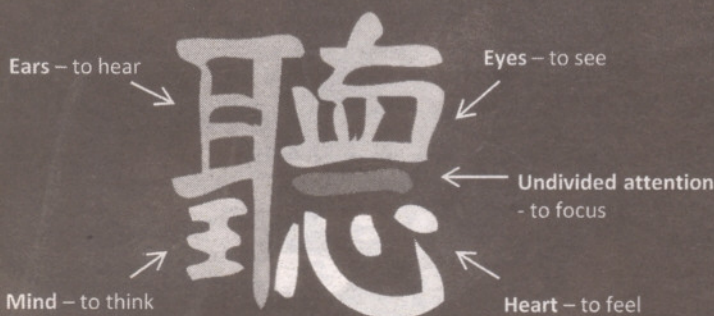


Listening with the right faculties

LISTENING in Kanji Character



THE last column set the tone for us to move into actualising human governance through practising real listening – the listening that will lead to learning. Nonetheless, because the art of listening where one uses the ears, eyes, mind and the heart to be able to hear, give attention, understand and remember is no longer the default state that many of us are accustomed to, shifting gear into bringing back this form of listening is not easy.

But try we must, for if we don't, we will remain unable to utilise all the faculties that have already been endowed to us. Incomplete – not unlike having a smart phone with all the facilities yet only using it to make and receive calls because we don't have time to master the rest. Don't we feel a sense of loss of potential, what we could have and yet cannot have due to our own inadequacy?

Unfortunately with humans what we do not use can be lost forever. Those who utilise the endowed faculties to the fullest will lead the pack. Don't we wonder how entrepreneurs who do not undergo any MBA or entrepreneurship training programmes or even set foot into the premises of institutions of higher learning become successful?

Somehow they managed to listen well to the real business beat so that they were able to seize opportunities others could not.

So, where does this leave business schools? It only takes honesty and not rocket science to know that there must be something incomplete with the preparation we are giving our students. It is for this reason that we at Putra Business School (PUTRA) have decided to go back to our origins to bring back human governance with listening as its prerequisite.

Being among the first, if not the first to do so among the fraternity of business schools, we could only adopt a design-and-build stra-

tegy – addressing issues as we move along, and listening hard to get the signals for the next step. And I must say it certainly hasn't been easy.

Almost all of us have been conditioned into accepting that it is knowledge sourced from written documents which is the core to learning. We failed to acknowledge that meaning through auditory words is the origin of knowledge, that indigenous language is never based on written words, nor did scripture at once appear in the form of a written document.

Oral language is thus a powerful pedagogy with which to disseminate meaning, which in turn puts one in a state of having knowledge. Capturing sounds into words through stringing letters of the alphabet together only comes later. Listening therefore precedes reading, not the other way round.

Enlightened by such a discovery, we at PUTRA began contemplating the manner in which we have been disseminating knowledge to our students. To promote real listening to take place during classroom sessions, both teachers and learners need to learn to reactivate

their faculties of listening, something that can only be acquired through an experiential setting rather than from reading instructions or manual of codes.

Accepting that humans are unique rather than uniform, standardised machines, we do not expect our facilitators of learning nor students to be able to achieve the listening mode overnight. Yet we are steadfast in undertaking the path – a path that not many have dared tread upon. For to us, nurturing human leaders entails living on the terrain not a map on which some realities have been distorted. The human faculties for listening as a means to learning must be reclaimed.



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