



# E-BUZZ



The Year 2021 Recap Newsletter of MustaphaRaj



## NEWS & FEATURES

Foreword

**PAGE 1**

Charity Work

**PAGE 2**

2021 Internal News

At A Glance

**PAGE 3**

Reading List

**PAGE 4**

Article Spotlight

**PAGE 5**

Celebration Photos

**PAGE 8**

Facts and Funnies

**PAGE 9**

## Foreword BY RALPH RATNASWAMY, PARTNER

Dear MR Familia,

As we began the year, there was a sense of optimism that the issues of the pandemic were behind us and 2021 was going to be a growth year as we celebrated the 20th year of MustaphaRaj.

Sadly, the virus had other plans and further lockdowns ensued as we battled through wave after wave of further infections including the current natural disasters. I would like to commend everyone on the resilience shown during this difficult year and despite all the challenges we have made it through to the end of 2021.

During the year, an important focus for many has been the issues of mental health and the challenges therein. It has been evident by all within the MR Family, the constant efforts made on following up with your respective peers to check in on their well-being during these difficult times.

As always there was also a concerted effort on the part of the MR Sports Club to focus on charitable efforts within the community with many successful campaigns that were completed.

We also had our very first MR Town Hall which was particularly successful as colleagues from different departments came together online in a spirit of enthusiasm and fun.

As we head into 2022, there is a renewed sense of optimism that the worst is behind us and we have plenty to look forward to in the year ahead.

Let's look forward in this spirit to continue to challenge ourselves to be the best version within and without as we strive to cement ourselves and find our feet in this new norm.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to wish all of our colleagues who are celebrating, a very Merry Christmas and to all a blessed new year.

*Merry  
Christmas  
&  
Happy  
New Year!*

# Corporate Social Responsibility



## Charity Work

Charity work has always been at the heart of our practice. In honor of MalaysiaDay and returning to post lockdown from COVID-19 restrictions, we couldn't think of a better way to show pride in our nation by helping those who are in need during difficult times. Collectively we raised RM10,000 to aid White Flag initiatives.

### KEPONG HOSPICE FOR THE ELDERLY

We helped residents in plight at Kepong Hospice and provided them with supplies they needed to care for the elderly. The products they needed the most were senior hygiene products for the elderly.

### TAMAN MEGAH HOME FOR SPECIAL NEEDS AND UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN

Our second White Flag initiative for the year was helping the children at Taman Megah. The Home provides shelter for 138 children of which about 100 children are disabled and the rest come from broken families. We provided packed food for all the children catered from Fire Grill Restaurant.



# Internal News

Our very own Mr. Ralph Ratnaswamy and Mr. Heron Goh have had quite a year being a star in their roles of advisory. They presented in various webinars, including Malaysian Bar Council, Hartamas Academy, Access UBS Group and Malaysia New Zealand Chamber of Commerce, to name a few. They provided insightful and comprehensive advice on the current Tax, Accounting and Human Resource topics and their implications to industries, corporations and individuals.

## -DID YOU KNOW?-



Have you noticed our Despatch Service personnel looking sharper this year? That's right, their uniforms have been upgraded to a different design and colour.



# Town Hall

HELD ON 23RD JULY 2021

2021 started with the COVID-19 crisis snowballing into a critical situation in Malaysia. By the end of May, we faced a Full Movement Control Order again, which confined us to our homes for three months.

To stay connected, MustaphaRaj organized its first virtual Town Hall Session! Everyone joined in with their favorite snacks and drinks while each department presented its progress while on lockdown. We shared conversations about balancing our work-life as well as activities, hobbies, and overall wellbeing. All in all, it was a grand old time with the session surpassing the intended 1-hour time limit to go on for 3 hours.



# BOOKS We Read

Our fellow MRians submitted the list of books they've read this year.

## Ridha

- Agent Zero by Jack Mars
- Introduction to Business Law in Malaysia by Irini Ibrahim & others
- Auditing and Assurance Services in Malaysia by Alvin A. Arens & others
- Accounting Information System by Marshall B. Romney
- Management Accounting by Kim Langfield Smith

## Justin Sha

- Enemy Contact / Code of Honor / Threat Vector / Command Authority by Tom Clancy
- Map of Bones / The Judas Strain / The Devil Colony / Bloodline / End of God / The 6th Extinction / The Bone Labyrinth / The 7th Plague / The Demon Crown by James Rollins
- The Andromeda Strain / Eaters of the Dead / Micro / Next by Michael Crichton
- The Omen Machine / The 3rd Kingdom / Severed Souls by Terry Goodkind
- Under Siege by Stephen Coonts
- Dune by Frank Herbert

## Data Raj

- Some Stories I Have Told And Some That I Haven't by Judge V.C. George

## Nicole

- NYPD Red 2 by James Patterson
- Harry Potter Series, Book 1 by J.K. Rowling

## Datin Jane

- American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins
- The Sanatorium by Sarah Pearse
- Atomic Habits by James Clear
- Pachinko by Min Jin Lee
- The Secrets We Kept by Lara Prescott
- The Henna Artist by Alka Joshi
- The Spy by Paulo Coelho
- Fire Keeper's Daughter by Angeline Boulley

## Shaarula

- Meditations by Marcus Aurelius
- The Pacesetters: The British accountancy firms reshaping their industry by Doug LaBahn & Josh Drummond

## Nadiyah

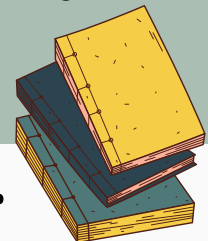
- Animal Farm by George Orwell

## Priya

- The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho



## People who read books live longer



According to Yale researchers who studied 3,635 people older than 50, those who read books for 30 minutes daily lived an average of 23 months longer than nonreaders or magazine readers. Apparently, the practice of reading books creates cognitive engagement that improves lots of things, including vocabulary, thinking skills, and concentration. It also can affect empathy, social perception, and emotional intelligence, the sum of which helps people stay on the planet longer.

**Squid Game has swept the digital world. Let's look at some management lessons organisational leaders can take from this nerve-wracking Netflix series.**

*Warning: spoiler alert! If you have not watched Squid Game, you can watch it on Netflix.*

Recently, Squid Game has taken the world by storm. For those who have not watched it (yet do not mind a spoiler), it is a dark dystopian Korean series that follows the story of Gi-Hun (player #456), a divorcee, compulsive gambler, and indebted chauffeur, who accepted the offer to participate in a tournament to settle his debt—and unbeknownst to him, a dangerous game where “game over” means death.

While it is a cautionary tale about how money can ruin lives, there are also some important management lessons that organisational leaders can learn. In the business world, organisational leaders are the players, and the market is the game master—it decides what challenges you are playing, and whoever is reactive enough and has the best strategy gets out as the champion.

In general, there are four key aspects of an organization: design, culture and employee experience, learning and growth mindset, and leadership. To stay ahead of the game in the constantly changing world, you need to build an internal ecosystem that can sustain changes not only in the present day, but also in the future. In this article, I will analyse Squid Game and make a side-by-side comparison with each organisational aspect and what you can do to future-proof your organisation. So, get ready and grab some popcorn!

## 1. Design

### Goals determine the outcomes

In the first challenge, Red Light, Green Light, Sang-Woo (player #218) figured out that the key to conquer is to move quickly while hiding behind the other players. In real life, we face various challenges with various levels of complexity. The minute you are hit by an issue, experiencing fear and confusion at first is normal. To get through this initial shock, focus on your goals, and think of how you want to work on the challenges as well as what you need to do to achieve those goals.

### Agile structure results in efficiency

During the lights-out period when all the players annihilated each other as each player's death meant more money added to the piggybank, Gi-Hun, Ali (player #276), Sae-Byeok (player #67), Il-Nam (player #1), and Sang-Woo formed an alliance and a night watch system, operating in pairs, instead to protect each other. Creating a network or team allows you to solve issues quickly and move on to tackle the next one, especially in times of crisis. Furthermore, you can also swiftly help each other in case one team member is overwhelmed.

## 2. Culture and Experience

### Inclusivity will help you win

During the marble game, the players were asked to form a pair. However, one player, Han Min-Nyeo (player #212) was not chosen by anyone. To the surprise of the others, she automatically went through the next challenge. In the Korean culture, she is considered the *kkakdugi*, which is a term used in children's game to describe the weakest link of the group that will gain a special skill, usually in the form of immunity. The concept is to teach children to be considerate and include everyone, no matter how weak or different someone seems to be, so that everyone can enjoy the game and benefit from it together. At the workplace, you need to build a culture where inclusivity is taken seriously. What may be perceived as a weakness by society, may bring special skills that help everyone go further together. Eventually, you will enjoy the benefits of inclusivity.

### Teamwork, teamwork, teamwork!

Throughout the series, the theme of individualism was prominent. But what caught my attention is how teamwork was actually what helped many of them to survive. One memorable example is during the tug of war game where Gi-Hun's team consisted of people from diverse backgrounds, ethnicity, and age. They were not the physically strongest team, but against all odds, they won because they listened to Il-Nam's strategy. Moreover, the combination of Gi-Hun's leadership and Sang-Woo's last-minute tactic also helped seal the winning. The true key to success is overcoming differences, listening to each other, and digging deeper together.

### Purpose drives action

At a glance, it seems that the players were all money thirsty. But their motivation was beyond money. A higher purpose than mere money or profit is the one that will oil an organisation's engine—its people. Therefore, it is important to know exactly what you want to achieve together as an organisation.

### Shared values vs skill alignment

Squid Game also taught us that success is not only about skill alignment, but also about shared principles and values. The friendships of the main characters helped all of them to go deeper in the game. Fostering a connection based on shared values can get you far and is much more sustainable than when it is based on mere skill alignment.

## 3. Learning and Growth

### Gambits can be game-changing

In the tug of war game, Sang-Woo's tactic was to let go of the rope for a few seconds to make the other team lose their balance—a risky, but effective move. Being fearless, risk-taking, and willing to learn is necessary to move forward. Especially when times are unsettled like now, making a daring but strategic move will open you up to opportunities.

## Learning from mistakes is crucial

One of the most gut-wrenching challenges, the glass bridge, demonstrated the importance of learning from mistakes. Sometimes, you only have one chance to do one thing right. You need to learn from past data and decide your next move based on both your experience and others'. Your chance of winning will gradually increase when you want to learn and actively listen to others.

## 4. Leadership

### Lead with wisdom

In the tug and war challenge, Il-Nam gave some life-saving tips based on his childhood experience and assigned each person a role in the match. Good leaders know how to put people in the right roles and build strategy based on experience and know-how.

### Creativity is key to success

During the honeycomb challenge, instead of treacherously trying to break the candy with the needle, like the others, Gi-Hun licked the area around the shape. Leaders need to be prepared to challenge the common norms and think outside of the box. Seeing things differently and being creative is crucial to help you deal with uncertainty.

### Compassion matters—a lot!

Gi-Hun, the winner, was one of the only players who actually cared about the value of friendship and human life. He may not be the strongest nor the smartest, but even the very last game—his bet with Il-Nam— proved that by believing in the good of people, you can win too. What can we learn from him? You need to be kind and to believe in your people. Being a humane and empathetic leader is key in navigating the uncertain future.

Squid Game reminds us that strong players do not make great teams. What makes a team or organisation great is strategic, compassionate leaders who have clear vision and purpose, stimulate their people to learn, grow, and work in an agile manner, embed inclusivity within and outside of the organization, and who can foster genuine relationships among their people.

Ultimately, those are the qualities that can make an organisation resilient and ready for future challenges.

Source: [Human Resources Online](#)

# Chinese New Year and Hari Raya Celebration





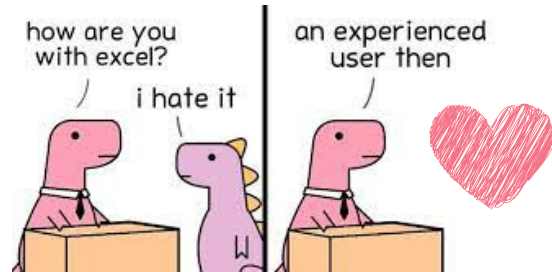
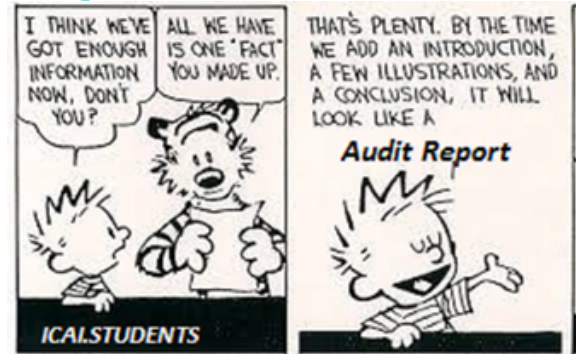
# FACTS & FUNNIES



## INTERESTING RANDOM FACTS

- The Ancient Romans used to drop a piece of toast into their wine for good health - hence why we 'raise a toast'.
- Australia is wider than the moon. The moon sits at 3400km in diameter, while Australia's diameter from east to west is almost 4000km.
- The Eiffel Tower can be 15 cm taller during the summer, due to thermal expansion meaning the iron heats up, the particles gain kinetic energy and take up more space.
- The unicorn is the national animal of Scotland. It was apparently chosen because of its connection with dominance and chivalry as well as purity and innocence in Celtic mythology.
- Nutmeg is a hallucinogen. The spice contains myristicin, a natural compound that has mind-altering effects if ingested in large doses.
- The Spanish national anthem has no words. The 'Marcha Real' is one of only four national anthems in the world (along with those of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and San Marino) to have no official lyrics.
- Avocados are a fruit, not a vegetable. They're technically considered a single-seeded berry, believe it or not.

## COMIC STRIP



## RETURNING TO WORK AFTER A LONG WEEKEND



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WHATEVER YOU  
DO, ALWAYS  
GIVE 100%.

*Unless you're donating blood.*

Hope you enjoyed your read. For questions and suggestions,  
please email [shaayla@mustapharaj.com](mailto:shaayla@mustapharaj.com)