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Never do anything **half-heartedly**

In this week's column Sunbiz sat down with running events organiser Monkey Theory Sdn Bhd founder and CEO Delon Leong to hear his thoughts and views on what it takes to be an effective leader

SUCCESS: THE INSIGHT STORY

How has your life experience made you the leader you are today?

It was not all rainbows and sunshine. There were also challenging situations, which I had to face that ultimately turned out to be a rewarding experience. I went through a lot of ups and downs and failed over and over again but one thing I always kept true to was perseverance. I've grown so much and learnt from the many painful situations in my life, which I have gained mostly from working for my mother in her wood industry business.

What traits do you look for in your talents or how do you decide who is right for a job?

I believe that positive attitudes, the right mentality and sheer determination are keys in selecting any individual. Though academic excellence is also important, we also recognise that everyone comes from different industries and backgrounds. What is more important is that we are passionate, determined, and have the drive to further improve ourselves.

How do you think the industry you are in will evolve?

I definitely believe that the industry is evolving and this will greatly affect the market as it has yet to reach maturity. Ten years down the road, I foresee the whole industry going digital and being able to perform with a higher efficiency in servicing people.

What advice can you offer those looking to start their career/own business?

I would say "Go for it!" Everyone should have the courage to follow their dreams and make their dreams a reality. Be sure to do something that you like or are passionate about because if you do what you love and love what you do you won't have to work a single day of your life. No one can ever take your

accomplishments away from you. I believe the most important ingredient to success is perseverance. So persevere all the way!

We all know about the industrial revolution, are we in for a technological revolution? Your thoughts.

Yes, we definitely are. In fact, we're already in one! I firmly believe businesses that implement technology into their business models are the ones who will be able to sustain in the long run. We have to accept change and flow with the times.

What do you want to accomplish in the next five years?

In the next five years, I see my company evolving to become a multinational company and to hopefully be listed on Bursa Malaysia. No dream is too big! I look forward to the day where I see my team grow and expand to their very best potential.

Best piece of advice you ever got on your career.

The best advice I've ever got was when I was younger when I was told: "If you want to do something, do it big. If you want to change something, change it big

time." This advice has been ingrained in my head. Never do anything half-heartedly.

Most admired business leader? Why?

I would say Elon Musk. He's a South African-born Canadian-American business magnate, investor, engineer, and inventor. He is known for his works on SpaceX, PayPal, Tesla Inc., Hyperloop, SolarCity, Open AI, The Boring Company, Neuralink and Zip 2. According to Forbes, he is estimated to be US\$6.6 billion (RM7.2 billion). One of my ultimate goals in life is to leave behind a legacy and this is why I truly admire him and his work, which has greatly benefited mankind.

How do you stay abreast of issues affecting your industry?

There will be many issues affecting the industry from time to time, so we will just have to take it as it comes. We need to be innovative and if need be, redesign our business model canvas. As I've said before, perseverance is the key to success.

If you could have an hour with any thought leader in the world, who would it be and why?

I would definitely like to meet Elon Musk or Nick Woodman. Both of them are such extraordinary leaders. Their work and contribution to society is admirable and their passion and dreams has led them to conquer some of the biggest market share in the world. If I only had an hour with them, I would totally pick their brains to gain insight and tips on how to succeed further in life. This would definitely make my day!

What has been the biggest challenge you have faced? And what did you learn from it?

My biggest challenge thus far was when we scaled up the business model. It may sound easy but trust me, it is much tougher than it seems. If starting up a new business had its challenges, scaling up is tougher.

What was the most outlandish business proposal you have ever heard of?

The most outlandish business proposal I've ever heard of was probably Million Dollar Feet™ Million Dollar Feet™ is a programme led by EPL legend Steve McMahon where drills and tryouts were conducted in Penang, Pahang, Sarawak, Johor and Kuala Lumpur with one aim – to find the country's best young football talents aged between 11 and 16 years. Shortlisted finalists will then compete in the ultimate showdown, where two lucky winners, the crème de la crème will be sent on the ultimate football experience in the UK, with the opportunity of being witnessed by scouts from top European football clubs.

Malaysia's greatest brand?

That will have to be Astro! Who doesn't know Astro? It is well known nationwide. It serves over 21 million individuals in 5.2 million households or 73% of Malaysian households so I have to say Astro is Malaysia's greatest brand! Plus, it brings all of my favourite sports channels!

A must-read for every business owner/manager is?

Zero to One: Notes on Startups, or How to Build the Future, written by Peter Thiel and Blake Masters. This book is my go to book on starting a business. A definite must-read for any budding entrepreneur out there!

How do you expect policies on climate change to impact businesses in the future?

I certainly think that policies on climate change will benefit both the environment and businesses in general as policies in return will make us take environmental issues more seriously. Environmental pollution is a serious problem today and if we could utilise our businesses to create a better future, why not? It would surely bring a positive impact to the ecosystem.



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