

V MALAYSIA SME VISIONARIES





COUNTING STARS

Datuk Seri Raymond Liew,
President of McMillan
Woods Global



Chapter I

What is McMillan Woods Global?

McMillan Woods is a global network or association of independent local and regional firms of recognised qualified accountants and professional advisors.

It was established for the purpose of providing members and their clients with the capability of furnishing a broader spectrum of accounting, auditing, advisory and management services at a cutting-edge, cost-effective basis.

What is the vision for your company?

Our Mission: To meet our clients' highest expectations is our standard, to exceed them is our goal. To be recognised as a global strategic financial business partner in fulfilling and adding value to the needs of our clients by way of a Multiple Disciplinary Partnership.

Our Vision: To continuously scale new heights and to embrace the vision of 'The Business Mind' with the focus to meet global challenges of tomorrow.

What inspired you to take the first step into entrepreneurship?

Entrepreneurship is instilled naturally in many of us. I believe all of us are born with entrepreneurial skills, only many of us are afraid to explore our hidden talents by taking the plunge into a business venture – and at the back of their minds is the fear of failure.

Since young, I have always yearned to run a business of my own, bearing in mind that I was brought up running a small scale coffee shop owned by my parents. Life as a

'coffee boy' was seriously tough and challenging, but the rewards were good, as the profits made from this small-scale business venture enabled my parents to send all of us siblings overseas to pursue our studies, although on a shoe string budget.

I started off in London pursuing my studies, and I had to work most weekends and whatever spare time I had to make ends meet. After graduation, I had a decent job in an accounting firm that paid reasonably well. After some years, I moved to a bigger commercial environment where my pay was quadruple and one might say that my career was at its peak. Then, it dawned on me that I needed to complete the 'cycle' of life – the 'legacy' stage, to create value in life, hence my vision of setting up an international network that will leave a footprint.

Why did you choose to go into this industry?

Pursuing my studies in accountancy automatically propelled me into this industry by choice. Besides, it is a 'safe' profession that provides job security and a comfortable lifestyle.

Tell us how you've seen the industry grow since you began the company.

Accountants nowadays need to be alert and well versed in all the latest changes in international standards and compliance in order to thrive. Accountants too need to be computer or IT savvy and must think like entrepreneurs.

How have you felt the company has grown since you started?

We are still growing at a steady pace. When we first started, we had only one office,



and now within a span of nine years, we are in 63 countries with over 200 offices and 3,000 staff worldwide, and our Head Office is located in London.

Currently, McMillan Woods Global has six regions with greater China as an extension of the Asia Pacific region namely Europe, Asia Pacific, United States of America (USA), Middle East, Africa and Latin America.

Not only are we achieving our vision and objectives, we are steadily championing the *Malaysia Boleh* adage in the right context, where we Malaysians can do equally well, if not better, as our international counterparts in the global arena.

Chapter II

Tell us about the supportive figures in your personal life. Were they your parents, friends or spouse? How did they help you when it came to managing the business or the stress associated with it?

My late father has always been my inspirational figurehead. Naturally, with my dad passing on, my mum who is 93 this year has played an important role of bringing the family members together at least each month or weekend. To me, that is important, as it fosters greater family bonds among all our siblings who are scattered through different countries.

What about the supportive figures in your business life? Did you have mentors, advisors or investors? How did they impact the way you run your business?

My business partners, especially my secretarial personnel such as Lynda Leong and Jin May, not forgetting my Personal Assistant, Hana Sha, who all play a significant supporting role in my daily business affairs. Not only are they supportive in reducing my workload, they also help me to reduce work stress by handling any hiccups using their own initiative and finding solutions. I would like to accord a word of thanks to these ladies.

By the same token, I would also like to thank my Tax Chairman, Tan Sri Shukor, the former Director General of Inland Revenue Board, who has relieved me of having to deal with many of the clients' tax issues.



What have you learned on your entrepreneurial journey?

The learning process is never ending. If there is anything valuable that I have learned over the years in business, it's that one needs to upkeep integrity and honesty in business dealings, and accord respect at all times. I am an advocate that one should always stay positive and positive vibes automatically follow you wherever you go.

What advice would you give if you could talk to yourself when you first started and why?

I guess the question is will I do it differently given the chance to do it all over again? The answer is clearly no. Perhaps I should have done it much earlier, but then I may lack the experience and exposure.

How do you feel you

have grown as a person since you first started the company?

I have grown to be a better person both in my private life and business dealings. I have learned to be more patient and never to make assumptions under whatever circumstances. What is important is that I have learned that 'Everything happens for a reason and it's always for a better reason!'

Chapter III

What are you most proud of achieving in your company so far?

The proudest moment was when the first inaugural McMillan Woods Global Awards kicked off on the 1st of November 2012 with award recipients the like of Georgina Hope Rinehart (the richest woman in Australia and purportedly, the world's richest woman in 2012), Dato Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor, our Malaysian Supermodel, Amber Chia, and many more.

The annual McMillan Woods Global Awards has created lots of traction where many successful business entrepreneurs and celebrities are vie to be recognised as an award recipient. The adjudicator team selects candidates based on public profiling and business success. Unlike other awards, we research and choose the award recipients via our network.

How did you manage to achieve it?

Hard work and lots of patience. But most importantly, the understanding of a loving family.

How has that achievement impacted your personal and business growth?

The definition of achievement is rather subjective. To me, for where we are today, is primarily due to great cooperative team spirit and an understanding staff force with compatible business partners.

As the global network grows, all of us also grow with the network by being wiser and staying modest in nature. Certainly, financially, all of us are better off and at the same time providing greater initiatives to ensure sustainability and continuous growth. Let me put it that we have never sat on our laurels for what we have achieved today, but continuously brainstorm ideas to grow the network.

What has the company planned for the future, and what steps are you taking to achieve it?

Staying on a positive note despite the soft global economy, we are working on making McMillan Woods Global the market leader of SME accountancy firms not only in Malaysia but globally. The steps we are working on is to further increase our network firms to at least 100 firms in the next here to five years.

We will also setup the McMillan Woods Global Foundation to further expand on our existing McM Cares programme by extending it globally.

Where do you see your company in ten years' time?

With fingers crossed, McMillan Woods will be listed either on the Hong Kong or Shanghai Stock Market or even US Stock Market, depending on the movement of the world economy.