ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:
STARTING A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS BY LEADING FROM THE HEART
Dr Patrick Liew
Executive Chairman of GEX Global Group
Diploma in Electrical Engineering, 1978

IN THE BUSINESS OF TRANSFORMING LIVES

Entrepreneur, business leader, and Singapore Polytechnic (SP) Alumnus Dr Patrick Liew is a firm believer in playing a supportive role to help others lead successful lives. He credits this worldview to his humble upbringing, where everything was shared amongst his large family of nine.

Starting Out
Growing up with financial constraints, Dr Liew’s parents faced the difficult decision of choosing only one child to support through further education after secondary school.

Despite the pressure, they placed their faith in Dr Liew’s abilities, providing him with the motivation to learn a hands-on skill, secure a good job, and contribute financially to the family.

“I chose to study Electrical Engineering in SP because in my mind, everything needs electricity to work well.”

Dr Liew describes his time in SP as meaningful and memorable. It was on campus where he first gained exposure to different ways of thinking and read about various disciplines. This nurtured his passion for education, which helped lay the foundation for his commitment to lifelong learning.

Even while schooling, he still found time to give back and contribute to charitable causes.

“As a student, I helped to lead a youth charity with over 400 volunteers. We even had an office and hired staff to help run the organisation.”

Doing What You Love
After graduating, Dr Liew continued to resist and upskill while furthering his education. He earned multiple degrees and professional qualifications, which helped him to become a better leader.

With more than three decades of experience and having started several successful companies, Dr Liew then went on to start his current venture, GEX Global Group. Its foundations were built on leading from the heart and showing genuine care to people so that their lives are impacted for the better. This authenticity is also reflected in the company logo where the Mandarin character for heart is weaved in.

Now as Executive Chairman, Dr Liew and his team help to mentor the next generation of entrepreneurs and investors. They offer strategic services for boosting performance, raising capital, and globalising businesses.

Becoming a mentor seemed a natural transition for Dr Liew. He sees mentorship as investing in someone’s life. His motivation stems from his belief that “the more you invest in other lives, the better the life you live. The more you reach out to bless others, the richer and better your life becomes.”

Changing Lives with Kindness
These days, he regularly raises funds for underprivileged families, worthwhile causes, and crisis relief. He hopes that his efforts to pave the way for others will help them reach their goals faster.

At a personal level, Dr Liew shares an unforgettable experience he had with a person he helped.

After coming across a former employee at Chinatown, he soon learned that she was diagnosed with late-stage cancer and was given just a few months to live. She was not employed, had depleted her savings on treatments, and had no family to help support her through this devastating time.

Dr Liew took it upon himself to re-hire her, provided her with nutritious food, and tasked her with interesting projects to keep her motivated. His team also rallied around her former colleague by spending time with her and encouraging her through treatments.

With such care, his ex-employee actually lived for a few more years than her original prognosis. Shortly before she passed, she shared with Dr Liew that the past few years had been the happiest period of her life.

“I can think of many other stories like this, where people who, through our contributions, have their whole lives changed.”

Empowering Progress at SP
Not forgetting his alma mater, Dr Liew contributes regularly to SP. He is an active supporter of the many initiatives carried out on campus.

He champions a fund to help needy students and has inspired many SP students and staff with his motivational speech at the SP 50th Graduation Ceremony and the Excellence in Teaching Convention in 2013.

Secret to His Success
“When running a business, you must also be concerned about your social, spiritual, and environmental bottom line, not just the financial one.”

He explains that consumers expect businesses to help improve their lifestyles and livelihoods, not just offer a great product or service.

Dr Liew goes on to share his personal mantra for achieving sustainable success.

“E = MC4, where E stands for excellence, M for mission, and C4 is the synergy between character, commitment, competence, and compassion. With these in mind, anyone can achieve their version of success.”

Secret to His Success
The best of both worlds: Starting a career while acquiring workplace skills and higher qualifications

In August 2019, SP alumna Firzanah enrolled in the Work-Study Programme (WSP) for a Work-Study Post-Diploma (Specialist Diploma in Cyber Security) at Singapore Polytechnic (SP). Through the programme, she was hired by Thermo Fisher Scientific, where she is currently a cybersecurity analyst after graduating from the WSP in July 2020. She has been able to transition seamlessly into daily work thanks to the industry-relevant modules equipping her with the required knowledge and skills. Having attained her certification, Firzanah hopes to continue advancing in her career.
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SP Alliance & Network (SPAN) Team,
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