

# GERBANG ALAF ZEROES IN ON WHAT EMPLOYEES VALUE MOST

BY **KHAIRANI AFIFI NOORDIN**

**G**erbang Alaf Restaurants Sdn Bhd clinched its fourth award at Aon Best Employers — Malaysia 2018 awards. Director of HR business partners Zarina Osman attributes the win to the company's employee value proposition (EVP), which are the qualities its employees value the most about the organisation.

The EVP comprises three aspects — family and friends, flexibility and the future, she says. “Our employees are highly engaged and energised because of the warm and friendly ‘McFamily’ culture, the accommodating work environment that meets the different needs of our people and the career growth and development opportunities available at McDonald’s.”

Gerbang Alaf is the local operator of the McDonald’s franchise in Malaysia. The company also won the award last year, in 2013 and in 2011. It won special recognition for being the Best Employer for Women in 2015 and the Best Employer for Generation Y in 2013.

Zarina says the company is truly honoured to win the award again this year. To maintain its winning streak, it will continue to listen to its employees and seek their feedback on how it can improve in meeting their needs.

“As our founder Ray Kroc once said, ‘We are not a burger business serving people. We are a people business serving burgers’. Hence, this recognition is a testament to the effectiveness of our people prac-



KENNY YAP/THE EDGE

tices and proves that we are on the right track on our journey to becoming people’s favourite way and place to work,” says Zarina.

Amid the trials and tribulations faced by the McDonald’s brand over the past few years, Gerbang Alaf has taken some key steps to keep employee morale up. This includes allowing free communication inside and outside the management level. Recently, the company went a step further and introduced the “McDonald’s Culture”, defined as the guiding principles for the company as it strives for improvement.

According to Zarina, the three pillars of the

McDonald’s Culture are guest-obsessed, better together, and commitment to lead. The first pillar means giving the best effort to ensure that its guests enjoy the best McDonald’s experience. The second is about promoting teamwork and treating employees right. The third pillar refers to actions that make a positive difference in the industry, for the community, and for the planet.

“When our people bring this culture to life in the workplace, we are poised to become a better McDonald’s through a high-performing and motivated workforce,” says Zarina.

She adds that training and development is provided for all employees in both functional and leadership areas. In fact, the company invests more than RM8.2 million annually for these purposes.

“Functional refers to structured training on the McDonald’s curriculum. This includes courses like Crew Trainer Development, Shift Management Excellence and People Management. Leadership refers to development opportunities that hone the leadership skills of employees. For example, the ‘buddy system’ at the restaurant helps our people develop communication and coaching skills,” says Zarina.

To ensure the physical and mental well-being of its employees, Gerbang Alaf promotes balanced and active lifestyles by encouraging employees to engage in fitness activities. “We organise activities such as brisk walking, zumba, futsal and bowling. We have established a sports and recreational club for our employees, which conducts activities designed to improve their overall well-being,” says Zarina. **E**