剩的外国工友的同时，经济又有竞争力？关键在于是否能够保证竞争力、工作能力和适应力。”

秘书长在讲解“更好、更快、更省”的概念时坦诚地指出：“要实现这个理想很不容易，要中小型企业做到这个境界更是难上加难。

“我想指出的是，我们有更好的选择吗？”他的意思是说，实力强大的竞争者已经让顾客更省，而能为顾客省钱的竞争者也越做越好，在此情形之下，我们惟有善用每一名工友，无论是本地工友或外地工友。

> **“摆在我们面前的挑战是，在控制外国工友的人数时，应该如何提高生产力，加强能力和适应能力，从而实现“更好、更快、更省”的理想。**
>
> **—职总秘书长林瑞生**

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职能培训员
引领失业者另谋出路