

Five minutes with Matchy Ma

Charmaine Ng meets the founder of Talent Academy



corporate trainers, coaches) who, like himself, bring client-centric solutions to organisations.

“As a metaphor, I am an orchestra conductor who leads a team of excellent musicians to create a wonderful show for the audience,” explains Ma.

Before he found his calling and started a consultancy of his own, Ma dipped his toes in research and gained experience in different corporate organisations.

“I started my career as a Market Researcher in ACNielsen, working both in Hong Kong and China for about three years,” he says. “After some reflection, though, I decided that the research industry was not for me. So, I resigned and joined a training consultancy company.”


It went upwards from there. After his stint at the company, Ma acquired a Master Degree in Industrial & Organisational Psychology from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The new qualification opened the door to job opportunities in large multinational corporations. He found himself at HSBC, Personnel Decisions International and Walmart Global Procurement as an Organisational Psychologist, leading different leadership development projects.

Now, as the boss of his own business, Ma's schedule is packed to the brim. On a typical day, there will be client calls, proposal writing, training/coaching preparation, meetings with consultants to brainstorm and more.

“Time management is key – planning, prioritising and focusing,” he says, explaining how he organises his time. “I conduct reviews on a quarterly, monthly, weekly and daily basis. This allows me to stay focused on what matters most and adjust my strategy along the way.”

Aside from starting his own firm and designing signature training programmes for key clients, the most memorable moment in Ma's career is giving back and starting a yearly internship programme. Talent Academy's internship programme, now in its 10th year, helps fund Psychology students in local and overseas universities.

“Our programme aims at supporting Psychology students to experience and learn about the application of Industrial & Organisational Psychology in the workplace. In the past 10 years, we have provided opportunities for over 20 students from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, The City University of Hong Kong and the University of Birmingham.”

Going forward, Ma aspires to build up a bigger regional team, to provide face-to-face and virtual training for clients in the Asia Pacific. He hopes to continue his vision to empower the workforce with the positivity and skills to flourish. 

As a Registered Industrial & Organisational Psychologist, Corporate Trainer and Director at his own consultancy Talent Academy, Matchy Ma wears many hats. With over 20 years experience working in multinational corporations, he specialises in transforming individual and team performance people from all walks of life, by applying practitioner skills backed by research-based psychological principles.

It sounds complicated, but essentially what

Ma does, as an Industrial & Organisational Psychologist and Corporate Trainer, is supporting organisations to create engaging employee experiences. This includes helping them hire the right employees; developing these employees' capabilities and their career development; and creating engaging onboarding experiences.

Meanwhile, as the director of his own firm Talent Academy, Ma's job encompasses leading a team of professional consultants (psychologists,