

Tripartite Golf Friendly Turns 20 ...And So Does Orchid Country Club

The annual Tripartite Golf Friendly at Orchid Country Club (OCC) held its 20th edition on 28 July 2013. Around 200 participants from the Government, employers and unions took part in the event which also coincided with OCC's 20th anniversary.

The first Tripartite Golf Friendly held on 9 October 1994 was organised by then-NTUC President Oscar Oliveira on the suggestion of then-Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong. It has since grown to become an annual fixture at OCC.

In his welcome speech at the dinner after the golf game, Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) President Stephen Lee said: "It is hard to believe that we have been meeting like this for 20 consecutive years. Newcomers may not know that the idea for



Happy 20th birthday! (From left) NTUC Emeritus President John De Payva, National Wages Council 2013/14 Chairman Professor Lim Pin, Health Minister and Chairman of Singapore Labour Foundation Gan Kim Yong, NTUC Immediate Past Secretary-General Lim Boon Heng, OCC General Committee President Chong Kee Hiong, NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say, Acting Manpower Minister Tan Chuan-Jin, Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong, SNEF President Stephen Lee and Defence Minister Dr Ng Eng Hen.

a Tripartite Golf Friendly came from Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong back in 1993 when he was Prime Minister. It was also the year OCC was completed."

Mr Lee noted that over the past 20 years, there have been two Prime Ministers - Mr Goh

Chok Tong from 1990 to 2004, and Mr Lee Hsien Loong from 2004 to date.

There have been three NTUC Secretaries-General - the late Mr Ong Teng Cheong from 1983 to 1993, Mr Lim Boon Heng from 1993 to 2006, and Mr Lim Swee Say from 2006 to date.

There has also been three NTUC Presidents - Mr Oscar Oliveira from 1986 to 1997, Mr John De Payva from 1997 till 2011, and Ms Diana Chia from 2011 to date.

In addition, there have been five Ministers for Manpower - Dr Lee Boon Yang from 1992 to 2003, Dr Ng Eng Hen from 2003 to 2008, Mr Gan Kim Yong from 2008 to 2011, Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam from 2011 to 2012, and Mr Tan Chuan-Jin from 2012 to date.

The unions won the overall trophy this year, and there was a cake cutting ceremony to mark the 20th anniversary of both the Tripartite Golf Friendly and OCC. A special OCC 20th anniversary commemorative book was distributed to participants at the event and later to OCC members as well.

Companies Share Benefits Of WorkPro

In light of the tight labour market in Singapore, the Government launched this year the WorkPro funding scheme to help Singaporeans re-join the workforce. Jointly developed by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) and National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), the tripartite programme aims to encourage the adoption of flexible work arrangements (FWAs), facilitate job redesign and support the employment of mature workers and back-to-work locals. Two companies which have tapped on WorkPro share their experience and the benefits of the scheme:

Nando's Chickenland Singapore Pte Ltd

The Afro-Portuguese casual dining restaurant has about eight workers employed under the WorkPro funding scheme. Nando's General Manager, June Koh, shared that the re-employment legislation provided the company with a bigger pool of candidates to hire. "The opportunity to attend the Job Redesign and Process Improvement Course and the Age Management Course has contributed positively to our human capital management", says Ms Koh.

While the company is still currently in the process of claiming the grant, Ms Koh shared that the fund application process is easy. She added that with part of the grant, cost of advertising and training can be defrayed. Workers recruited through the WorkPro funding scheme will also receive benefits like transport allowance and retention bonus. It is a win-win situation for both the employer and the employees.

Nippon Paint (Singapore) Co Pte Ltd

Nippon Paint (Singapore) was established in 1962 and is one of the leading paint manufacturers in Singapore. It is also one of the unionised companies that have tapped on WorkPro to support the employment of mature workers and back-to-work locals. HR Manager Rita Chua noted that the purpose of WorkPro was to retain existing staff and to attract back-to-work locals into the workforce. "We believe that the funding will also provide the company an early headstart in attracting mature workers and back-to-work locals," she said. She also commented on the ease of applying for the funding scheme. "The application was made easier with the right officer-in-charge who handled our concerns well," Ms Chua added.

SNEF-TP 5th Structured Human Resource Internship Programme (SHIP)

10 September 2013 – 30 November 2013



The Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) together with Temasek Polytechnic (TP) organised the 5th Structured Human Resource Internship Programme (SHIP) for TP students majoring in Diplomas in Business with an elective in Human Resource Management, from 10 September to 30 November 2013.

The programme allowed students to gain rare insights into the employment practices, policies and issues in Singapore through a week-long series of talks, briefings and on-site visits to SNEF, the Ministry of Manpower, the Industrial Arbitration Court, the National Trades Union Congress, the Workplace Safety and Health Council, the Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices and the Employer Alliance. This was followed by a 10-week industrial attachment at companies, which will enable students to gain practical insights into HR Practices.

We wish the SHIP interns success in their future endeavours.

Review Of The Industrial Relations Act

The Industrial Relations Act (IRA) provides a framework for the prevention and settlement of trade disputes through collective bargaining, conciliation and arbitration.

PMEs (Professionals, Managers and Executives) now form more than a third of the workforce and their proportion is likely to increase further in the coming years. A Tripartite Workgroup with representatives from the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) and the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) was formed to update the IRA to reflect the changing workforce profile and workplace norms. The Tripartite Workgroup has deliberated and tabled its recommendations, which incorporate feedback from SNEF and NTUC's consultations with their respective constituents.

The Government supports these recommendations and MOM is seeking feedback from the public through the REACH ([reaching everyone for active citizenry@ home](http://reachingeveryoneforactivecitizenry.com)) portal on the proposed areas being considered in the review. The Tripartite Workgroup will concurrently work out a set of guidelines to guide implementation on the ground so that the proposed amendments can be implemented smoothly. MOM plans to introduce the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Bill in Parliament next year after the public consultations.

The recommendations include:

- Allowing rank-and-file unions to collectively represent PMEs (except those with substantial managerial responsibilities) on any industrial matters except on matters which are the prerogative of employers, and
- Expanding the areas for limited representation on an individual basis to include re-employment disputes.

Being Fair Is The Right Thing To Do

Recently, the Ministry of Manpower reported that unemployment remained low for the second quarter of 2013. In such a tight labour market, employers who practise Fair Employment Practices (FEP) would have access to a wider talent pool, increasing their chances of finding the best person for the job.

Besides having access to a wider talent pool, some of the other benefits of being fair include:

- Increased productivity and staff retention
- Innovation and tapping into new markets
- Improved customer satisfaction
- Deployment flexibility
- Being an employer of choice

Ultimately, being fair and practising FEP is the right thing to do. The Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices sets out fair employment practices for adoption by employers. This will not only help prevent discrimination at the workplace, but also encourage employers to adopt progressive HR practices that will benefit both employers and employees.

The five principles of FEP are:

- a. Recruit and select employees on the basis of merit (such as skills, experience or ability to perform the job), and regardless of age, race, gender, religion, family status or disability.
- b. Treat employees fairly and with respect and implement progressive human resource management systems.
- c. Provide employees with equal opportunity to be considered for training and development based on their strengths and needs to help them achieve their full potential.
- d. Reward employees fairly based on their ability, performance, contribution and experience.
- e. Abide by labour laws and adopt the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices.

The practice of FEP does not just start after an employee joins a company. FEP is also important during the recruitment stage, right from the job advertisement that a company puts up. Putting up a good job advertisement does not just ensure that the right candidates apply for the job (thereby saving time on the recruitment process), but also sends a strong signal about the beliefs and values of a company.

Creating a job advertisement starts with knowing what the tasks and responsibilities of the job are, and the skills, abilities, experiences and qualifications needed to perform the job. Selection criteria should be stated clearly, and should be related to qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience.

Employers who advertise a position requiring a specific attribute which may be described as discriminatory should ensure that it is indeed a requirement of the job and state the reason for the requirement in the advertisement. This will ensure that it will be well understood. Words or phrases that exclude Singaporeans or indicate a preference for non-Singaporeans should not be used in job advertisements.

Please refer to TAFEP's website (www.tafep.sg) for examples of acceptable and unacceptable phrases in job advertisements.