

Stephen Chong
– *defining corporate wisdom*

Media Release

Diversity in business is not just a word restricted to gender says Stephen Chong

Monday August 6, 2018. Whilst addressing a group of managers at a ***Defining Corporate Wisdom*** workshop Stephen Chong challenged the group to think beyond diversity in terms of gender or even age, race or cultural background. Instead to look past the things in common but how everyone is different and why diversity is so important among teams in business.



To highlight this, Stephen Chong used the example of a Conductor who strides on stage before the highly expectant orchestra and an excited, but a slightly anxious audience, they know that they hold in hand the opportunity to create a wonderful symphony. But it is more than that!

“Assembled before them is a large team of 50 or more, fine musicians, each dedicated to performing at the highest level. Assembled are master percussionists, brass, woodwinds and strings”, said Stephen.

“The Conductor knows the score. Yet, he or she must draw forth the best from the assembled group to ensure that each and every paying patron’s expectations are fully met. This requires skill. This requires leadership”.

Stephen continued, “The Conductor knows the assembled musicians possess a wide range of skills and a diversity of ability. Yet, it is known that every musician is a master of their own craft. They have reached a level of skill and competency – otherwise, they wouldn’t or shouldn’t be there”.

Yes, there is a mix of gender, certainly, there is a wide divergence of personality and assuredly there is wide-variety of opinions. Yet, the Master Conductor knows they hold the baton. They conduct, but it is the totality of the whole that makes the music great.

The most effective leaders know the same principles apply to Business Effectiveness affirmed Stephen Chong.

“Firstly, the Effective Leader must convene a group of skilled and competent people. If a person does not measure up to those required skills, they must be replaced by someone who can. If the area is Finance, Operations, or Sales – skills and competency count. Most assuredly, they know not to fall prey to the **three isms** - nepotism, favouritism or despotism”.

Secondly, the Effective Leader is aware that there must be a diversity of personalities.

In his 30-years experience of working with teams and personality profiling, Stephen has found that the most effective teams are those that have a wide variety of personality types as their make-up.

Those teams that have uniformity of personality types tend to be dysfunctional and incapable of expansive thinking or practical application.

Thirdly, and most importantly, the Effective Leader knows that they **MUST** have a diversity of opinion and ideas generation. The last thing that an effective leader would want is **Groupthink** – opinions that confirm only with their own.

To obtain the best results, the effective leader should welcome a divergent set of opinions from which they can decide upon the best course of action. Yes, this will take skill on the Leader's part. Yes, there will be conflict. But if this conflict is constructive (Leader's role), then the end results will be far superior to the limited perspectives of just one or two.

Finally, like the Conductor, the Effective Leader knows that they must make decisions based on the best interests of the patrons. It is they, after all, who are the ultimate beneficiaries of the organisation.

The Effective Leader will be aware of their own decision-making framework.

Do they decide with the 'head' and go by logic, or, do they decide with the 'heart' based on personal convictions? Are they concerned with truth and justice, or, the maintenance of personal relationships? Do they take a 'long-term' view, or, an immediate and personal view?

The Effective Leader will know their decision-making preferences.

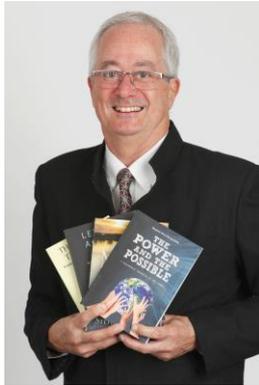
Stephen Chong continued, "Like the Conductor, as an Effective Leader, you should be loathed to have within your orchestra a mandated number of gender-based musicians. Embrace diversity and value the skills and competencies, provided with a wide range of diverse opinions from people who are not afraid to 'speak up'.

"Have a variety of personality types each placed within the area of their expertise – where they can be best utilised for the betterment of the final product. If all of this does not equate to an equitable gender-base, I would be highly surprised".

Stephen Chong concluded the workshop, "As an Effective Leader, be aware that all of these functions are within your brief. You hold the baton and conduct the orchestra. As Leader, you have the ultimate responsibility – and a heavy burden it is – but all worth the effort as the resultant masterful symphony is enjoyed by all paying-patrons".

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Stephen Chong M.Ed. is a highly sought-after Personal Development Coach, Speaker, and Author. In his coaching work, Stephen focuses on imparting the essential envisioning and goal-setting skills that bring out the best in executives, managers and staff in the modern workplace.

He has established a considerable reputation for designing and delivering quality coaching and training programs, evidenced in the many courses he has written, such as: Enhanced leadership skills; Effective communication; Conflict resolution; Living on the edge of your comfort zone; Developing winning teams; and Overcoming the obstacles.