

Publication: The Sunday Times, p A13
Date: 08 January 2017
Headline: Minister flags key traits to thrive in age of disruption

Minister flags key traits to thrive in age of disruption



On the panel at the symposium yesterday were (from left), Dr Tan Chi Chiu, Mr Warren Fernandez, Mr Lawrence Wong, moderator Vinwa Sadashiv, who is chief executive of Strategic Moves and a former Nominated MP, and Mr Martin Tan. PHOTO: TIFFANY GOH FOR THE SUNDAY TIMES

Lawrence Wong says humility, staying hungry, being human are vital in new world

Melody Zaccheus

Following a year marked by disruption, having humility, staying hungry and being human are key traits to have to thrive in this new world, said National Development Minister Lawrence Wong.

He was speaking yesterday at the St Gallen Symposium 2017 Singapore Forum held at the National University of Singapore's (NUS) Shaw Foundation Alumni House.

Mr Wong said being humble means putting effort to learn and develop "deep skills and capabilities", while staying hungry requires Singaporeans to step out of their comfort zones and seize opportunities here and abroad.

But at the heart of it is maintaining the human touch and connection, noted Mr Wong, who said technology can never replace the human spirit.

The Singapore leg of the symposium, with the theme, Dilemma of Disruption, was organised by the National Youth Achievement Award Council, in partnership with the Switzerland-based St Gallen Foundation and NUS.

It is an international platform where world leaders and youth engage in dialogue on various issues of the day.

This year's theme was selected following the recent unfolding of unpredictable events such as Britain's vote to leave the European Union and Mr Donald Trump's successful bid for the United States presidency, as well as the rise of companies such as Uber and Grab which have disrupted traditional taxi services.

Mr Wong - who is also Second Minister for Finance, and who gave a keynote address at the event - was later joined by three panellists: Mr Warren Fernandez, The Straits Times' editor and editor-in-chief of Singapore Press Holdings' English, Malay and Tamil Media Group; Dr Tan Chi Chiu, chairman of the Lien Centre for Social Innovation at the Singapore Management University (SMU); and Mr Martin Tan, the executive director of the Institute for Societal Leadership at SMU.

Mr Fernandez noted the need for established companies and systems, such as The Straits Times newsroom, to stay nimble.

He also emphasised the importance of teaching history to the young to better "understand our future".

Responding to a question from Nanyang Technological University undergraduate Benjamin Cai, 27, on how the Government will handle Singapore's future, Mr Wong said it was impossible to predict what will happen in the long term.

"But we need more preparation, more serious and hard thinking of all the different contingencies, and then be ready for any scenario in the future," he said.

melodyz@sph.com.sg

TACKLING THE FUTURE

We need more preparation, more serious and hard thinking of all the different contingencies, and then be ready for any scenario in the future.



NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER
LAWRENCE WONG

Source: The Sunday Times @ Singapore Press Holdings Limited. Permission required for reproduction