

# TRUE NORTH

*In today's workplace climate, career advisory has gone beyond the simple act of placing clients into a job. It has become an intricate art of helping clients navigate workplace complexities and interweaving that closely with an individual's beliefs, values and principles. As a career professional, you are tasked with the all-important role of helping one find meaning and fulfillment in their job. You are instrumental in their search for a purpose-driven life; for their TRUE NORTH.*



**Community of Practice (CoP)**  
Retirement and Re-employment

At this year's National Day Rally, Prime Minister Lee announced the progressive changes to the retirement and re-employment ages. By 2030, retirement and re-employment ages are set to reach 65 years and 70 years respectively. With this change, there is a greater impetus for companies to start looking into job-redesign and make the work environments older worker friendly.

Employees on the other hand will need to exercise mindset shifts to adapt and keep up with a changing work environment to stay employable. So how can we better prepare our older workers today for this change? As a career professional, how can you carry out meaningful career conversions on this topic?

Come hear from Prof Tan Ern Ser, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and our panel of experts as they share their thoughts on the impact of the impending re-employment policy changes on our older workers.

If you are keen to participate in this CoP, scan the QR code on the right to be updated with details of the event!

**Date: November 2019\***

\* Actual date TBC

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## FROM THE CASE CHEST

Isabel was a project manager, bringing with her work experiences from a diverse background including; office administration as well as customer service. She had a pleasant disposition and a cheerful personality, making her someone who was easy to get along. From her sharing, Joel, her career consultant could tell that she was a dedicated, hard worker who would go the extra mile for others.

In the course of the coaching, Isabel shared that she was keen to return to the area of Administration and Human Resource, and was looking to upgrade herself in these areas.

To do this, Joel used a set of guiding questions which he had put together, drawing from literature and resources he read in the course of his work e.g. *Leading on Empty: Refilling Your Tank and Renewing Your Passion* by Wayne Cordeiro, *Knowdell Card Sorts and Ikigai* — A Japanese concept. From her responses, Joel assessed that Isabel's interest and values were indeed a good fit for the social service sector.

For a start, Joel enrolled Isabel for the Resume & Cover Letter Writing Workshop and advised her to do up a tailored resume / cover letter. In the

## IN THE PIPELINE

### Career Advisory Programme (CAP)

**Nov intake:** 11 – 13 Nov 2019  
(Application closes: 13 Oct 2019)

**Dec intake:** 4 – 6 Dec 2019  
(Application closes: 6 Nov 2019)

**Jan intake:** 6 – 8 Jan 2020  
(Application closes: 8 Dec 2019)

### Career Advisory Programme Assessment-only Pathway (CAP AOP)

**Dec intake**  
(Application closes: 25 Nov 2019)

### Career Facilitation Programme Assessment-only Pathway (CFP AOP)

**Nov intake**  
(Application closes: 15 Oct 2019)

## FILM-TASTIC

Filmed primarily on Long Island — the birthplace of the post-WWII suburban American Dream — this 54-minute film documents the challenges and frustrations facing several unemployed or under-employed people who are trying to land new jobs and make ends meet in the face of increasingly daunting odds.



Starting in the summer of 2010, a time which many hoped would usher in an era of recovery, and continuing through the holiday season six months later, Emmy® Award-winning filmmakers Marc Levin and Daphne Pinkerson chronicle the growing difficulties and despair as several suburban men and women search in vain for employment, their dignity eroding and their plight largely ignored by politicians and businesses. The subjects in *Hard Times* put a human face on the shocking national statistics, as the growing number of long-term unemployed Americans impact consumer spending, home mortgages, and the shrinking middle class.

ensuing months, having established a strong coach-coachee relationship, Isabel was encouraged and more ready to apply for administrative and social service job opportunities. In spite of countless rejection, Joel continued to inspire hope and encouraged Isabel to persevere.

One month into the career consultation, one of MAXIMUS ASIA's partners, Salvation Army, advertised a role for a Program Executive. The role required skills that were closely aligned to what Isabel had to offer e.g. events management, administration and customer service. More importantly, they were looking for someone with a passion for the community and a heart to serve in a non-profit organisation. Joel wasted no time in sharing the role with Isabel and within the next day, she had drafted a cover letter for the role. After making a few improvements, Joel proceeded to send her resume to Salvation Army.

The rest they say is history, but it is also Isabel's success story. Today, 11 months into her job, Isabel is still enjoying her job and finding a purpose in what she is pursuing. In view of her outstanding performance, she has been given an expanded job scope, with new opportunities to demonstrate her strengths. Through it all, she remains thankful for the support rendered to her during her job search journey and she is looking forward to continue to grow with the organisation.

*Contributed by Joel Wee*  
Career Consultant  
MAXIMUS

#### Useful links:

[Knowdell Card Sorts](#)

[Ikigai — A Japanese concept](#)



## HOW BEING IN LEARNING MODE MAY ENABLE A SUSTAINABLE CAREER ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Hundreds of studies have highlighted the physical, psychological, and emotional hazards involved in many career (i.e. long work hours, role ambiguity, work-family conflict, job insecurity). The imperative to address the harsh context in which many people enact their career is crystallized in the concept of a sustainable career, that is, a career in which individuals enjoy at least a moderate degree of productivity, health, and happiness across their lifespan.

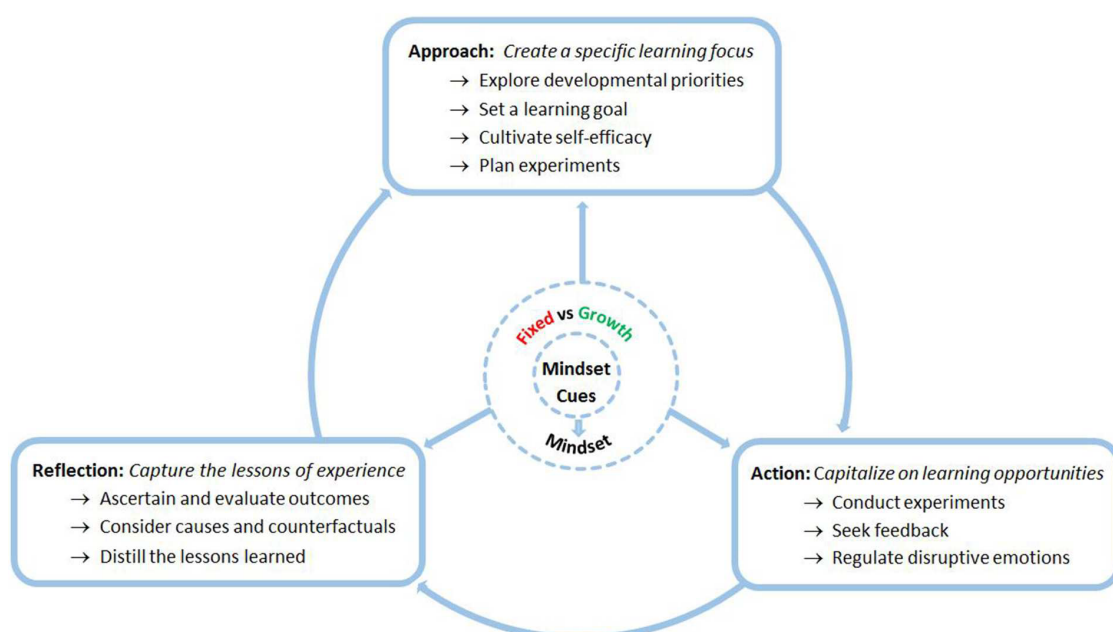
In contrast to extant theory about the nature of sustainable careers and emerging research on predictors of career sustainability, there is little scholarship on what governs people's

learning about how to have a more sustainable career. To advance the literature in this regard, one of the contributions made is the proposal to be in learning mode as a meta-competency pertaining to how people can learn to cultivate their career sustainability.

### Being in Learning Mode

People are in learning mode when they hold a growth mindset as they cycle through relevant approach, action, and reflection experiential learning processes depicted in Fig 1.

*Fig.1. The role of mindsets and action learning processes when in learning mode to craft a more sustainable career.*



The approach phase entails embracing a learning orientation, setting learning goals, and planning possible experiments. The action phase involves active experimentation, seeking feedback,

and emotion regulation. Finally, the reflection phase encompasses diagnosing cause-and-effect regarding what occurred, considering counterfactuals, and distilling the lessons learned.

### Practical Implications For Organisations

Organisations may profit from enabling employees to be in learning mode by designing work roles that foster employee's learning and development, physical and mental health. Doing so also reduces cost of withdrawal behaviors like lateness, absenteeism and turnover.

Other than providing growth mindset interventions, organisations can support employees' being in learning mode through policies and practices that signal growth mindsets and learning. These include inverting in 'building' rather than just 'buying' required talent.

### For Vocational Counselling and Peer Coaching

Fig 1. can be a useful tool for helping clients and peer coaches to identify what they already do relatively well in terms of being in learning mode and the areas of focus in order to develop a targeted ability or resource to enable enhanced career sustainability.

### For Individuals Engaged in a Career

Individuals may support themselves being in learning mode by proactively managing their exposure to growth and fixed mindsets cues, as well as by consulting readily available resources regarding strategies for cultivating a growth mindset. One strategy is to replace fixed-minded self-talk about a particular career sustainability challenge (e.g. "There's just never enough hours in a day to actually live") with a growth-minded alternative (e.g. "There's always a better way, and I'm going to discover how to improve my work-life balance"), so as to inculcate a deliberate growth mindset for the task at hand. Framing career challenges as an opportunity to practice and develop useful skills, rather than as a test of inherent ability, may also minimize the anxiety and defensiveness that impedes wholeheartedly being in learning mode.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How can career professionals nudge individuals in the workforce towards embracing the learning mode?

## FURTHER READING



How being in learning mode may enable a sustainable career across the lifespan



In learning mode? The role of mindsets in derailing and enabling experiential leadership development



Engaging Employees to Create a Sustainable Business

## IN CONVERSATION

Ghenglai is a seasoned facilitator and coach, with both private and public sector experience in strategic HR management and Coaching including career coaching, performance coaching and executive coaching. She has a passion for career management, talent management and leadership development.

Ghenglai is the Co-Founder of Morph Consulting, an HR consulting and training company, as well as an Adjunct Adult Educator with the Workforce Singapore (WSG) for the Career Facilitation Programme (CFP) and Career Advisor Programme (CAP). She is also an Adjunct Adult Educator for the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), supporting the development of training and adult educators through an integrated programme of classroom based, technology enabled and workplace learning.



Yip Ghenglai

WSG Career Advisory Programme & Career Facilitation Programme Trainer

### What do you think are some of the biggest challenges and rewards facing our local HR practitioners as they carry out career conversations at work?

I personally feel that the single biggest challenge faced by HR practitioners today is **building trust** with employees — assuring them that we have their best interests at heart.

Oftentimes employees do not approach HR practitioners for career advice because they think that HR practitioners within the organisation will only give advice that encourages retention within the company and not necessarily think in the best interest of the individual at that stage of their life and career.

I strongly believe that if we take a long-term view of an employee's career, to the extent of thinking beyond the current organisation, we will truly unleash the potential of that individual beyond just the needs of a company or industry, and subsequently the whole workforce.

Some might think this runs counter to employee retention, however experience has shown that employees appreciate this candor; that the company has their best interests at heart, and in fact, serves as a retention strategy. This is one of the ways we can develop talent for the nation and even beyond our borders. This is what makes HR work truly inspiring and exciting for me!

### The notion of Career Development is increasingly gaining popularity and recognition. How do you think it can benefit today's workforce?

I started doing Career Development work back in 2003 with the then - Singapore Workforce Development Agency.

From an individual's point of view, career management can be daunting at times. However, it can also be empowering and motivating, allowing us to take charge and design our career through greater self-awareness of our own purpose, values, interests, personality, strengths, life stage/commitments, and priorities.

From an employer's point of view, embedding career development and management into HR systems and conversations is a great employee value proposition and retention strategy. From my experience, when we care about an employee's career development and support them in managing life and work commitments, the employee is often ready to give back 110% or more!

### How do you think employers can play a greater role in embedding the practice of Career Development within their organisations?

I personally feel that Career Development can be a key value proposition for hiring and retaining talent. Caring for each and every employee, can unleash the potential of the organisation; because being curious about their career and personal aspirations, and guiding them through managing their career can be extremely motivating for employees.

As HR practitioners, we can help leaders and managers to be proactive when it comes to conducting career conversations through an employee centric approach. An employee centric approach would require leaders and managers to focus on the employee — get to know who they really are, their ambitions, and support them in their growth journey.

**What is one key advice you would give to HR practitioners who provide career advisory to fellow colleagues at work?**

The first thing I do in any career conversation is to form a working alliance and build trust. This requires us to listen more, speak less, and probe to understand where the individual is coming from. Having a good understanding of the individual helps with the subsequent stages of supporting them as they define their career goals and action plans.

The key to building trust with fellow colleagues is to help them understand that you have their interests at heart, and will keep what they share confidential.

Career advisory and coaching are very rewarding and inspiring aspects of HR's work, and I leave you with my personal philosophy: *"To leave a legacy in the organisations that I build, the people I develop, and the life that I lead."*

Connect with Ghenglai here: [www.linkedin.com/in/ghenglai-yip](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ghenglai-yip)

## Congratulations to our 2019 Credential Holders!

### Certified Career Practitioners

Adeline Lim Meow Kuan  
Aishah Binte Akil  
Alice Ku Pei Aik  
Badariah Bte Amil  
Bong Siew Yin  
Chan Boon Siong Dennis  
Chan Chee Hoe  
Cheng Hing Nan  
Chew Keng Tiew, Timothy  
Chiang Yuet Lin  
Chin Chee Lin, Irene  
Chua Soik Jun Geraldine  
Ernest Lim Kwoon Yong  
Evani Venkata Anantha Lakshmi  
Fong Kok Wah  
Foo Lai Kuan, Minna  
Foo May Ling  
Gan Peck Lian, Christine  
Gerard Chee Su Choong  
Haseena Binte Mohd Sham  
Heng Yit Han David  
Indira D/O Ramasundran  
Jay Shree D/O Mohan Pohumal Shivanani  
Jitendra Nagpal  
Kate Choo Huey Xuan  
Kathy Koh Lee Keow  
Kee May Lee  
Koh Boon Yi, Jovian  
Lee Pei Ru Wendy

Leong Chee Hung  
Liew Dewen Asher  
Lim Chooi Hong Joleen  
Lin Peili  
Low Kok Soon Jason  
Loy Shing Ching  
Lum Lai Mung  
Marlina Bte Abdullah@Baljeet Kaur  
Mitchell Sia Chiao-Min  
Moi Seng Kwong  
Muhammad Zulhelmi Bin Juma'at  
Ng Ee Leng Elaine  
Noralizah Binte Aziz  
Ong Lai Hock Tony  
Phoa Ang Hiok  
Quek Kiat Hian  
Sio Wee Syn  
Tan Buck Siang Allen  
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Tan Sok Ngee Beatrice  
Tang Wai Leng  
Teh Siew Fui  
Teng Soo Ling  
Teo Thim Toh  
Tuen Run Qing  
Wang Pheok Hoon  
Wang Shanhui, Adora  
Yeo Kia Li  
Yeo Sang Leng Dorothea



### Certified Career Advisors

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Dorothy Tan Hui Sim  
Teo Pek Quen  
Leong Sing Meng  
Lim Yin Jee Faith  
Maurice Ng Hock Seong  
Ng Teng Geok (Huang Tingyu)  
Sanisah Binte Asri  
Jitendra Nagpal  
Ee-Leen Chong  
Han Huay Huay Alisa  
Yong Siao Fern



Next Credential application window will be in Jan 2020.

Find out more:  
[bit.ly/cdf\\_credential](https://bit.ly/cdf_credential)



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## CPD IN NUMBERS

The July 2019 opening for the WSG Career Development Framework (CDF) Credentials saw 25 career professionals being awarded with their credentials!

Here are some interesting statistics:

#### Credential Holder's Profile:

52% Male 48% Female

#### Breakdown of Client Profile:



#### Avg hour per practitioner:



Total no. of clients seen: **12,749**



\* Based on declaration of contact and non-contact hours in the past 3 years.



Brought to you by:

**Career Practitioners Division (CPD)**

Careers Connect Group

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