

A Malaysian Researcher's Profile and Perspective

Ungku Suseelawati Ungku Omar

Executive Director
DTZ Debenham Tie Leung

Getting to Know You

Mrs. Omar, thank you for your willingness to share your reflections on your research career and provide us with your insights. Your insights are particularly important as the retail real estate industry becomes more global, creating new challenges for researchers and decision-makers. But even before addressing those issues, please tell us about your current position and responsibilities. Who do you work for, and how does retail fit into the company's business strategy?



I am the Executive Director of DTZ Debenham Tie Leung Malaysia. DTZ has a total of 200 offices worldwide. These offices report to three major regional head offices in London, Hong Kong and Singapore which respectively covers Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA); North Asia; and South East Asia (SEA). The Malaysian office reports to the South East Asia regional office, and provides advisory services for all sectors of the property market. Despite this breadth, our core specialization is retail, residential, investment advisory and agency capabilities.

I also hold the position of Regional Head of Retail for South East Asia, a responsibility that requires me to advise and oversee the retail assignments in the region for our offices in Jakarta, Singapore, Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur.

DTZ Malaysia has developed niche strength in three major areas: retail real estate; residential development, advisory services and marketing; and investment advisory services. Specifically, on the retail front we provide retail development consultancy to major developers in the region. Our consultancy work spans a wide range of situations, including concept development,

marketing positioning through market research findings, merchandise strategies and tenancy mix. As a key component of our services, we use market research, which is either done in-house or outsourced to specialized firms. Another distinguishing feature is that we work with architects to ensure that key inputs are factored into the layouts, plans and size of stores. This helps ensure that projects are in line with current and future market requirements. It also is important to a global operation, helping ensure that we understand the implication of major trends after taking into account the unique cultural differences of each country. In addition, we develop marketing and leasing strategies for malls to help them respond to competitive forces and market demand.

We currently work with major regional funds to identify and secure suitable property investments within the region. Property funds are looking for good, high-yielding investments, and retail is a favorite for them. By having an understanding of the key ingredients required to make successful malls in various countries and markets, we are able to provide developers with an opportunity to attract both international and local investors, and to provide returns that are competitive under local market conditions.

How did you become involved in ICSC?

My particular involvement began when I attended the inaugural Asia Pacific ICSC conference in Hong Kong in 1993. At that time I was employed by a Malaysian property developer, Kuala Lumpur City Centre Holdings (KLCC). My firm was the developer of the Petronas twin towers (at that time, the tallest towers in the world), and the Suria KLCC (the 1-million-square-foot net leasable area [NLA] retail center housed in the podium of the towers).

Since that first conference, I have been a firm supporter and member of the ICSC. The conference and the networking that was part of the whole experience

This is part of a series of executive profiles of research-oriented industry leaders conducted by **James DeLisle, Ph.D.**, Director of the Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies at the University of Washington.

Some of the interviewees' careers remain in research, as they continuously hone their skills, while others have moved on to other functional areas. Regardless of current or future career choices, we will explore to what extent the mind-set and skills cultivated in research roles have been instrumental in their professional development, and how they have built on that foundation.



provided me with a great opportunity to learn from the past experiences of developers worldwide. I subsequently attended the both Level I and Level II of the ICSC Management/Marketing Institute Certificate Programs, which I found to be excellent. To this day, more than 14 years after participating in these programs, I still am in contact with some of the participants—some of whom now hold key positions in the shopping center industry in Asia. My involvement in ICSC has been particularly important in light of DTZ’s emphasis on the retail sector; the breadth of the organization and its members have helped across the full spectrum of our business, covering not only development and leasing, but investment advisory services as well.

What role will you play as an ICSC Asia Pacific Research Group member in ICSC’s goal to increase retail real estate data and research transparency across Asia?

I am very excited about ICSC’s initiative to improve data and create greater transparency across the region. I believe that I will be able to help ensure the success of these efforts, and will be able to bring an understanding of developments in the retail industry in South East Asia, which are somewhat unique. I realize the importance of having access to accurate, timely data—especially after my experience of being involved in the development of an international shopping center (KLCC). Not only was the center ahead of it’s time, but we also faced real challenges in terms of in getting access to information that could help us make the right decisions. As such, we had to do a lot of work and research on our own. While we were able to develop a sufficient understanding of the market, we realize that others will not be able to make a similar investment in proprietary research. Further, the new wave of international and institutional investors demands sufficient information that allows them to understand the risks and rewards in such investments. In particular, they are looking for industry indicators that are generally accepted, rather than proprietary research and data that typically cannot be independently verified.

Having gone through the challenges we faced, I hope that we can shorten the process for others and help them develop a better understanding of the market. I believe that to be successful in the global capital market, it will be necessary to encourage growth of knowledge. I believe that this will be best achieved by sharing and developing consistent and comparable market information. In the long run, ICSC’s efforts in this regard will help support the development of the shopping center industry in this region.

Thanks for your insight into the retail market in the South East Asia region. You’ve obviously developed a lot of insight into the market. We’d like to know a little about your personal background. Where were you raised, and what was it like growing up?

I was born in Malaysia into a family with six kids. I was very fortunate to have a father who strongly believed that education was the key to success instead of being dependent on one’s family background. He believed that girls should have an equal chance for education and encouraged all of us (five girls and one boy) to excel in our studies. Thus, from an early stage we were trained to appreciate the importance of research and knowledge.

When I was four years old, our family moved to London, as my father was pursuing his doctorate in pathology at the University of London’s School of Tropical Medicine. We were there for almost four years, and the experience provided me with a great foundation for my education. Upon my return to Malaysia, I continued my education up to Form 6 (equivalent to high school) and then went back to the United Kingdom to pursue a degree at the University of Lancaster.

Unfortunately, my father passed away at the young age of 38, at the height of his career as the director of the Institute of Medical Research. He himself was very involved in education in Malaysia. He was part of the think tank that was involved in the conceptualization of two local universities as well as some educational institutes in the country.

Upon his death, my young mother was cast in the role as the force that kept the family going. I’m sure that was a challenge for her, as she had to transition from being the housewife of a prominent government officer to a head of household who suddenly had to work for the first time in her life at the age of 35 years. She was an amazing lady, and dynamic with an acute business sense. By developing a few small properties that my father left behind, she managed to raise us and put us through university. We also were fortunate that the Malaysian government at that time had a very active scholarship program from which most of my siblings benefited at either at local or U.K. universities.

What is your educational background and how did it prepare you for your career? Did you have any specific retail or real estate education?

I graduated with Bachelor of Science degree in management, specializing in marketing at the University of Lancaster. In looking back, I believe that getting a degree or formal education in a particular subject may not necessarily help you prepare exactly for a chosen



career. This is especially true, since many of the subjects taught when I went to school were, at most times, purely academic in nature and drew on relatively little practical experience. However, I also believe that having a formal education and getting a degree are important in a more indirect way—by helping one learn how to think and how to strategize. I believe that these general skills, tools and mind-sets are important to achieving success in whatever field one chooses to work in.

Career Path

Tell us how you first became interested in retail real estate? What was your first retail real estate related job? Why did you choose to work there?

I had not planned on a career in real estate; rather, I became interested by accident or maybe by natural progression. I began my working life in the petroleum industry, in a marketing job with the national petroleum company of Malaysia: Petronas. I was part of a team that was responsible for setting up the first Petronas service stations in the country. Subsequently, I was part of the Natural Gas division, where I was in business development and involved in the promotion of natural gas as an alternative car fuel, and worked on a cabinet paper to solicit incentives for that fuel. After nine years in this position, I felt that something was missing. Although I was being promoted into a newly formed Gas and Petrochemical division, I decided to leave Petronas and make a total career change. I entered the retail industry by joining Metrojaya, the largest department store chain in Malaysia at that time.

In this new organization, I was appointed as a project manager, responsible for setting up new department stores and specialty stores in the country as well as in Singapore. Further, I worked with merchandisers as well as in operations, learning the retail business from a number of important perspectives. I enjoyed the challenges and learned a lot in my new career. By the end of three years I was offered a job as the operations manager in charge of all of the stores. While I was intrigued by the offer, I didn't take up the position. At that point in my career, I was drawn to a job offer as a retail development manager for Suria KLCC, the largest shopping mall at the podium of the Petronas twin towers. I chose to work at KLCC, drawn by the opportunity to enter an exciting new field that blended retail and real estate. In my new role, my job was both exciting and challenging. I was particularly pleased to be part of the team that set new directions and standards of retail in the country. While I was extremely busy, I realized that there was much to learn and to do, and continued my "on-the-job" education and training. On a

side note, I should point out that KLCC is a subsidiary of Petronas. Thus, although I left to take on new challenges, my career came back full circle because of my retail experience.

How did your career unfold after that start? What different positions have you held and what led you down that career path?

My first real estate-related position in 1993 as Retail Development Manager was a turning point, both for me and my company. At that point, I was, in effective, the first person in the department. I was successful in building the position and was later promoted to General Manager when the department grew. As we expanded our scope of operations, my responsibilities increased. I was responsible for leading and directing a team of consultants, and a staff, to produce a design concept that would set new benchmarks in the industry, which would be marketable to both international and local retailers. We developed the plans, the positioning strategy, and the merchandise mix and tenant mix for the mall. We then went on to lease the mall, and as a starting point, were able to get a commitment from Isetan as the first department store anchor. Subsequently, I was also involved in negotiations with the joint venture partners—Rodamco and Westfield. This was a new and exciting challenge for me, since I had to use my retail and real estate knowledge to convince them that the project would be successful.

In 1998, I led the leasing and marketing of the center. After its opening, I handed it over to the center management team (led by Westfield, together with KLCC). At that point, my role changed to asset management of the mall.

What is or was your most rewarding job or the most rewarding part of your job, and why? If you moved on, why did you leave that position?

The most rewarding part of my job is when established retailers, who are the market leaders in a particular region, commit to take space in a mall. I view that as confirmation that they understand and agree with our vision for the mall. I find great satisfaction in knowing that I have been part of that vision and have helped create value that retailers recognize. To me, these are the opinions that matter the most since I know how sophisticated they are in making such decisions. I also love the "feel of" and the excitement as new shops open in a mall. This is particularly rewarding when my team has been involved and we have pushed the standards of merchandise and quality of fit-out to match consumer demand. There's really no way to best describe the sense



of being part of such an operation.

Although I take great satisfaction in putting a mall together, I find that after a mall has opened and after the initial challenges that are inevitable with a new venture have been overcome, my own excitement peters down somewhat. In essence, with success, the job takes on a sense of repetition. At this point, I believe that I have made my best contribution and feel compelled to move on to try new things. Looking back, I think that I am something of a masochist at heart and that I constantly need new challenges. I guess that is what I find so exciting about my current position; I feel that I am constantly challenged as I work on multiple jobs and try to accommodate a range of clients with their own goals and objectives.

If you could, would you change any career decisions you made along the way? Do you wish you had taken some opportunities that you passed on?

While I am not the type of person who likes to look back and wonder, “What if I had...?” I’ve often stepped back and reflected on my career choices. For example, after four years into my first job in marketing at Petronas, and after the team had set up more than 20 stations across the country, I grew restless. Once the processes were in place things were running smoothly, I decided to move on to the upstream division as a Senior Project Buyer for an offshore project. Unfortunately, once I got there I soon found that the work was very structured and rather mundane compared to the challenges I faced in making marketing decisions. Ironically, this was the first time that I had changed jobs after only one year.

As to regretting decisions I’ve made, one of the lessons I’ve learned is that it doesn’t pay to second guess yourself. In most cases, you can’t reverse your decisions anyway, so you should learn how to make the most of them and concentrate on moving forward.

Looking back, were there some specific event(s) that were defining moments in your life? If so, what were they?

The most defining event in my career up to this point was leaving a secure and well-paid job in Petronas, a government linked corporation, and moving to join a retailer. The bottom line is that I took a risk. Despite the upside potential, the reality is that I took a salary cut, and had lower benefits and fewer holidays. Furthermore, I had entered a field in which I had no direct experience. Despite these caveats, I enjoyed the change and have learned to thrive on new challenges. In some respects, I

can say that I have found my “true vocation” after nine years of working. I would never have discovered my true calling if I had not made the move to first join Metrojaya. It later led to my job in KLCC and began my career in retail real estate. The bottom line is that I love what I do, and wouldn’t do anything differently.

What was the most difficult or riskiest career decision you faced? What was the outcome? Would you make the same decision today? What “lesson learned” might have helped you in facing this decision?

The riskiest career decision I faced was when I considered leaving KLCC in 2000 at the age of 42 to be one of the local founding members of DTZ. It was, yet again, a major move from being a paid employee in a very visible position in the industry to being a shareholder in a smaller firm. Also, it was an adjustment from being in a position where colleagues and clients sought me out for my expertise, to a position where it was necessary to canvass for jobs. I had taken other risks along the way, which helped me find my way into retail real estate. However, in terms of giving up something I loved, this was the riskiest career decision that I’ve made in my life. Not only did I take a massive salary cut, but I also had to put in my savings as equity to get the business going. In addition to a financial risk, I was moving into a new venture with new partners. Finally, I was moving into unfamiliar territory, with no experience in setting up a business and being a consultant. Fortunately, I have good partners and have received great support from the DTZ regional office in Singapore. At this point, the company is making tracks and is now one of the leading service providers in retail in our market area.

Based on this experience, I can share the lesson learned that nothing major really comes easy. While it may sound exciting to set up a company and work as an independent consultant, to be successful one must make a tremendous commitment and dedication that is much higher than required if you are content working for a major firm. Luckily I was prepared for the changes and benefited from a supportive husband and kids. Without their encouragement and support, I doubt if I could have made the commitment and sacrifices necessary to launch a successful business venture. Today, I enjoy the new challenges we face and am particularly pleased with the fact that I can make decisions quickly, and am also responsible for those decisions. Having gotten to this point, I don’t think I could go back to working as an employee.



Education

What role has education played in your current career? Did your formal education prepare you for your current position or what did you do to prepare for the industry?

My formal education served mainly to equip me with the right tools to begin my working career in marketing and/ or similar fields related to business and management. I believe that formal education is very important, as it trains you to be able to think on your feet, and introduces the tools necessary to analyze situations effectively so that you can use your knowledge in different fields.

To prepare for the industry, I read a lot, learned from people's experiences, and asked a lot of questions. The ICSC was just one platform where I had to opportunity to do so. I also took the opportunity to learn from other consultants and to learn how to listen, to analyze, and to question.

Once you got into retail real estate, did you need to further your career with professional training? Did you get this training informally on the job, or did you get formal training?

After my initial education, I didn't feel the need to receive further training, even when I changed careers. Working for major companies, I was lucky to get training informally on the job. To complement that training, however, I have attended ICSC's Levels I and II Management and Marketing Certificate Programs. I've also attended a number of relevant conventions and conferences that have helped me develop my insights and stay current with industry trends.

How important is formal educational training to someone pursuing a career like yours?

I think it is definitely useful to get formal educational training to build a solid foundation. Not only is it important for developing technical skills, but it also is critical for helping figure out how to approach new problems and make decisions. That said, formal education is not the only criterion needed for success, especially if you ever want to venture out on your own.

What skills or training does it take to excel in a job like yours? How should those interested in following your path best prepare themselves for success?

A formal education and a degree in Marketing, Business, Accounting or Real Estate are useful as a starting point. It also is important to obtain wide and extensive experience in various sectors that are not just confined to real estate. To be successful as a consultant,

decisions are so complex, that one must make a conscious effort to get exposure in related fields. I believe that the breadth and depth of perspectives and the experiences you develop from such outreach are essential to help you create the knowledge base that is necessary to excel in the industry. At the same time, the ability to communicate ideas to clients and staff is critical, suggesting the importance of developing solid communication skills. Regardless of the size of your operation, project and team management skills also are important for allowing you to harness the resources you have and to motivate your team to deliver in an efficient, consistent manner. From a personal perspective, I believe it is important to get yourself into a position where you truly enjoy your job and can be passionate about your work. Finally, to maintain your edge and always grow, you must be willing to learn from your experiences in your chosen field, and from those around you.

How do you rate the formal academic training that the "next generation" is receiving? How good a job are schools and universities doing in training students to "hit the ground running"?

The retail real estate industry has become increasingly complex on a number of fronts. This situation is likely to continue, especially with globalization and other trends that are changing the scope of decisions and challenges the industry faces. In these times, there is so much competition that it has raised the stakes and requires a much more comprehensive approach to decision-making. I believe that schools and universities have a role to play in helping students develop the technical skills and perspective associated with various degrees and certificates. However, I also realize that purely academic qualifications are not enough to prepare our "next generation." In today's environment, companies are looking for employees who can build on their skills and have qualities such as initiative, resourcefulness, team spirit, confidence, communication skills and commitment. To the extent schools cultivate such attributes in their students, they can better prepare the students for long-term success.

Professional Relations

A number of other people who have appeared in this Profiles section have benefited from relationships with professionals or a mentor. What role did other people play in shaping your life? Was there a particularly important person who influenced your career and if so, who, and how did they affect your life?



I had the opportunity to work with some excellent, as well as “not so good” consultants during my career at KLCC and DTZ—ranging from architects to planners to market research specialists. If there was one person who could be deemed as a mentor it was the former director of DTZ Singapore, Ms. Wang Look Tsui. In the early days of KLCC, she was my retail development consultant. I enjoyed working with her throughout the days and evenings. I valued her insight so much that I would offer to take her to the airport so that I could pick her brain, and get her ideas while on the way there. She was instrumental in getting me to join DTZ. Once I got here, she provided phenomenal support as well as being someone with whom I could share ideas and concepts. She did such a great job of training me and of helping me develop that, when she left the firm, I was able to take over her place as regional head of retail for South East Asia. Although we are not working together now, to this day we still keep in touch.

Do you have any words of advice or “lessons learned” that you’d like to share with respect to the importance of other people in life or in a career?

I believe that it is important to be able to listen to people, whether they are your clients, colleagues, retailers, or others from both within and outside the industry.

How important are industry affiliations? What characteristics should people look for when choosing industry associations with which to be affiliated?

I believe that they are very important, as they provide an opportunity to network, share and discuss ideas and experiences with the industry leaders and individuals who have gone through the paces; and to learn from the experiences of others. The characteristics that I would look for would be the international recognition, profile of members, quality of publications, willingness to share information with members, and their relevance to both international and local issues.

What do you believe are the key steps in making an affiliation work for the real estate professional?

To provide a meaningful experience, associations must be able to address relevant issues that you face. While a global connection is important and useful, there must be a local representative who is able to make the linkages and connections between international and regional groups.

Do you have any networking tips for young professionals?

Meet as many people within the industry as you can.

If I can leave one word of advice about networking, it is to *not limit* your outreach to the most influential person in an organization. Go out and meet, and get to know, people at all levels in all echelons. Not only will you develop a richer perspective, but you never know that, one day, the junior staff member who you met could be your client or even your employer. I am fortunate to have previous staff members who have now become my clients because they were treated fairly while working with us.

Role of Research

How important is research to the industry? Is it receiving the recognition it warrants? Why, or why not?

Research is crucial in the planning of any development. This is especially true in the retail industry where effective market research helps the developer design and build a shopping center that can be filled with an exciting, yet functional, tenant mix that appeals to the target market. That said, even though research is considered standard practice today, I believe that it is not taken as seriously as it should be in Malaysia. In many cases, research is seen as only a complementary effort that is required by management. While such a role is important, it is not adequate since it is not absorbed into the planning and design of the individual shopping center and market. Since good research is costly to execute, many try to get by with basic research and preliminary supply studies that provide a broad picture of the various competing retail developments. While important, such research is not adequate for ensuring long-term success.

At this point, we do not have reliable and predictable sources of population and demographic data, property market and retail industry information which are available in other countries. Thus, the industry has not been able to apply sound research fundamentals and methodologies that could improve decision-making. Due to these barriers, research methodology is somewhat rudimentary compared to other countries. Thus, research tends to capture first-level analysis, and does not reveal critical information such as the potential market share of proposed development vis-à-vis aggregate local retail market (in terms of dollars and cents), sales performance of retailers versus occupancy cost, and the projected retail spending per capita. In countries with more established industries—like Australia and America—there are specialized retail market research firms that provide this scope of services.



Do you believe that a background in research is necessary in order to fully understand the real estate process and markets?

A background in research is not a precursor to be effective in understanding real estate markets. However, a research perspective or appreciation for research can provide a solid base for decision making. Extension of the research process also can provide a systematic means of planning the development process and customizing the solution to the market situation.

What elements of research provide the best catapult to a successful career? Is research a good step toward preparation for a management position?

A solid research base promotes and encourages well-thought-out decisions that can be backed by the relevant facts and figures. Research requires methodological and critical thinking, analysis and accountability. These skills are very important inputs to a successful career in any phase of retail real estate. Thus, research can form an excellent base for a management position, though it is not a precondition to success.

What are the biggest challenges you face in terms of research?

The biggest research-related challenge for DTZ is access to reliable and consistent stream of data from government agencies, real estate developers and other sources. The absence of such data forces one to make a significant investment in procuring primary data. Not only does this become very costly, but it also is inherently limited by the lack of standardization and access to meaningful facts that are not freely shared in the competitive market. As a result, the research methodology we can apply is constrained, as we are limited in the quality of secondary data. This forces us at times to apply surface-level analysis that is property-market-centric. As such, the results are not extendable to broader retail industry which creates uncertainty and risk.

How has research changed over the past several years? Where is research headed in the industry?

As the retail industry becomes more competitive, retail research is becoming a compulsory planning tool. Traditional data focus has been on the supply of retail space and rental rates; now, more emphasis is being placed on capturing insights from customers. For example, some researchers are using shopper psychographic studies to assist in developing a mix and a style that matches consumer preferences. Overall, our research methodology is gradually improving and

maturing as we grow and as more data become available. We are also looking for ways to apply more sophisticated models and the research methodologies practiced in more advanced markets like Australia and the United States.

Are “lessons learned” and research insights portable across country boundaries or are they materially different?

The fundamentals remain the same, and the lessons learned can be applied cross-border. However, some fine-tuning is necessary to cater for local differences like cultural practices, norms and market trends. Thus, while globalization offers a number of benefits, it also creates a number of challenges that researchers must overcome.

Future Vision

How would you characterize the current state of the shopping center industry in Malaysia?

Malaysia is clearly on a growth track. The shopping center industry really started here in the early 1980s. It experienced exponential growth during the mid 1990s with major regional shopping centers like Sunway Pyramid and One Utama, located in the affluent suburbs of Kuala Lumpur city. At this point, the industry is beginning to consolidate. As the market matures, we anticipate upgrading of the industry to the next level of high-quality developments. Similarly, we are receiving a lot of attention from offshore, as real estate investment trusts (REITs) and foreign funds are entering the market.

Is the shopping center industry in Malaysia similar to other markets or is it significantly different and if so, how different?

Within the South East Asia market, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia are generally on par. While there are some pertinent differences, these countries are all on the growth trend. As a result, we are seeing some benchmark, high-quality developments across the region, as in the case of Suria KLCC (Kuala Lumpur), Siam Paragon (Bangkok) and Plaza Senayan (Jakarta). Meanwhile, Singapore, which is the most advanced retail market, is characterized as a condensed city with good-quality, vibrant retail facilities. It is a mature industry, so competition is more aggressive. Then there are countries with less-developed industries like Vietnam, which is only starting its shopping center industry. However, we are starting to see the presence of high-end brands such as Louis Vuitton opening in Vietnam. Despite the growth of shopping centers in Malaysia and throughout the region, there are some areas where the industry still falls behind other markets.



An evident area would be shopping center management, where there is room for improvement and additional expertise.

Is there one change you would most like see happen in the retail real estate industry in Malaysia?

There is a critical need for greater transparency and freedom of information. These data should come from the relevant supporting governments, as well as from private agencies. With some nurturing and guidance to provide and impetus, we would greatly benefit from having access to reliable data. Properly used, such data could ensure transparent procedures that would promote good planning practices for retail industry development. To get to that point, developers, mall owners and retailers also must see the benefit in sharing sales and occupancy cost data so that the industry can be benchmarked and continuously assessed locally as well as regionally.

What are the major trends that will affect global retail real estate in the future?

Globalization will promote greater transparency, mobility, and competition in the industry. Retailing trends in the Western and the more advanced Eastern economies—like Japan—will have more influence on the region. Going forward, increasing affluent and trendy local consumers will receive more attention, which will lead to more competition. Finally, international and cross-border retailing will become a significant portion of the retail business.

What are the key challenges you think young people will face in launching and sustaining successful careers?

In the future, I anticipate intense competition among industry players and employers as an increasingly talented pool of human resource continues to grow. It is more difficult today to secure a choice job with a preferred firm than it was in the past; this trend will only continue to grow as the industry matures and more players enter the market. The jobs of the future demand multi-disciplinary skills and talents, as well as the ability to communicate effectively. They also beckon a keen interest and passion about the subject matter—to both help chart a career growth path and ultimately sustain a successful career in a desired field

How can young professionals prepare for the “future world”?

Young professionals should not limit themselves to their daily jobs, but always look for opportunities to accumulate new knowledge and experiences

What closing advice would you like to share with the next generation of young professionals?

Work hard and expand your boundaries beyond what you’ve learned at school. Engage in as many multi-disciplinary roles as possible, so that you will have a more wholesome and a broad base for career development.

Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences, thoughts and recommendations with us. We wish you continued success, both personally and professionally.