

# A DECADE OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR FEDEX

BY OLIVER CHRISTOPHER GOMEZ

Federal Express Services (M) Sdn Bhd clinched the Best Employer award for an impressive 10th consecutive year at the Aon Best Employers — Malaysia 2018 awards. The achievement makes it the most successful company since the inception of the event.

Managing director Chong Siang-Chung welcomed the news, citing the company's corporate philosophy of People, Service, Profit (PSP) as the primary driver behind its win. "We place our people first as we understand that our people — more than planes, trucks, warehouses and technology — are at the heart and soul of FedEx's successes," he says.

Expounding on the company's philosophy, Chong tells *The Edge* that it is about establishing a culture that respects and rewards employees who deliver exceptional service to customers. "Delighted customers, in turn, reward the company with their business and loyalty, creating a profitable enterprise that can provide job satisfaction and job security for its people. It is by embracing and living this 'people-first' philosophy that has consistently secured our position as Aon Best Employer," he adds.

FedEx Malaysia runs extensive training and development programmes for its 1,500-strong workforce. With a heavy emphasis on lifelong learning and promoting from within, the logistics giant is able to keep staff turnover down in the single digits. "Open positions, including managerial vacancies, are first offered to internal candidates before we consider external ones."

The key to having quality people to promote is first to provide opportunities for them to learn and improve while on the job. "Knowing that our success depends on the abilities of our people, we go out of our way to create opportunities for them to add to their skillsets and talents so they can succeed," says Chong.

## POWER TO THE PEOPLE

The company runs several programmes and initiatives to develop and upskill its employees. One of them is the Advance into Management (AIM) programme, which allows employees who display management potential to be nominated by their managers for the structured leadership training programme.

"This equips employees with a number of skillsets, including team communication, problem solving, conflict management and other crucial on-the-job skills," says Chong.

Training and development is now more accessible than ever, thanks to the internet. Recognising this, the company runs an internal Corporate E-learning initiative, where it provides more than 1,000 courses on a wide array of subjects, including management, quality management, languages, computer skills, communication skills and project management. These courses are crafted and curated in-house for the benefit of all FedEx employees.

It also provides career development services for employees. "Employees and managers jointly chart clear paths to ensure that each employee is provided with the right opportunities and training to help them reach their goals. This is followed by regular feedback, monitoring and recognition to help them grow in their careers," says Chong.

Of particular importance is the development

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— Chong



of the company's younger employees. According to Chong, millennials rate job satisfaction and work-life balance as their top priorities. They are also keen for growth and are always eager to learn.

"This makes them a very enthusiastic segment of the talent market for FedEx to tap. We promote diversity, which results in us hiring qualified team members regardless of age. We also place an emphasis on retraining older members of the workforce."

FedEx Malaysia provides specific opportunities for its staff to learn and grow, in addition to cultivating skills in areas they already excel in. This includes teaming up younger staff with Gen X employees and older. "This is so we can hone the experiences and capabilities of all generations of our staff," says Chong.

A company its size can ill afford unplanned downtime, whether it is its fleet of transport vehicles or its workforce. Talent and career development notwithstanding, it has a robust set of policies and initiatives to cater for employee health and well-being. "We have some great initiatives driven by our employees themselves, where they partake in activities such as futsal, football, badminton and evening walks in the park," says Chong.

In addition, the company regularly runs roadshows at its various facilities and offices nationwide. "Here, we provide free body composition tests, free health consultations, basic dental checks and basic eyesight checks, in addition to engaging vendors to promote healthy snacks and beverages. We have also started distributing fruit to all employees on a monthly basis, as part of our well-being programme," he says.

These "people first" policies are a result of FedEx's five pillars of people engagement: Best Benefits, Compelling Employer Brand, Family-oriented Organisation, 5S+ Safety and Corporate Social Responsibility. Each pillar is spearheaded by a senior manager and team members from various divisions of the company.

"They come together to plan and organise various activities for each pillar, such as Health Awareness Week, FedEx Cares Week and health diagnosis programmes, as well as corporate discounts obtained from food and beverage outlets, retail stores and other services providers," says Chong.

## RECOGNITION AND FEEDBACK

FedEx Malaysia fosters a culture that prioritises active listening as part of its daily communica-

tion practices. "We have a year-round practice known as the Survey-Feedback-Action (SFA) initiative. The company utilises it to ensure that management is aware of employee concerns so that actions can be taken for continuous improvement. In this annual survey, every employee is asked to complete a standard questionnaire on management, their work environment and various programmes and policies," says Chong.

Additionally, managers are required to schedule quarterly feedback meetings with their workgroups after receiving the results of the survey. These meetings give managers and employees an opportunity to discuss concerns and develop action plans to address them.

"The goals of each feedback meeting are to identify specific concerns and the root causes. Action plans are drawn up and executed on. These plans comprise clear, concise actions that address the workgroup's concerns, thus leading to an improved working environment and better staff performance," says Chong.

The SFA initiative is meant to promote continuous improvement in a number of key metrics, including immediate leadership; cooperation within and between workgroups; corporate leadership; compensation and rewards; job conditions; and training and understanding of corporate goals.

Recognising the right people can be just as important as keeping employees' morale high. Engaged employees often go beyond the call of duty without being asked or instructed. "We consistently and consciously empower employees at every level of the organisation so they understand our trust in their ability and aptitude to do a good job," says Chong.

Unsurprisingly, the company gives out numerous internal awards to recognise its outstanding employees. They include the Purple Promise Award, Humanitarian Award, APAC Five Star Award and APAC Excellence Award.

With these and other programmes and initiatives to keep its people engaged, happy and productive, it is small wonder that the company has clinched the Aon Best Employers award consistently over the past decade.

"Our employees enjoy a lifelong learning environment that encourages career progression. There is no limit to career prospects at FedEx Malaysia as we believe the training of our employees, from junior positions all the way to management, not only helps to attract and retain talent but also drives our business forward," says Chong. **E**