

e-Management Digest

A collection of management articles for the aspiring managers

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This Management Digest is prepared for the aspiring managers as an update to what they already know. This newsletter is sent monthly to members of the Hong Kong Institute of Marketing and delegates following courses provided through Consort Management Consultants Ltd.

MARKETING

Marketing of Experience

One challenge that always confronts marketers is competition and a way to overcome this challenge is through creativity – the innovation and sensitivity to make use of every opportunity to show off.

Retailers use shopping arcades to show off, so it becomes a duty of the arcades to bring traffic into their venues and give retailers the chance. Yet, shopping arcades have to compete among themselves for visitors.

Langham Place is a new venue for showing off. They are one of the most creative arcades



in the territory and would spare no effort to draw in shoppers. During the lunar new-year celebrations this year, they made helium-filled gold fishes swimming under the ceiling – directed by remote controllers on the ground. Then there is a garden of blossoming peach trees to make shoppers feel like walking into a theme park. The usual lucky draws, discount coupons and prizes are of course in abundance.

Valentine Day was another opportunity certainly not to be missed. For a few hundred dollars, customers could buy some fond memories – the memories of a wall size TV showing off their own courting messages, live bands and special dinner menus, etc., etc.

In Hong Kong, more and more events and shows are being put up in arcades, especially during festive seasons. Dinosaur skeletons, dog acrobats, lion dances, magic shows and fun competitions are staged in different arcades to celebrate the solar and lunar new years, for Easter, dragon boats, mid autumn, Halloween, Christmas, and so on.

'Experiential Marketing' is now becoming an important promotional approach. Disneyland, Lan-Kwai-Fong, etc. all attempt to create an experience for visitors by putting them into an environment to see, hear, feel or even smell or taste a special experience. This special experience could be very unreal but will be pleasant to the six senses of visitors.

Indeed for a few years now, in support of the demand for expertise in 'experience creation', there are courses on Events Marketing to teach about planning and managing exhibitions and events. The contents of these courses include marketing psychology, facilities management, and management of promotion and marketing quality.

The success of Experiential Marketing calls for several ingredients:

- Relevance of the theme – this is about commonsense: lion dances are not for Christmas celebrations, and roast turkeys are not for the time when people eat moon cakes.
- Innovation – Lan-Kwai-Fong was first developed as a pub area, but someone innovative turned it into a place for celebration of Western festivities – New Year Eve countdown, Halloween and more.
- Customer involvement and their sentiments at the time – having attractive décor may not be enough to generate the atmosphere. Lucky draws and shows could.
- Promotional support – Last but not least, there has to be a campaign to draw in customer traffic. Crowds can bring in more crowds and ensure marketing success.

There will be more and more examples of this new marketing approach. The market is constantly changing and marketers need to ride on creativity for success.

*(KM Yim, Chairman
Hong Kong Institute of Marketing)*

LIFE STYLE

Managing for Happiness

Happiness has been a word associated with Holy Grails and matters spiritual, but seldom with work.

In January, the Hong Kong SAR Government was hoping to introduce a five-day week for civil servants, so as to create a happier environment for the workers and their families, and to boost their moral and productivity. Some argued that this would put the commercial sector in a disadvantaged position. Employers who have been paying their workers poorly would still maintain a 6-day week. The result would be polarising the different sectors in the society as disparity in employment conditions would widen the gap of happiness. Further evaluation of the government proposal is in progress and a decision would be made in a few months.

Three years ago in Italy, there was a conference at the University of Milano-Bicocca to explore the relationship between happiness, motivation and productivity. Happiness was considered an aspect for businesses to manage, and in fact, there was a position of 'Happiness Manager' in a company listed at the Milan Stock Exchange.

Research

Research in American has shown that happiness is a more effective key to success than working hard. It would appear that cheerful people are more likely to try new ideas and challenge themselves. The venture into new things reinforces positive emotion, leading to success in work, good relationships and health.

Undertaken by a team from the University of

California Riverside, the research provides strong evidence that happiness leads people to be more productive at work, as well as to be more sociable and more generous, to make more money and indeed to have stronger immune systems.

The findings suggest that happiness is not a 'feel-good' luxury, but an essence to people's well-being. This can extend across an entire nation and people in 'happy' nations being more likely to have pro-democratic attitudes and a keenness to help others. Similarly, employees in happy companies are likely to be more productive and creative.

The Kingdom of Happiness

We know that all play and no work would impact upon productivity and the GNP. The small Buddhist kingdom of Bhutan, a country at the foot of the Himalayas, lying between India and Tibet see this differently. For some years they have been using a measure of happiness – Gross National Happiness (GNH) as an index to guide economic and public policy, in preference to the GNP.

Bhutanese are reputed to be the happiest people in the world and their King Jigme Singye Wanchuck conceived the GNH more than 30 years ago. GNH is rooted in the Buddhist belief that the ultimate purpose of

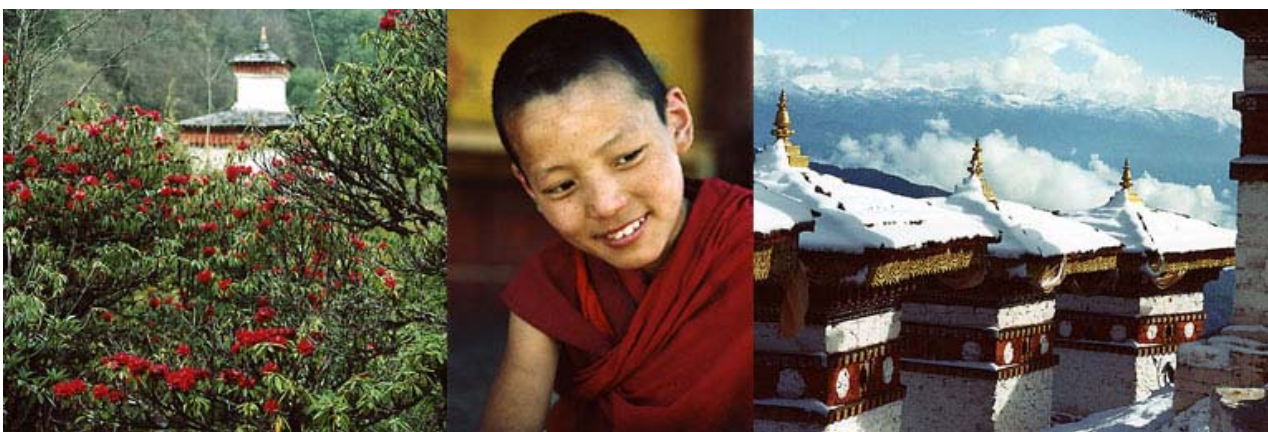
life is inner happiness and that quality of life is not dependent on material production and consumption, but on values such as compassion and sharing, minimum income disparity, minimum unemployment and urbanization.

The King of Bhutan was concerned about the effects of globalisation and conventional western development on his country's unique culture and wanted to find a way to protect Bhutan from being invaded by these influences. He thought that if he could quantify Bhutan's social and cultural values, the wider world might be able to understand and respect them.

In 1998 Home Minister Lyonpo Jigmi Thinley came up with four pillars of happiness to guide the country's public policy:

- Equitable and sustainable socio-economic development and self-reliance
- Conservation of the natural environment
- The preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, and
- The establishment of good governance – i.e. democracy

These pillars were followed through and the Kingdom is gradually moving towards a fully elected government by 2008.



Bhutan is far from being the utopia, but its GNH policy has attracted international attention. In 2004, the country began to share its happiness approach by hosting the first major conference on the subject. The meeting concluded that the concept need not be restricted either to Buddhist societies or small countries. GDP alone is no longer considered a valid measure of progress. There are other indexes for quality of life, like indicators to measure satisfaction level of personal relationship, employment, technological advancement, etc.

In the UK, a think tank is pushing for the implementation of a set of measure to show the balance between personal trust and stress. Australia's former deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer has already called for the preparation of a well-being and happiness indicator like the consumer price index. Referring to racial tensions recently in Australia, he said the index "would help to some extent in protecting hotspots of community negativity."

Following the Bhutan conference, a Gross International Happiness Network (GIH) was set up. Bhutan's Home Affairs Minister will be sharing his country's experience at the GIH international Human Resource conference in Singapore in May 2006. Here is a website:

www.grossinternationalhappiness.org

(adapted from Worldlink, January 2006)

"..... stress will always be a part of life. Success and happiness will depend on how well one can cope with, or manage, the stress." John Grohol, Psy.D.

Words Worth

WRONG	RIGHT
× You must eat vegetables as many as possible	✓ You must eat as many vegetables as possible.
<i>Note where to put the noun.</i>	
× After finished my lunch, I went to the post office.	✓ After finishing my lunch, I went to the post office. ✓ After having finished my lunch, I went to the post office.
<i>The gerund (-ing) is used following 'after'.</i>	
× Although I tried to stop him at once, but he has already bought the wrong book.	✓ I stopped him at once, but he has already bought the book. ✓ Although I stopped him at once, he had already bought the book.
<i>You use either 'although' or 'but', but not both in a sentence. This is different from the Chinese expression '雖然 但...'</i>	
× I telephoned to book a seat near the window.	✓ I telephoned to book a table near the window.
<i>You book a seat in a cinema or on the plane, but always a table at a restaurant. You can also say 'I have a reservation'.</i>	
× I invited him to lunch for several times.	✓ I invited him to lunch several times.
<i>Words like 'several' or 'many' do not take 'for' with 'times'. Do not be influenced by the expression 'for several reasons'. Note also – in law, 'several' in a contract can mean 'separate' ('several' is the adjective of 'sever'), so, 'the liability of the partners are joint and several' means the partners are liable for something done jointly as a partnership as well as separately as individual persons.'</i>	
× I withdrew all my money from this account two months before.	✓ I withdrew all my money from this account two months ago.
<i>'before' and 'ago' have the same meaning (之前), but 'before' is normally followed by something else: 'I withdrew all my money before I went to Japan'.</i>	