

Adding **HR** into the Mix

Companies have found a secret ingredient to stay ahead in the game – unlocking the potential of Human Resource capabilities to play more strategic roles in their growth and development. We find out how else the HR Industry Manpower Plan will help.

Food and beverage company SaladStop!s move to offer better training programmes has created confidence in their employees and empowered them with knowledge to stay on.



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HR Profession Can Play a Bigger Role

The Human Resource industry needs to up its game to stay relevant in changing times and new business models.

By **Shukry Rashid**

Like many industries and job roles, human resource (HR) is evolving as well. On its part, the Labour Movement is also making sure the voices of workers in the HR industry are being heard.

The recent launch of the HR Industry Manpower Plan (IMP) was a culmination of hard work and extensive consultation by the tripartite partners and industry associations since it was announced by Manpower Minister Lim Swee Say two years ago.

Speaking as a panellist during the recent launch of the HR Industry Manpower Plan (HRIMP), NTUC Assistant Director-General (ADG) Vivek Kumar said that HR is a “critical profession”.

To play a bigger role going forward, HR practitioners have to understand the change and advantages brought about by evolving technology in areas such as handling a multi-generational workforce and understanding the changing nature of business. With better understanding, ADG Vivek said that HR “can step up to the expectation” of the management and organisation.

Another concern of the Labour Movement brought up by ADG Vivek during the discussion was making sure that workers were not left behind as industries transformed. In line with that, the Labour Movement has been playing a proactive role of partnering HR of organisations to ensure that today’s employed will stay employed tomorrow.

He cited the example of the close partnership between DBS and DBS Staff Union, where union leaders are playing the big part of rallying workers as the bank goes through a digital transformation. In November last year, DBS announced that 5,000 employees gained insight into 1,000 digital experiments as it aspired to be a digital bank. In 2016, DBS was named the World’s Best Digital Bank by finance magazine *Euromoney*.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

For HR practitioners to play a bigger role and take part in the change management of a company, ADG Vivek said they have to see themselves as business leaders – not just HR leaders.

He explained: “If HR doesn't understand the business that it operates in, and the phase that the business is in, it may not have a fundamental role to play in the change management.”

Sharpening HR's Role

Human Resource departments are undergoing change to play a more strategic role in a company's growth.

By **Shukry Rashid** and **Avelyn Ng**

One of the challenges SaladStop!, which has 180 employees, faces is a high turnover rate for new hires within the first three months. To counter that, the company has started offering better training programmes to give its staff more knowledge and create confidence to stay on with the company.

To support SaladStop! in streamlining and simplifying its HR and training capabilities, SPRING Singapore engaged Ark Solutions Consultancy Director Kris Loy to act as mentor under the SkillsFuture SME Mentors programme.

Part of the Human Resource Industry Manpower Plan, the SkillsFuture SME Mentors programme is fully funded by SPRING Singapore.

Ms Loy mentored SaladStop! once a week from September last year to June this year.

SIMPLIFYING TRAINING

Prior to that, there were 12 blueprints or modules that each new staff had to learn. The training was conducted by designated trainers from headquarters who would go to various outlets.

To keep updated, all staff had to return to headquarters once a month, which disrupted operations.

The first thing Ms Loy did was to streamline and simplify the training modules from 12 to four.

She said: "I worked with the team to review and simplify the modules so that outlet managers could use the blueprints [to teach their staff], which are straightforward, simple and short."

To make sure that new staff are adequately trained, the four new blueprints are pegged to their three-month probationary period.

Ms Loy explained: "When the staff comes on board, there is a training plan that covers the four blueprints. Every blueprint that they go through, there will be an assessment."

At the end of the staff's probationary period, outlet managers will make a recommendation to the HR department if the staff is adequately trained and ready to be converted into a confirmed staff.

Ms Loy added that the current system is more structured in the form of training, assessment and feedback, and recommendations.

KNOWLEDGEABLE AND CONFIDENT

SaladStop! Director Katherine Braha Desbaillets said there has been much improvement since embarking on the SkillsFuture SME Mentors programme.

Having just concluded the pilot phase with three outlets, SaladStop! will be rolling out



"We now analyse attrition trends and performance across various units as well as identify talent and skills gaps. We will be looking into how we can leverage meaningful data to paint a holistic overview of the business and feedback to the management."

Senior Country Head of People & Culture Ivy Chew

the new training system to all of its 16 outlets in Singapore from August this year. With outlet managers taking over the training, Mrs Desbaillets added that the management can now take a step back as the company focuses its resources elsewhere.

She said that her employees are now more knowledgeable and confident, and the company now has a higher retention rate.

MNCs TAKING INITIATIVES

Nine months ago, multinational information and communication solutions provider, Dimension Data has adopted Workday, a cloud HR and finance management platform.

The first phase of implementation emphasised on data accuracy when importing employees' personal particulars, payroll and training certifications. Staff can access their information on their mobile or laptop anytime, therefore greatly reducing the time that a HR operation specialist spent on administrative work by 30 per cent. This has allowed the team to perform more value-added tasks.



To find out how they could further harness data to drive strategic business decisions, Senior Country Head of People & Culture Ivy Chew and her team member attended Singapore University of Technology and Design's "Introduction to HR Analytics" on 31 March 2017.

At The Singapore HR Awards 2017 held recently, Dimension Data earned the HR Advocate Award for its exemplary practices over three consecutive years in two categories – Learning & Development and Manpower Resourcing & Planning.

Moving forward, her team will be unlocking and exploring more features of Workday.

"We now analyse attrition trends and performance across various units as well as identify talent and skills gaps. We will be looking into how we can leverage meaningful data to paint a holistic overview of the business and feedback to the management," said Ms Chew.

GOOD TO KNOW

- Workday: www.workday.com
- Human Resource Industry Manpower Plan: www.mom.gov.sg/employment-practices/hr-industry-manpower-plan

Dynamic HR Portal to Help SMEs

A free, customised HR Resource Portal will help SMEs with limited resources sharpen up their HR capabilities.

By **Shukry Rashid**

An online resource portal is going to be live soon to support small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), especially those with limited resources, in human resource (HR) matters.

The HR Resource Portal initiative, which was announced by Second Minister for Manpower Josephine Teo during the recent launch of the HR Industry Manpower Plan, is currently being developed by SPRING Singapore, NTUC LearningHub (LHUB) and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

The portal will be launched in the fourth quarter of the year, and will be free for all companies.

LHUB CEO Kwek Kok Kwong said that many SMEs have tight resources and may not be able to invest in their HR. Even though SMEs make up 99 per cent of enterprises in Singapore, he acknowledged their limitations.

“We know that HR is a very important part of Singapore’s success. It is through human capital that we are able to leapfrog many other economies. So we need to invest in it,” he said.

Mr Kwek said that the portal is a good start to help SMEs and if they still need help, they can approach LHUB or any of their partners to get deeper knowledge on HR.

DYNAMIC PORTAL

Jason Law of LHUB’s Business Development Department, and the project lead for the eight-man development team, said there were some considerations when developing the portal, such as its usability for various SMEs.

According to him, the best feature of the portal is how dynamic it will be.

He explained: “New information will constantly be flowing in. It will be interactive and engaging, and will have a wide range of tools available, such as downloadable videos and podcasts.

“The portal will also be curated by an industry leader and professional body from the United Kingdom. It will be curated with SMEs in mind and co-developed with SMEs’ inputs.”

HR Courses and Resources

HR professionals, here is a list of courses and programmes under the Labour Movement network just for you! Eligible individuals can enjoy subsidies under Union Training Assistance Programme and SkillsFuture.

Compiled by **Avelyn Ng**

BACK TO BASICS

U SME-OTCi Human Resource Series

This series by U SME and Ong Teng Cheong Labour Leadership Institute aims to equip management and HR staff with knowledge on essential labour legislations in Singapore.

Courses:

- ▶ Understanding the Employment Act
- ▶ Grievance Handling and Discipline
- ▶ Work Injury Compensation Act and Workplace Safety & Health Act
- ▶ Employment of Foreign Manpower Act
- ▶ Personal Data Protection Act
- ▶ Retirement and Re-Employment Act

<http://ntucusme.weebly.com/u-sme-employment-legislation-and-practices-hr-series.html>



FURTHER STUDIES

Established in 1965, Singapore Human Resources Institute (SHRI) is a not-for-profit professional HR body and an NTUC U Associate.

The SHRI Academy runs several programmes and courses, including:

Postgraduate Diploma (progress to Master’s Degree in 6 months)

- ▶ Human Capital Management
- ▶ HR and Organisational Psychology
- ▶ HR and Reward Management

<http://shri.org.sg/programmes/>



GET AHEAD

Leveraging Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)’s expertise, NTUC LearningHub has co-developed masterclasses to inspire organisations’ HR professionals.

CIPD Masterclasses

- ▶ HR as an Organisational Coach-Mentor
- ▶ HR Business Savvy Skills
- ▶ HR Strategic Analytics and Reporting
- ▶ Leading Strategic HR Transformation
- ▶ The Influential HR and Stakeholder Management

<https://courses.ntuclearninghub.com/browse/hr-management-and-development-skills>

NTUC’s e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) has partnered Singapore Management University on this two-day programme to help HR use analytical tools.

HR Analytics Certificate – Using Analytics to Improve People Decisions

<https://cps.smu.edu.sg/hranalytics>



DISCOVER OPPORTUNITIES

Human Resource e-Career Fair

The year-long initiative is co-organised by e2i and FindSGJobs.com, with the support of Singapore National Employers Federation and NTUC U Family. To encourage more companies to participate, e2i offers employers recruitment support under the Professional Conversion Programme and Career Support Programme.

Jobseekers can apply for HR-related positions and even engage in video interviews on the platform from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

<https://jobs.e2i.findsgjobs.com/>



HR Certified, Industry-Endorsed

Are you in the HR line? You may want to hear about this certification from Alicia Cher, who has already acquired it.

By **Shukry Rashid**



Alicia Cher, 35, has been growing her career in the human resource (HR) field since she graduated with a bachelor's degree 10 years ago. Currently the HR manager for Food Republic, she was recently accorded a national endorsement in HR – the Institute for Human Resource Professionals (IHRP) certification.

While her competency has previously been validated by her supervisors and peers, Alicia acknowledges the benefits of the IHRP certification. She recognises the value of a nationwide accreditation, to ensure that HR professionals in Singapore remain at the forefront to direct and influence strategic HR changes.

Alicia is one of 88 in the pilot batch recently certified by IHRP. The IHRP is a HR professional body set up by the tripartite partners, and the certification is part of the HR Industry Manpower Plan.

FUNDAMENTAL CRITERIA

For successful certification, she completed two papers that included a broad spectrum of HR competencies. These include knowledge of the labour policies and legislation, HR functional and foundational competencies, and the mindsets and behaviours of a HR professional.

“As we are the custodian for all employment-related matters, these labour policies and legislation are essential knowledge as they lay the foundation for a HR practitioner. The second part of the assessment required more knowledge transfer, where we were given case studies and asked on the possible direction and decisions we would take.

“While there were no textbook answers, one’s experience in the field would allow an individual to quickly ascertain what is the best outcome or decision to make,” she explained.

She encourages all HR professionals to go through the IHRP certification. It endorses an individual as a competent person in the HR field – by fellow professionals and through a recognised body.

She added: “HR is no longer confined to administrative work. As we move towards strategic HR, we require a holistic understanding of HR. Every decision that we [HR professionals] make on behalf of our employer has implications and legal compliances. Therefore, it is imperative for a HR professional to be competent in these areas of work so we can safeguard the interests of the company and partner its employees – regardless of an individual’s seniority in the company.”

i For more information and registration for the Institute for Human Resource Professionals Certification, visit www.ihrp.sg.

Future Outlook: Start Imagining Today!

Painless, needle-less shots, hands-free toothbrushing and an elevator that practically levitates ... Welcome to a whole new world. Look out for more in this regular column.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**



Needle-less Injector

Not naming names, we know of a few around us who turn to jelly at the sight of an injection. They will surely be overjoyed to hear this news we are going to share. Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have come up with a needle-less injector that will make going to the doctor for your next flu jab a skip around the playground.

Called Portal Instruments, the injector replaces needles with pressure technology to inject medicine into the skin with a minuscule jet. There you have it – a painless and anxiety-free experience! The injector works on the same principle as the nicotine patch that allows the skin to absorb the drug.

Shots can also be controlled and tracked digitally via a phone app, so you’ll know what you’ve taken and when the next one is due.

Source: news.mit.edu

Automated Toothbrush

We spend an average of 100 days of our lives brushing our teeth. But what if there was a life hack that could get you back those 100 days and still get your pearly whites cleaned?

Introducing Amabrush – the world’s first fully automatic toothbrush. It basically looks like a boxer’s mouth guard with bristles. Simply pop the device in your mouth and let it clean your teeth in a dentist-recommended manner.

Although the company doesn’t claim its product is better than the traditional toothbrush, they do say it is better than how most people clean their teeth.

Source: www.kickstarter.com



Cable-Free Lift

Step into the elevator of the future. The brainchild of German engineering firm ThyssenKrupp, the Multi can travel both vertically and horizontally, without the use of cables.

The experimental elevator works on magnetic fields, much like the Hyperloop concept for trains.

If you’ve been in a tall building, you may have had to change elevators to get to the highest floors. This is because standard cable lift designs can only safely rise about 1,600 feet per single continuous stretch. Well, the Multi does one better – since it doesn’t have cables or pullies, you get one straight ride to the top.

Source: multi.thyssenkrupp-elevator.com



Bringing Manufacturing into Tomorrow

The Labour Movement calls on all stakeholders to play their part to accelerate transformation in the manufacturing sector.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**



You have probably heard the term Industry 4.0 many times in describing the future economy. But is Singapore ready for it?

Supervising Lead for NTUC's Electronics and Precision and Machinery Engineering (EPME) Cluster Melvin Yong said the country still has some way to go before it harnesses emerging technologies and concepts to bring the manufacturing sector to the next level and fulfil the vision of Industry 4.0.

He made the point in a commentary titled 'Manufacturing cannot adopt a wait-and-see approach to transformation,' published on Channel NewsAsia's website on 17 July 2017.

EQUIPPING WORKERS

"Government agencies, companies and workers must all come on board to make concrete progress and accelerate Singapore's transformation in manufacturing. Failing to do so may result in Singapore losing our competitive advantage in manufacturing, which is one of the major pillars of growth of Singapore's economy," said Mr Yong.

On its part, the Labour Movement has been quietly making headway in helping workers gain the necessary skills.

NTUC's EPME cluster has been working closely with NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) and the Economic Development Board (EDB) to equip companies and workers with knowledge on emerging technologies which they can incorporate into their work.

The EPME cluster is also exploring courses on Industry 4.0 and advanced manufacturing with Singapore Polytechnic, and a specialist diploma in the Internet of Things with Temasek Polytechnic for workers in the EPME sectors.



Getting More on Board the Returners Programme

Desmond Choo calls on employers to be a part of the Returners Programme, which holds the potential to convert job trials into job placements.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

NTUC Industry Transformation and Productivity Director Desmond Choo urged employers to come on board the Labour Movement's Returners Programme and consider offering job trials to PMETs looking to return to the workforce. This was said in his Facebook post on 13 July 2017.

The Returners Programme, a concept similar to an internship, was proposed by Labour Members of Parliament in April 2017 to help stay-at-home parents who are professionals, managers and executives and technicians (PMETs) to return to the workforce. Through the programme, employers will get funding support when taking on professionals.

"The returners are a latent talent pool who may currently be out of the workforce but have amassed years of experience in their former careers. Additionally, they have also gained newfound perspectives and strengths – such as resourcefulness, resilience and heightened multi-tasking abilities – during the time they spent on personal commitments.

"From the various returners that I have met in both my NTUC and grassroots capacities, one thing was clear – they are ready to do what it takes to transit back into the workforce and are raring to go," said Mr Choo.

SUPPORT FROM GOVERNMENT

He added that he is heartened by the support shown by Second Minister for Manpower Josephine Teo for the Returners Programme.

In her Facebook post on the same day, Second Minister Teo said: "When I started work at MOM [Ministry of Manpower] in May, I was keen to support the NTUC's Returners proposal because it is beneficial for both the PMETs who had stayed home to get back to work and their prospective employers. Of course, the PMETs may need training to refresh their skills, and I believe NTUC is keen to help."

Second Minister Teo added that the tripartite partners want to encourage more companies to adopt progressive workplace practices.

"We plan to introduce a series of Tripartite Standards that will help job seekers identify such good employers, including those that offer flexible work arrangements not just for parents but also for those with other caregiving needs.

"We might also support companies which offer job-sharing opportunities. With these, we hope to drum up companies' support for working parents and make inclusive workplaces a norm in Singapore," she said.

RETAINING RETURNERS

Mr Choo highlighted that attention must also be paid to retaining workers after they return to the workforce.

He said: "Employers have increasingly responded to the ongoing calls to create a supportive environment with family-friendly measures in the workplaces. We want to work with more progressive employers in creating a work environment and culture that is forward-looking, supportive and appreciative of the key resource that they have – their skilled talent."

i For employers or individuals keen to participate in the Returners Programme, contact NTUC U Family at ufamily@ntuc.org.sg.

MWC In Action



Manpower Ministry and MWC officials visit the injured workers at Changi General Hospital

The Migrant Workers' Centre does its part to help workers in recent incidents.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**

Two recent construction site accidents at Upper Changi Road and Sembawang kept the Migrant Workers' Centre (MWC) busy, with staff and volunteers providing help to the injured foreign workers.

MWC has also been working with the employers of the projects to facilitate travel arrangements for the next-of kin of the workers who had died in these mishaps. One foreign worker died in each of the mishap at Upper Changi Road and the Sembawang worksite opposite Canberra Drive. They were both from China.

FAST ACCESS

MWC Chairman Yeo Guat Kwang reiterated in a Facebook post on 17 July 2017 that its major concern was getting access to the injured workers quickly so that help can be rendered.

"It is necessary to reiterate to stakeholders, and particularly employers, that there is no reason to deliberately exclude the MWC as our only concern is for the well-being of the affected workers in such situations.

"Our hope is that employers see the MWC as a non-judgemental, worker advocate that can be trusted to aid and assist the employer if his genuine intention is to help his workers," he said.

SURPRISE CHECKS

MWC has also been making surprise checks on premises housing foreign workers.

One such visit was on 6 July 2017 with the Ministry of Manpower's Housing Inspectorate to a housing unit within a private apartment block.

The team found a four-bedroom apartment that was reconfigured into seven smaller rooms using thin wooden partitions.

The unit housed 44 workers, with only two small lavatories and a kitchen for common use.

According to MWC, the workers have since been relocated to approved housing premises and the authorities are investigating the case.

GOOD TO KNOW



Migrant workers in need of help can call

MWC's 24-hour Helpline:
6536 2692



Connecting Jobseekers to Employment

Remodelled Careers Connect to help more Singaporeans find jobs.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**

More efforts have been announced by the Government to help jobseekers better connect to employers and openings. Manpower Minister Lim Swee Say also said that his ministry will work with other ministries to prepare the workforce to face possible disruptions and growing opportunities in five sectors. They are financial services, professional services, healthcare, wholesale trade, and infocomm and media sectors.

Workforce Singapore (WSG) has rebranded its three career centres at Paya Lebar, Tampines and Woodlands to Careers Connect to offer jobseekers an expanded suite of customised career matching services.

NEW SERVICES

Careers Connect offers three new career management and counselling programmes for jobseekers.

The career recharger aims to help jobseekers regain confidence and give them a positive frame of mind.

The career catalyst helps jobseekers chart career goals and looks for suitable job options for them if they are unsure of their career direction and options.

The third programme is career 360 and is for jobseekers who are clear about their career options but lack industry contacts. It provides networking opportunities.

For employers, there are workshops to equip them with skills to write effective job descriptions to attract the right talent and better understand the competencies required for a role so as to improve the career matching outcome between both parties.

FUTURE JOBS

Minister Lim, who launched Careers Connect at the Lifelong Learning Institute on 19 July 2017, said that while helping jobseekers was one part of the challenge, the other was to focus on jobs of the future.

For this, the Ministry of Manpower has started working with the relevant agencies, employers and unions in the five sectors.

"While many of the existing jobs may disappear, new jobs are going to be created as we go through the transformation. We are now working with the tripartite partners and want to pay extra attention to workers in these five sectors to continue to adapt and grow as the sectors go through the transformation," said Minister Lim.

i For more information on Careers Connect and its career matching services visit www.wsg.gov.sg/care

Making Work a Passion

Employee of the Year winner Madan Lal serves up hospitality in his own warm way to ensure guests take away a lasting experience.

Story and Photos by **Jonathan Tan**

Satisfaction for Madan Lal comes from ensuring that his guests enjoy their meals.

Guests settling in for a meal at the Tiffin Room at Raffles Singapore often get served more than just food. Restaurant Captain Madan Lal is always there with a bright smile to brighten their day.

His peers call the soft-spoken 33-year-old 'Iron Man', all due to his dedication to work, his ability to stay calm and composed under pressure, his keen attention to meeting guests' needs and helping colleagues.

"My job is to give good service and take care of my guests. As a captain, I try to take care of their needs such as providing them an infant chair if they have a child or re-arranging the seating to accommodate the elderly who may need more space," said Madan, who has worked at the Raffles Singapore for nearly four years.

A PASSION FOR LEARNING

With four different operational shifts, working at the Tiffin Room can be demanding, yet the pressure is something that Madan relishes.

"The standard here is high, and every day I will need to learn different things and attend different types of training. This is all very good because I enjoy learning new things and training to improve myself. This is what motivates me," said Madan, who has attended both formal courses and received regular on-the-job training, especially on the food and beverage items offered in the restaurant.

He added that his motivation stems from the satisfaction of seeing his guests happy, and from the camaraderie he shares with his colleagues.

"I'm energetic because I like to work. It brings me happiness because I'm proud to be working for Raffles Singapore. I've worked at other hotels, but when I'm here, I'm very happy," he said.

GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

Madan may work five days a week, but he readily volunteers to help support the hotel's other restaurants should they need an extra hand. He also shared how he takes the initiative to mentor new staff and help colleagues who

may be experiencing difficulties coping with changes at work.

"I will find out the details from my managers, understand how things work and then share these with my colleagues, especially the newcomers, by making the information simpler and easier," he said.

Though Madan has never encountered any problems at work, the Food Drinks & Allied Workers Union (FDAWU) member shared that he can count on the union's branch officials in the hotel for help should he encounter any issues.

"I will find out the details from my managers, understand how things work and then share these with my colleagues, especially the newcomers, by making the information simpler and easier."

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARD

For his passion, commitment, teamwork and excellence at work, Madan was one of 71 exemplary hotel employees who received the Employee of the Year Award. At the same time, the Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort & Spa also received two Hotel Sector Innovation Awards

for Workplace Safety and Health for two submitted projects.

Organised by FDAWU, NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) and the Singapore Hotel Association, this year's Employee of the Year Award Ceremony was held at the NTUC Centre on 18 July 2017. The awards were given out by FDAWU Advisor and Member of Parliament for Holland-Bukit Timah GRC Christopher De Souza.

"With their passion to serve, these recipients truly deserve their awards. They are the shining stars of their industry and I'm very sure that they will be able to lead in their own ways back in their organisations," said FDAWU General-Secretary Tan Hock Soon.



This year's award ceremony saw 71 hotel employees awarded Employee of the Year.

GOOD TO KNOW

Hotel Virtual Career Fair

In a first for the hotel sector, e2i's virtual career fair gives Singaporeans the opportunity to browse the many job opportunities in the hotel industry and get connected with potential employers online.

i Interested Singaporeans need only visit www.rightspot.co/e2i/hotelcareers/ or download the Rightspot app, create a profile and enter the 'HOTELCAREERS2017' link code to get started. The virtual fair will take place from now till 27 October 2017.



Reinventing Accountancy

The accountancy profession in Singapore has every reason to not only compete, but thrive in tomorrow's world if it fulfills a few pre-requisites.

By **Avelyn Ng**

Themed “Innovating Business Models for a Sustainable Future”, ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) Singapore Annual Conference started off with addresses by keynote speakers and Guest-of-Honour NTUC Secretary-General (SG) Chan Chun Sing, followed by various sectoral panel discussions.

Over 500 industry practitioners attended the event on 19 July 2017. According to SG Chan, the accountancy profession can thrive in tomorrow's economy if it fulfills the following conditions.

► SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES OVERSEAS

While the brand of trust and quality assurance puts Singapore in good stead on the global map, accountancy firms still have to work together to acquire the necessary market and technical knowledge needed to internationalise.

SG Chan highlighted that U Associates like ACCA and other partners under the U Network are there to support. They can cross-share their expertise on business cultures, legal systems and accountancy standards abroad.

► BUILD ADJACENT SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

To maintain a competitive edge, it is critical for companies to groom their people, expand beyond accountancy work and offer a suite of solutions such as consultancy and integrated services.

NTUC Assistant Secretary-General and Future Jobs, Skills and Training Director Patrick Tay, who was also one of the panellists, suggested that accountancy firms can recommend their clients technologies to minimise fraud, maximise compliance and enhance processes to be more productive.

“Auditors have been cited as one of the key jobs that will become obsolete, because it is quite mechanical. However, artificial intelligence is still in the very early stages, and we are not there yet.

“But, I think with technology, more roles will be created and accountants have more time to do analysis work that is real value to businesses as well. It can help us reach a state where we can make the right decisions all the time,” said Head of ACCA Singapore Reuter Chua.

► FORM A SPEED-TO-MARKET COMMUNITY

Noting that the cycle to develop and formalise new knowledge is too slow for the fast-moving economy, SG Chan urged attendees to explore new ways of learning. As such, professionals can post issues on an online community and solve them together. With the latest curated insights pushed to them, they will be able to stay current and engaged on-the-go.

He added that NTUC is also working with institutes of higher learning and other professional bodies to see how they can shorten the continuous education cycle.

Thought Leaders

Olivier Legrand

As part of our ongoing series featuring insights from top business leaders in NTUC's U Circle of Friends network, we speak to LinkedIn's managing director for Asia Pacific.

By **Jonathan Tan**

What does it take to stand out from the crowd online, push your personal career boundaries and stay ahead of disruptions in the workplace?

We caught up with Olivier Legrand, LinkedIn's managing director for Asia Pacific, to find out what he has to say on the matter.

NTUC This Week: Tell us about your career journey that has spanned Europe and Asia?

Olivier Legrand: My top three learnings are: Pick a place that inspires you, have a place to land and know what you want to do. Joining LinkedIn gave me the opportunity to lead and shape the internet industry as opposed to continuing digital transformation work for traditional players.

What do you look for in your staff?

Learning agility, an appetite for change or curiosity and cultural fit. I admire people who embrace change and are curious about new technologies that can disrupt their expertise and skillset.

What kind of work culture do you foster?

It has always been about collaboration and respect, and the LinkedIn culture has helped me codify this in a consistent yet scalable way across offices and regions. This has truly differentiated us from other companies and is why the best people want to work with us.

How do you think workers can push themselves?

There are three key elements. Join an organisation which believes in its purpose, understand the company's mission and vision as well as its culture. If these three stars are aligned, it will likely be a good ride.

How do you balance the demands of your work with family commitments?

I borrow from Jeff Weiner and Jess Bezos' ‘work-life harmony’ as opposed to balance. I do not try to balance both equally as it would be unrealistic. However, I apply a strict set of rules with regards to how I manage my time and I try to make the moments I spend with my family as meaningful as possible by being present.





Aziza Sheerin



We catch up with the regional director of General Assembly who tells us about the need for individuals to start thinking about where their careers are headed.

Story and Photo by **Avelyn Ng**

General Assembly, an educator in 20 cities across North America, Europe, Asia and Australia, made its foray into Singapore about two years ago.

Sticking to its ethos in bridging skills gaps in the future economy, General Assembly Singapore (GA Singapore) currently offers courses to both individuals and companies in five niche areas: coding, UX design, data, digital marketing and product management.

“Seeing education as an investment, we try to make sure students get the most returns. We reduce the opportunity cost by shortening the time required and focusing on skillsets that are highly relevant.

“We aim to bridge education to employment by equipping students with the kind of skills that employers need. Our courses are very hands-on and project based, and that’s what employers are looking for – proof that students have applied their skills to building something,” said General Assembly’s Regional Director for Singapore Aziza Sheerin.

ABOUT THE LEARNERS

GA Singapore’s immersive programmes take up to 480 hours over 10 to 12 weeks, while online or part-time ones can take just 40 hours over the same period. According to Aziza, the enrolment mix in the former category is mainly career-switchers while the latter categories see professionals who are funded by their employers for upskilling.

“We also have a few non-technical entrepreneurs coming in... Many of them have great ideas but are unsure as to what technologies are needed or how to go about building their product. Even if you are not the one doing the groundwork, you will have

to know how to manage your team and what deliverables to expect.

“Some people only think about upskilling when it becomes an absolute necessity but they need to change their mindsets and look at education as a continued path and be proactively thinking about where their careers are heading. The skills required in the workforce are changing so fast and we need to stay ahead. We work with a number of companies to provide customised content that meets their needs,” said Aziza.

While data science has been around for a while in the United States, it has just taken Singapore by storm. Observing that the part-time course for data science has been fully-subscribed, Aziza has decided to bring its full-time immersive programme to Singapore as well. The first intake starts 28 August 2017.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY

GA Singapore’s key outreach strategies lie in event partnerships. Last year, 18,000 people attended its events. They included public workshops on how technology is permeating into lifestyle aspects such as food, fashion and finance.

It joined NTUC as a U Associate last year. Since then, GA Singapore has been working with NTUC to conduct complimentary introductory courses and curate industrial talks for union members.

Together, they have explored topics such as future careers, productivity tools, generating viral content and raising funds.

“NTUC has been very forward-thinking when it comes to envisioning where the economy is going and engaging the labour force in active conversations about how to

be prepared for it. We are happy to partner NTUC, reach out to their membership base of working professionals, and educate more on the opportunities in tech, data and digital fields. Our joint events are great avenues for people who have not pinned down exactly where they want to move into. It provides a preview into what the industries beyond their own are like,” explained Aziza.

INSIDER'S GUIDE



General Assembly Singapore

Established in Singapore: 2015

Why: To provide training in today’s most in-demand tech and digital skills and close the global skills gap as individuals and companies struggle to compete in an increasingly technological economy.

Became an NTUC U Associate on: Dec 2016

Did You Know: General Assembly has partnered with the Info-communications Media Development Authority of Singapore as its pilot partner in the Tech Immersion and Placement Programme. Singaporeans who are admitted to one of its immersive programmes will receive a \$7,000 subsidy.

It currently has 35,000 alumni worldwide. Students in the Immersive courses receive “Outcomes Support”, which gives them career advice and exposes them to job opportunities.

<https://generalassemb.ly>

Snapshots

A quick round up of what went on in and around the Labour Movement recently.

Compiled by **NTUC This Week Team**



Enhancing Customer Service

In Singapore, it may just not be enough to improve public amenities in places like shopping malls to cater to Singaporeans of all ages and abilities.

Serving customers with passion and empathy, especially those with special needs, is needed as well.

To achieve this, NTUC LearningHub (LHUB) has tied up with the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) to roll out two Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) Service Excellence courses.

The WSQ Lead with Service Vision course, which starts in July this year, is for business owners and service team leaders to help them develop plans and strategies to make their businesses more family-friendly.

The WSQ Demonstrate the Service Vision, which kicked off in September 2016, has seen more than 200 service professionals being trained. This is a one-day course for receptionists, retail associates and cleaning staff.

Training includes enhancing the capability to deliver quality service to families with different needs, including families with young children, elderly with dementia and persons with disabilities.

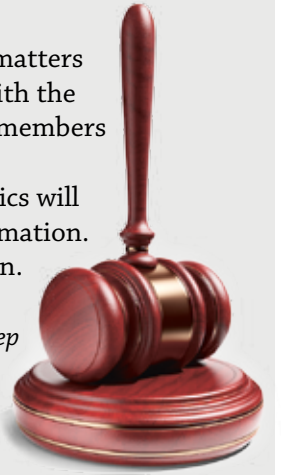
i For more details about the WSQ courses, visit www.ntuclearninghub.com

LawWorks Legal Clinic

Are you an NTUC member in need of legal advice on personal matters such as wills and matrimonial issues? NTUC is collaborating with the Law Society of Singapore to provide free legal clinics to NTUC members like you.

Held once a month for the next three months, the legal clinics will see volunteer lawyers give free basic legal oral advice and information. Don't forget to pre-register as there are limited slots per session.

i 17 Aug 2017 (register by 4 Aug 2017), 21 Sep 2017 (register by 8 Sep 2017), 19 Oct 2017 (register by 6 Oct 2017), 7pm–9pm, NTUC Centre. To register, email lawworks@ntuc.org.sg or call **8444 6209**. For more information, visit www.ntuc.org.sg/pme.



Young AESU's Leadership Camp

The Air Transport Executive Staff Union (AESU) held their first Young AESU Youth Campus on 8 July 2017. Among the attendees were AESU's executive committee members and some 15 representatives from Singapore Airlines, SIA Engineering Company and SATS.

"I feel that it is important for the committee to keep in touch with our youth members and pick their brains on what they envisage a future AESU to be. In line with our succession planning strategies, we also hope to use such platforms to identify potential leaders for AESU and educate them on the challenges surrounding the industry," said AESU President Daniel Loh.

Participants attended a short course on industrial relations and a presentation on Young NTUC's programmes, followed by team-bonding activities and a dialogue with Young NTUC Executive Secretary Desmond Choo.

"Union work is interesting because you actually go beyond yourself. You take care of the workers behind you, beside you, ahead of you and that to me, has a larger purpose, beyond just a paycheck. By helping workers that are less informed about their rights, you restore a sense of justice and equality. I would like to think that as a younger generation coming through, we believe a lot stronger in social equity," said Mr Choo.

Recognising Progressive Tech Employers

In recognition of technology companies who have provided inclusive opportunities for Singaporeans and valued talent based on skills, NTUC U Associate Singapore Computer Society gave out the Best Tech Company to Work For Award to 10 Singapore-based companies during its annual Tech3 Forum on 12 July 2017.

The 10 companies are Accenture, Carousell, EON Reality, IBM, Razer, Red Hat, ST Electronics Info-Comm Systems, Tableau, Tinkerbox and Titansoft.

"Our strategic intent in terms of Infocomm manpower development is to strengthen the Singaporean core, tap on global expertise, and more importantly, speed up the transfer of knowledge to our local workforce. If we can achieve that, we can attract better investment, create better jobs and sustain better growth in our future economy," said Manpower Minister Lim Swee Say, who was guest of honour.



Manpower Minister Lim Swee Say with Best Tech Company to Work For award winners.

He may be turning only 30 this year but having been in the security line since he was 16, Union of Security Employees (USE) President Hareenderpal Singh has seen the industry go through a number of changes over the years. He started work as a security guard (now known as security officer) and has worked his way up to an operations manager at Premiere Security Co-operative.

Hareenderpal's passion for serving as a union leader has always been one of his top priorities, and he works tirelessly to improve the lives of security officers and the industry. He has been serving in USE's executive committee since 2011 and has been the union's president since 2013.

NTUC This Week: What are the daily challenges you face as an operations manager and union leader?

Hareenderpal Singh: I have to balance the company's contractual obligations and the needs of the officers. Let's say a dispute occurs, I have to balance the two roles that I play, and that is where it gets tricky.

I can't be seen leaning towards the company too much, and at the same time, I can't be too pro-worker. I think this is a daily dilemma many union leaders face because no matter what decision is made, one party will be unhappy.

It's not easy, but at the end of the day, I have to be objective. I'll look at who's right and who's wrong, based on facts.

One thing good is that the company I'm working for is enlightened and has a good working relationship with the union. Being a co-operative, the company looks after the welfare of the employees well and has their interests at heart. In fact, the company has given up contracts when they found that the buyers weren't taking care of the officers well. The company gave the buyers a couple of month's termination notice on the contract and simply walked away.

The officers followed Premiere instead of staying at the worksite because they realised the company was willing to throw away profits for their welfare.

Earlier this year, the company you work for conducted a redundancy exercise after it lost one of its biggest contracts. Take us through that experience.

This incident was an odd occurrence because, in the security industry, we will never hear of cases of agencies conducting redundancy exercises. This was, in fact, the first ever reported redundancy exercise in the security industry because it was so large scale.

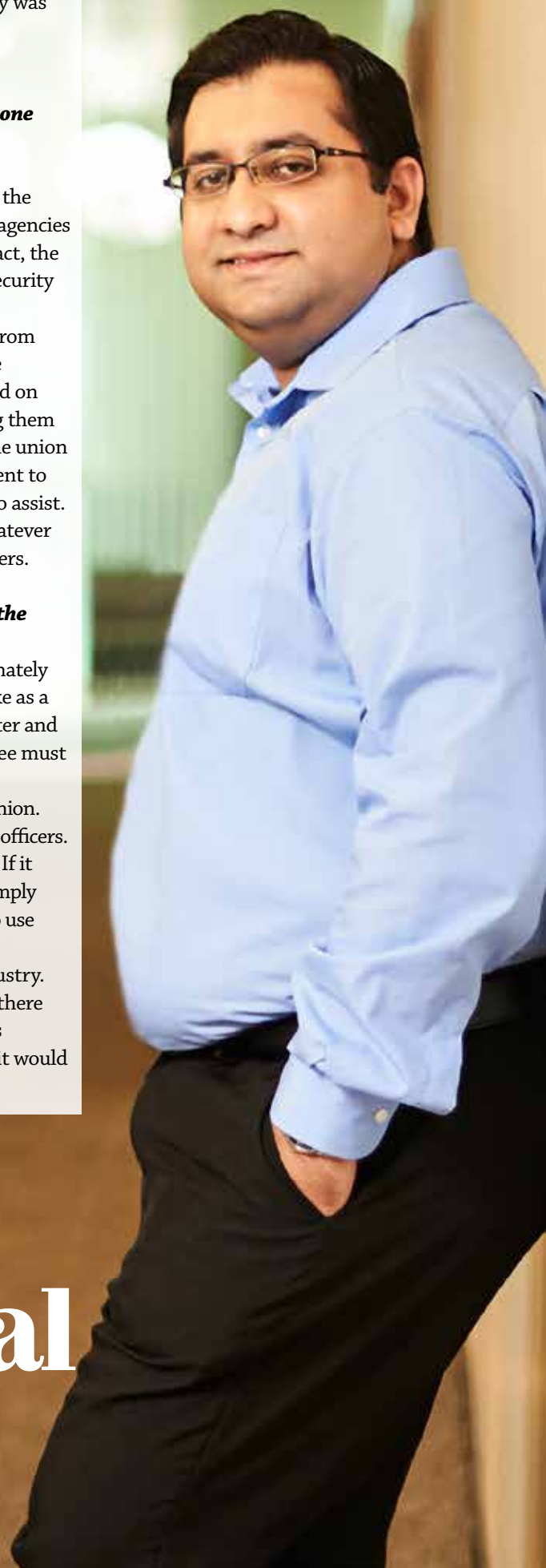
It was an emotional journey for everybody, from the top management to the union leaders to the officers on the ground. I spent days going around on the ground speaking to the officers and assuring them that they were not being abandoned and that the union was working something out with the management to negotiate a package and do whatever we could to assist. In that exercise, the union and company did whatever we could to fairly compensate the affected workers.

What role does legislation play to transform the security industry?

Union leaders can mobilise the ground but ultimately for things to get done, we must legislate. My take as a union leader is that the Security Tripartite Cluster and the Security Industry Transformation Committee must push for legislation.

Legislation will not weaken the voice of the union. It actually helps us push to better the lives of our officers. Take the Progressive Wage Model as an example. If it weren't mandatory, not many agencies would comply with it. Legislation acts as a lever for the union to use when we are trying to get agencies to move.

USE represents about 50 per cent of the industry. The other half are non-unionised companies. If there were no legislation, and only unionised agencies complied with new efforts and initiatives, then it would be almost impossible to transform the industry.



FACE 2 FACE WITH

Hareenderpal Singh

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

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ANDROID