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Paying attention to how her role may change and looking for the chance to learn new skills is how MasterCard employee Julia Yeo plans to keep growing in her career. "Many times we don't realise we're in a transition stage from our current role to a different job five or

10 years down the road," she said. Over the past nine months, Ms Yeo has trained in five countries – Singapore, the US, Switzerland, Indonesia and China – as part of the Asian Financial Leaders Programme run by Singapore Management University and Temasek Management Services. Ms Yeo, 39, who is MasterCard's vice-president for Asia-Pacific franchise development, said that besides being able to network with international peers from the finance industry, she has also picked up cultural nuances on how things are done elsewhere. This has

helped her become more flexible in her regional work. She said she can "craft a solution that works best for my stakeholders, instead of looking at things from my own lens with a very structured approach – which sometimes just does not work". Two years ago, she applied to join an internal audit programme. It allowed her to be posted to a different department in London for a week as a guest auditor last year. Such stints can open up career options in other parts of the company, which workers should be alert to, said Ms Yeo, who has been

with MasterCard for 4½ years. With information from the company on where the business is headed over the next few years, employees can see how their job will change and, if they are likely to be displaced, how they can equip themselves to remain employable. "Having that understanding, you'll be able to know where the gaps are and that's when you actively go out and pursue experience or courses," she said. "Knowing what you want to do allows you to have a conversation with your organisation about what opportunities there are for you."



Ms Julia Yeo says knowing what you want to do allows you to have a conversation with your firm about what opportunities there are for you. ST PHOTO: KEVIN LIM

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