

TODAY
 WE SET YOU THINKING

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Caldecott Broadcast Centre,
 Andrew Road, Singapore 299939
 Tel: 6236 4888 | Fax: 6534 4217

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LETTER
CYCLISTS DO NOT HAVE RIGHT OF WAY ON PAVEMENTS



Scan the QR code using the reader app on your smartphone, or you can visit tdy.sg/ltrcyclists for the letter from Caroline Tham.

Be patient in drive for more technopreneurs

FROM **KWAN JIN YAO**

I refer to the commentary “Aspire to be a technopreneur, rather than a doctor or lawyer” (Sept 24).

Calls for the Government to invest more in technopreneurship are often marked by anxiety, with warnings that, in the immediate future, innovative disruptions round the world could have painful consequences for local industries, especially traditional ones.

Digitisation, for instance, has affected tour guides and department stores here; they face competition from low-cost, high-growth technology start-ups.

Sustaining an effort to “attract international venture capital and incubators” to build a stronger technopreneurship network should be straightforward for Singapore. On

“Perhaps a useful indicator, beyond the number of start-ups incorporated over time or the amount of funding they raise, is whether young, qualified Singaporeans are willing to work in these new organisations.”

the other hand, crafting an “endearing culture” that will “motivate its population to want to develop an enterprising mindset” has proven trickier. Few see the need to strike out on their own, without a safety net of qualifications.

The perceived superiority of the academic pathway and, by extension, the importance of a degree have persisted; the accumulated aversion to risk must be chipped away at gradually.

Against a backdrop of initiatives, the Government has done its fair share through start-up grants and schemes as well as a wider range of financing options made available by venture capital firms and venture debt programmes. This has encouraged a flurry of activity in Singapore’s tech and start-up ecosystem.

The commentary is optimistic about e-commerce trends, the emer-

gence of big data and that technopreneurship “will help in the push towards an adaptive economy”, but its authors should be cognisant that the quantity and quality of available talents are obstacles.

Perhaps a useful indicator, beyond the number of start-ups incorporated over time or the amount of funding they raise, is whether young, qualified Singaporeans are willing to work in these new organisations.

If human resource management, such as recruitment and retention, is the problem, then patience will be necessary. It would therefore be constructive to survey the structural challenges tech start-ups may face in terms of recruiting and retaining manpower.

If polytechnic and university graduates are unwilling to work in these companies, what are their reservations? Have the tertiary institutions done enough? It is hardly meaningful to call for individuals to move away from the “traditional focus on job security and wealth accumulation” to create “hunger for innovation and impact”, without addressing more fundamental, entrenched mindsets.

Let’s not have an erosion of values

FROM **LEE TECK CHUAN**

I refer to the letter “Parents should empower teachers to curb mischief” (Sept 23). We cannot speak in this age for fear of having labels stuck on us by so-called liberals, who have become increasingly vocal, if not combative.

So, some parents are afraid to parent, some teachers are afraid to teach, and some governments are afraid to govern. The silent majority, though gathering in numbers, have grown more silent. Technology is an accessory.

If an act captures a following on social media, a transgressor might be redeemed not by repentance, but by clicks. How is this right? We should scrub off the grime and see ourselves for who we are. It is no longer about sparing the rod and spoiling the child, but about handing the rod to him to use on us.

We should not let our young think they are victims who commit no wrong when parents blame teachers, the system or society for their own neglect in raising their children, other than pandering to their children’s material wants.

We must return to the fundamentals. Civil society is not about who shouts the loudest. And have we become too litigious for our own good, or have the so-called liberals been overzealous, yet freeing no one, not least themselves?

We should not allude to the question of who are we to judge, and leave everything for others to judge. Have the liberators become the new oppressors, like in George Orwell’s novella *Animal Farm*?

We should regain our place and make it better for those who come after us. Let us call a spade a spade. Let our young take ownership of their actions. Let us not have an erosion of values.

“We cannot speak in this age for fear of having labels stuck on us by so-called liberals, who have become increasingly vocal, if not combative.”

School statements not enough to stop bullying

FROM **DANNY CHOW**

The comments from the Shuqun Secondary School principal, reported in “Principal advises students to step up and stop bullying” (Sept 25), demonstrate a lack of leadership and could explain why the bullying had been happening for a period of time.

He advised the class “how as bystanders, they should step up to stop aggressive behaviour”, but how do they step up when the school seems to have taken mild action? What were the disciplinary measures claimed to have been taken?

There was no report of the bully’s parents being counselled, either. And how would transferring him to another class solve the problem? He should remain in the same class and show true remorse to his classmates.

Did the adjunct teacher do nothing? How many times has he or she witnessed such incidents and not reported them? Does the person qualify to remain in the job? A student was jumping on the teacher’s table; of what use was the teacher?

Motherhood statements — that the school takes a serious view of bullying, that it does not condone such behaviour, et cetera — are commonplace. Meanwhile, I do not see any sign that the Education Ministry is taking the matter that seriously.



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Venue: NEX Popular Bookstore
 NEX Mall #04-59/60 (Nearest MRT: Serangoon)

Date & Time: 30 September 2015 (Wednesday), 2pm to 5pm
Venue: Jurong Point Popular Bookstore
 Jurong Point #B1-41 (Nearest MRT: Boon Lay)

Please bring along your resumes, together with copies of your identity cards, academic qualifications and any other relevant documents.

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MINORITY REPORT

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