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PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

WE ALL know that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) need to transform themselves to compete in today's economy. But for firms to successfully do so, they must not neglect a key ingredient – their people. In fact, the staff is arguably the main driving force behind a firm's upward trajectory.

The year certainly looks like it is shaping up nicely as the global economy continues on its upswing, and business sentiment continues to brighten. But even as SMEs embark on ambitious plans in 2018, they should always bear their talent strategy in mind.

This issue's Top Story looks at the skills that are most sought after; how SMEs can attract talent into their fold; and how they can develop the potential of staff already within their ranks.

Attracting and retaining the right people may be a challenge for resource-strapped SMEs, but that is not stopping many of the businesses within our midst from trying.

One homegrown company that is walking the talk in this department is Yang Kee Logistics. The business is led by second-generation leader Ken Koh, who is our Towkay and cover story this issue. He tells us how he dramatically grew the business and expanded abroad based on the collective strength of its staff. The company takes skills upgrading and talent acquisition seriously. As a result, the SME is able to join the ranks of the big boys, competing with multinationals across the world.

In Budding Entrepreneurs, we take a look at human resource tech startup Peoplewave, which aims to make people management more transparent, data-driven and fairer for both the company and the employee. Find out from CEO and founder Damien Cummings on how the startup intends to change the world of work by putting people first.

In Smart Capital, we look at how SMEs can ride on the wave of growth in Asean through mergers and acquisitions, while in Legal Adviser, we find out how businesses should take measures to prevent cyber attacks from happening.

As for the Space section, we examine how manufacturers will have to review their business model and space requirements, which will likely benefit the business park and independent high-specification spaces, due to the onset of the fourth industrial revolution.

This is but a taste of what we have for you in this issue. Happy reading!

Vivien Shiao

EDITOR



ON THE COVER

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