

NEWSFLASH

UNION OF TELECOMS EMPLOYEES OF SINGAPORE

MAY / JUNE 2010

*“Being great at what you do
isn’t just something you do for the organization you work for
– it’s a gift you give yourself.”*

– Robin Sharma
CEO, Sharma Leadership International, Inc.

Robin Sharma had enjoyed an illustrious career as a litigation lawyer before he became a leadership expert. He is a globally celebrated author of 11 bestselling books on leadership and personal development. His works have been published in more than 50 countries and in close to 70 languages, making him one of the most widely-read authors in the world. He is probably best known for “*The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari*”, which has dominated international bestseller lists. He is the founder of Sharma Leadership International Inc., a global consultancy committed to helping organisations *Lead Without a Title* by enabling their employees to fulfill their greatest potential for exceptional professional and personal results. Sharma Leadership International Inc. counts Microsoft, NASA, The Harvard Business School, Nike and other Fortune 500 corporations as clients.

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SINGTEL REVISED PAY-CUT AT 60 POLICY

Two years after UTES first engaged SingTel in discussion over their existing pay-cut at 60 policy, both organisations have now arrived on the same page. The existing practice in SingTel is to implement a 10 percent cut off the salaries of employees when they reach 60 years of age. In the way forward, Singtel has also agreed to implement a cut only where work performance and/or reduction of job scope justify for it. When the revised policy comes into effect in July 2010, SingTel will reinstate the salaries of previously-affected employees back to 100 percent.

Although this comes as welcome news to the majority of yet-to-be-affected employees, the main disgruntle amongst affected employees is the fact that under the agreed terms, SingTel will not be compensating for past loss. Still, given that the Retirement Age Act gives employers the prerogative to exercise this legal option (of reducing the wages of workers who reach age 60 by up to 10 percent), SingTel must be applauded for this move towards fairness and flexibility in their employment practices.

SINGTEL TO SIGN EMPLOYERS' PLEDGE OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

SingTel will soon join more than 1,000 other organisations in Singapore who have already signed the Employers' Pledge of Fair Employment Practices. Signing the Pledge means SingTel is making a conscious commitment towards fair employment practices, which includes, according to the Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices, *"giving employees equal opportunities for employment, rewarding according to merit, treating them fairly and with respect, and helping them to optimise their abilities and talent"*.

UTES BRANCH OFFICIALS LAUDED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Sister Alice Sin (Secretary, Administrative Branch) and Brother Thuvinder Singh (Chairman, Customer Service Branch) have been conferred the Branch Officials Recognition Award 2010 for their respective contributions towards UTES. The Branch Official Recognition Award, given annually by NTUC, creates opportunities for exposure, networking and social interaction amongst branch officials from the public, industrial and service sectors.

On receiving the accolade, Brother Thuvinder said: *"It's an honour for me to receive this award and it will certainly give me the drive to perform even better in the future. I will not forget what Mr Logarajah, our General Secretary, said to us and that is, to always work for the workers and to always listen and follow our leaders"*. This year's awards were presented by NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Heng Chee How on 23 June at the Orchid Country Club.

SINGAPORE POST WORKING TOWARDS RE-EMPLOYMENT AFTER 62 POLICY

SingPost has been a forerunner in offering their retiring employees opportunities beyond retirement. A Rehire of Retiree Scheme has, in fact, been in place since 1994. Both Management and Union have been meeting to fine tune a Re-Employment After 62 policy, which is hoped, can be implemented before the end of the year.

SINGTEL-UTES RE-EMPLOYMENT MOU IS ON THE CARDS

By Mr Marcus Lin, Executive Editor, NTUC This Week
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“This MOU between UTES and SingTel strengthens the practice of reemployment further. The company has found from its own experience and calculation that older employees can be very valuable when they have the right attitude, skills and performance. The union was thus able to work constructively with the company and refine the re-employment policy to benefit both company and workers reaching 62. We must press on with such efforts in every company and every industry.”

NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Heng Chee How

SingTel, Singapore’s biggest public-listed company and one of the largest employers, will soon sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Union of Telecoms Employees of Singapore (UTES) to formalise its re-employment policy for older workers.

Meanwhile, SingTel management and UTES have reviewed the company’s wage policy for employees reaching age 60. Effective from 1 July 2010, employees in general will not have any wage reduction when they reach 60.

The steps are taken ahead of legislation enactment by 2012 for the re-employment of workers raising the current statutory retirement age from 62 to 65.

General Secretary of UTES S Logarajah said: “I am happy that SingTel management and UTES have maintained open communications throughout the review. The new policy for employees who reach age 60 reflects our mutual understanding and presents a win-win outcome for both the company and its employees.”

SingTel has been re-employing its older workers even before 1993, when the official retirement age was 55. Mrs Wong Sau Lin, SingTel’s Vice-President of Human Resource (Singapore) said: “Our records show that 40 per cent of our total employees who reached age 62 in the last five years have been offered re-employment. But we can certainly do more.”

SingTel has been prudent in managing its operating costs including staff costs in line with business performance. Over the years, in close consultation with UTES, it has strengthened the link between pay and individual performance. Increments and variable bonuses for bargainable staff are negotiated yearly and this enables the company to be more responsive to changing market and economic conditions.

Another key area of co-operation between SingTel management and UTES is in upgrading the skills of employees, especially the older ones. Mrs Wong said: “The success of a company depends not only on newer and younger talents. We have an invaluable resource in our more mature colleagues.

“It makes business sense to ensure that they continue to upgrade their skills and knowledge to stay employable and relevant to the business. They can in turn contribute more to the organisation and provide stability and mentorship to our younger colleagues. Since the early 1980s, UTES has been a strong partner with management in promoting upgrading programmes for our employees in line with changing business needs.”

SINGPOST SELECTED FOR MAY DAY CBF MODEL PARTNERSHIP AWARD 2010

Article and photograph contributed by Corporate Communications, Singapore Post Limited.



AVP Jalil Bin Sam & Rahmad Bin Chik (Chairman of SingPost Branch - UTES) collecting the Award on behalf of SingPost & UTES respectively at the NTUC May Day CBF Model Partnership Awards Ceremony 2010 on 29 May 2010.

(L-R): Mr Stephen Lee - President of Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF), PSG Rahmad Chik, Mr John De Payva - President of National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), AVP Jalil Sam and Mr Lee Yi Shyan, Minister of State for Trade and Industry, and Manpower.

In recognition of the productivity gains and enhanced competitiveness by being Cheaper, Better and/or Faster (CBF), NTUC has selected Singapore Post Limited for the May Day CBF Model Partnership Award 2010 – Institutional Category.

With support from its Union, the *Union of Telecoms Employees of Singapore (UTES)*, Singapore Post Limited partnered with the NTUC - Women's Development Secretariat (WDS) to hire and train women back to work through the *Flexi-Works!* Scheme.

SingPost employs part-time mail sorters to help in the mail sorting process, enabling the postmen to focus more on outdoor delivery. SingPost further improved the mail sorting processes and invested in equipment to increase efficiency. Eighty percent of the cost of equipment was funded using the grant from the *Flexi-Works!* Scheme.

Previously, the old sorting frames were immovable and mail pieces were sorted into mail bags. Staff needed to lift the filled mail bags out of the metal frames and transfer to the next point of the mail process. It was laborious for the staff and mail bags did not last with the dragging of the mail bags to the next work point.

To ease the heavy lifting and dragging, SingPost introduced a new sorting frame that comprised letter trays within a wheeled frame, known as the Easy Trolley or ET. Mail items are sorted and arranged on the trays before stacking on the trolleys. Mail items are sorted in a single direction and with the address facing up, reducing sorting errors. As a result, the average time taken for the sorting of the mail items was reduced. This also helped to shorten the time spent on any rework. The ET is easy to push, cutting down the time spent on transferring mail items and arduous lifting of and dragging of the mail bags. As mail items are arranged in trays, the risk of mail pieces being damaged is also reduced. This initiative also helped to free up more space, leading to work stations being more organised. The projected savings from this project is about S\$580,000 in equivalent man hours per annum.

PERKS & PROMOTIONS

UTES Chalet

DOWNTOWN EAST PROMOTIONS JUL-AUG 2010



Peak: National Day – 9 August 2010

<i>Package</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Rates</i>	
		<i>Off-Peak</i>	<i>Peak</i>
FRI - SUN	3D/2N (Weekends)	\$200.00	-
SUN- WED	4D/3N (Weekdays)	\$120.00	\$250.00
WED-FRI	3D/2N (Weekdays)	\$100.00	-

Enjoy 2 FREE entry tickets (for each night's stay) at either
Escape Theme Park or Wild Wild Wet.
Wild Wild Wet is closed on Tuesdays.

For chalet booking enquiries, please contact UTES
at 63371122 Fax 63396040 or email chalet@utes.org.sg

COURSES FOR PARENTS AND TUTORS

The Singapore Teachers' Union is collaborating with NTUC U Family to organise select courses targeted at parents and tutors:



Lower Primary Mathematics Workshop

Saturday, 31 July 2010

9am – 1pm

NTUC Centre

Dr Yeap Ban Har, an experienced and interactive trainer from the National Institute of Education, will be sharing his insights on helping children in skills and concepts they find difficult. Learn the key mathematical ideas that children learn in the foundation years in primary school as well as how to extend their learning if they are advanced learners.



What is Good Spoken English for Your Children? – A Workshop for Parents and Tutors of the English Language.

14 August 2010

9am – 4:30pm

Singapore Teachers' Union

The workshop will provide parents with insights and examples on helping their children speak and interact better in English. It will help them identify the areas of English speech that they can improve on and to distinguish between “diction” and “accent” and “phonetics” and “phonics”.

Ms Susan Amy and Mr Clive Scharenguivel, both native speakers of the English language, will conduct the workshop.

The cost of each course is \$150 for NTUC Members and is inclusive of course materials, refreshments and prevailing GST.

For more details on the workshops, please visit www.stu.org.sg or contact the Singapore Teachers' Union at stu@stu.org.sg or Kim on 6299 3936.

UTES BENEFITS DISBURSED FOR APRIL AND MAY 2010

In April and May 2010, UTES collectively disbursed SGD20,637.65 to members through the following benefits:

<u>Type of Membership Benefit</u>	<u>April 2010</u>	<u>May 2010</u>
Benevolent Grant	1,000	1,200
Get Well Hamper	914.85	577.80
Hospitalisation Reimbursement	3,585	2,310
Medical Assistance	1,300	NIL
NTUC Gift	7,750	NIL
SLF Hardship Grant	2,000	NIL
Total	16,549.85	4,087.80
Grand Total	20,637.65	

Please visit http://www.utes.org.sg/memb_elig_bene.htm for more information on membership benefits.

SUBMISSION OF CLAIMS FOR HOSPITALISATION AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Claims for hospitalisation reimbursement and medical assistance must be submitted together with supporting documents no later than 30 days from the qualifying event. As a first point of reference, please contact the medical enquiry line at your respective companies. Alternatively, contact UTES Finance on 6337 1122 for instructions on claiming procedures.

MEMBERSHIP CONVERSION AND TERMINATION

New staff members of NCS CE, SingPost, SingTel, Quantum Solutions and Radiance Communications who are existing NTUC Card holders are welcome to convert their membership to that of UTES. Doing so would allow members to enjoy benefits that are both exclusive to UTES as well as those that are already provided under NTUC. Please visit http://www.utes.org.sg/memb_elig_bene.htm for the complete list of benefits or contact UTES Membership on 6337 1122.

Members wishing to terminate their membership are kindly reminded to do so in writing to us. Please address your letter to our *Membership Department* at *15 Hill Street, Telephone House Complex II, 3rd Storey, Singapore 179352* or membership@utes.org.sg. We will initiate the process of cancellation upon receipt of your written notification. Kindly allow 3 months for it to be fully processed and effected. A written acknowledgement will be sent via mail or email to inform you of the last date of your membership. Members who initiated termination but did not receive any form of written acknowledgement from UTES are requested to follow up with our Membership Officers.

CONTACTING UTES

Union of Telecoms Employees of Singapore

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The UTES Secretariat operates from 8:30am to 6pm (Mondays to Thursdays) and from 8:30am to 5:30pm (Fridays).

Please refer to the contact list below for assistance on specific area(s):

Membership

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CHANGES TO CONTACT DETAILS

Please call on 6337 1122 or visit http://www.utes.org.sg/change_add.php to update UTES on any changes to your contact details.

FEEDBACK AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Please direct your feedback and newsworthy contributions for Newsflash to utes@utes.org.sg

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