

Tripartism @Work

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Work Together, Grow Together

More than 150 CEOs, senior management representatives and key tripartite partners re-affirmed their commitment to work together at the Singapore Tripartism Forum Luncheon Dialogue with CEOs on 'Leveraging Tripartism To Raise Productivity' held at the Shangri-La Hotel on 30 March 2011.

The dialogue session, moderated by NTUC President John De Payva, provided attendees with a platform to voice issues to panellists Manpower Minister Gan Kim Yong, NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say and SNEF President Stephen Lee.

While some of the issues raised were on the Government's recent decision to increase foreign worker levy and the lack of local talent which, some claim, is aggravating the tight labour situation, the panellists highlighted that there are alternatives that companies should look at.

Stressing on the need to increase productivity over the next ten years from the current one per cent to two to three per cent each year, the tripartite leaders encouraged companies to tap on the various programmes that are already in place to increase productivity and in turn alleviate the company's labour problems.



Tripartite leaders (from left): NTUC Secretary General Lim Swee Say; SNEF President Stephen Lee; Minister for Manpower Gan Kim Yong and moderator of the dialogue session, NTUC President John De Payva.

“We are hoping that with the introduction of the re-employment legislation next year, we will have a lot more opportunities for older workers to continue working. When they continue working then we will have more manpower available and this will enhance and grow the local workforce.”

Manpower Minister Gan Kim Yong

“Let's work together, find a way to make better use of the workers whether they are local or foreign, young or old, highly educated or less educated, because every one of them can help us to break future bottlenecks in manpower.”

NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say

“Employers need to push for productivity growth and the target is 2 to 3 per cent productivity growth per year, making good use of all the programmes available. We are also prepared to modify some of the programmes to fit specific company or industry needs.”

SNEF President Stephen Lee

Everybody Wins In Re-employment

WITH ABOUT NINE months before the Retirement and Re-employment Act (RRA) requiring employers to re-employ eligible employees beyond the statutory minimum retirement age of 62 up to age 65 which will take effect in January 2012, more employers are taking re-employment seriously.

Around 1,000 participants at the Singapore Tripartism Forum Re-employment Seminar on 14 March 2011 heard Manpower Minister Gan Kim Yong say that businesses are realising that retaining and re-employing older workers gives them a competitive edge as it enables them to harness the experience and skills of an older workforce.

Mr Gan reminded employers that there are already in place several resources to help them implement re-employment. In addition, Mr Gan also announced that customised assistance will be made available for companies who have more difficulties implementing re-employment: “The tripartite partners will be leading an ‘ACCELERETE’ (ACCElERating Re-Employment through Tripartite Efforts) programme to offer targeted assistance to help employers align their HR policies and re-employment practices to the Tripartite Guidelines.”

“Our objective is two-fold. Firstly, to ensure older workers remain employable. Secondly, not only to protect them with the law but to make sure that companies want to continue employing them and that employees want to be employed”

SNEF Vice-President Alexander C. Melchers



(From left) SNEF Vice-President Alexander Melchers, Minister of State for Manpower Lee Yi Shyan, NTUC President John De Payva, ASME President and SBF Council Deputy Honorary Secretary Lawrence Leow and NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Heng Chee How at the STF dialogue.

“You cannot get business success by getting subsidies from Government. You can only get business success by being competitive and productive. And for that you should incorporate your older workers, your re-employed workers, as part of your competitive strategy when you ready your system and human resources so that they can perform for you.”

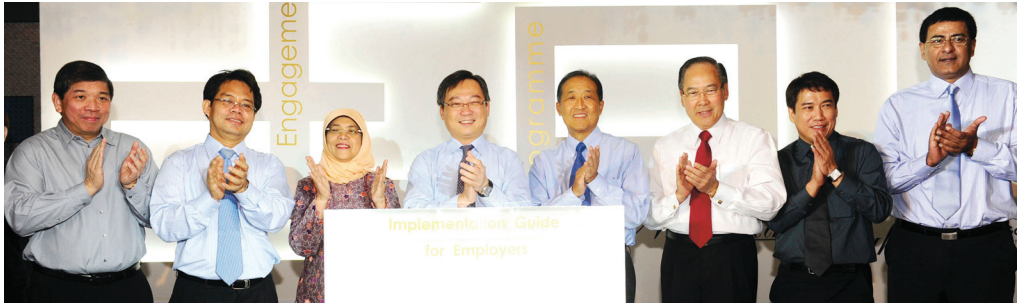
NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Heng Chee How

STF Survey 2011

SNEF is currently conducting a survey to gather employers' views on how STF can improve its various outreach efforts and suggestions on STF programmes that will benefit the HR community.

To participate in this survey, please log on to <http://survey.sgemployers.com/surveys/stf2011.htm>. Alternatively, you may wish to email us at mr@snef.org.sg to request for the soft-copy of the survey forms.

New Guide To Help Organisations Be More Resilient And United



Mr Gan Kim Yong (fourth from left) launches the CEP Implementation Guide for Employers with various tripartite partners.

IS YOUR WORKPLACE resilient to sudden events or situations that can adversely affect the harmonious workplace relations resulting in business disruptions?

An implementation guide has recently been launched to help employers "kick-start" within their organisations the Community Engagement Programme (CEP), with simple step-by-step information to help them build a resilient and united workforce. The CEP is a national initiative by the Businesses and Unions Cluster, supported by the Ministry of Manpower, seeking to strengthen the understanding and ties between people of different races and religions, and encourage different sectors of society to pick up

skills and knowledge in coping with emergencies, so as to build socially harmonious and secure workplaces.

Launched by Manpower Minister Gan Kim Yong at the CEP Businesses and Unions Cluster's Networking Night on 23 February 2011, this new CEP Implementation Guide will help organisations identify risks that could affect their workforce and cause business disruptions. Developed by tripartite partners and the ethnic chambers of commerce, it contains suggestions on how organisations can encourage and foster social harmony at the workplace.

The CEP Implementation Guide for Employers is now free for download via www.mom.gov.sg or www.singaporeunited.sg.

Extension Of WSHA To All Workplaces

THE WORKPLACE SAFETY & HEALTH

(WSH) Act will be extended to all workplaces from September 2011. Enacted in 2006, the Act initially applied only to higher-risk workplaces such as factories, construction work sites and shipyards. In 2008, the coverage was extended to six additional sectors - healthcare, hotels and restaurants, landscaping, transport and logistics, veterinary, and water and waste management.

The progressive extension of WSH Act to all work places underscores the Ministry of Manpower (MOM)'s belief that every worker has a right to a safe and healthy workplace. This law requires stakeholders to take reasonably practicable measures to ensure the safety and health of employees and other people that are affected by the work being carried out. In addition, employers must report to MOM incidents where an employee is injured or ill because of work.

To increase the awareness of the extended coverage of the Act and to help the new sectors put in place safety and health practices, MOM and the Workplace Safety and Health Council have taken various measures to inform and educate employers and the general workforce. These include:

- WSH clinics where employers, particularly SMEs, get one-on-one advisory services on their roles and obligations.



Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Manpower Mr Hawazi Daipi speaking to participants at a WSH Clinic.

- Release of "A Guide to Workplace Safety and Health" to help new workplaces manage common WSH hazards, like slips, trips and injuries caused by manual handling of objects.
- Impactful advertisements on safety and health at work and the staging of "flash mob skits" at high traffic areas.
- Annual National WSH Campaigns, in collaboration with the tripartite partners, to raise industry awareness on WSH. The theme for this year focuses on everyday risks at work with a range of innovative and enriching activities for both employers and employees.

More information on the extension of WSHA may be found on the MOM website at www.mom.gov.sg or the WSH Council website at www.wshc.sg.

Dialogue On Tripartism With Overseas Delegates

THIRTY-TWO SENIOR officers from various developing countries attended a dialogue session with tripartite leaders on 10 March 2011. The delegates were on a visit to Singapore under the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP), which provides technical assistance to developing countries.

The delegates were briefed on industrial relations in Singapore under the tripartite framework. This was followed by a lively discussion, during which the visitors showed a keen interest on how the labour-management relations climate in Singapore had evolved from adversarial conflict in the 50s and 60s to the present state of industrial peace and harmony.

In response to questions by the delegates on the role of the tripartite partners in helping companies and workers manage the 2008/09 downturn, Mr Ong Yen Her, MOM Divisional Director Labour Relations and Workplaces Division, shared that each party understood the role that it had to play and worked together in adopting the approach of cutting costs to save jobs. Employers sent their excess manpower for training in preparation for the recovery instead of retrenching them. Employee trade unions helped explain and convince workers in companies badly affected by the downturn to accept cost cutting measures such as shorter work weeks and temporary lay-offs to save jobs. The government also played its part by providing financial support to employers through the Jobs Credit Scheme and SPUR (Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience) to defray the cost of training and absentee payroll for the employers.

The delegates came away from the session with a better understanding of Singapore's model of Tripartism. They were impressed by how the tripartite partners work together to foster industrial harmony in Singapore and enhance Singapore's competitiveness.