Welcome to Yoke Pean's personal space

This post is super out of date! I no longer work much on weekends now that my niece and nephew are both in school.

Hello! I thought it might be useful to give you an insight into who I am in the context of WISE. For personal details, check out my user profile - okay we'll move the data over from Old Confluence eventually - and do yours as well so we can learn more about you .

Who am I?

The co-founder of WISE .

What is my role at WISE?

That's a difficult question because, as the team of staff is small, I do **almost everything** . BUT, I would characterise my **main (but not only) goal/role** as '**t o move WISE from a founder-led to a team-led organisation**'. What do I mean? Five years after WISE was founded, I find that I still drive a lot of the strategies and decisions at the organisation. That's okay for now, because we are a small team (in terms of staff and experience). However, that's not where I want WISE to be.

Why a team-led organisation?

You can find many articles about the pitfalls of founder's syndrome (this, for example), but fundamentally, I believe that the inherent power imbalance in an hierarchical organisation does not reflect the equitable society that I wish to see. That's why I'm interested in concepts like holacracy and consensus decision-making. I'm not sure what a team-led organisation will look like in WISE's context, but I know that it will mean I am less 'powerful' when we make decisions.

How will WISE get there?

We've already taken some steps! For example, the board members in Singapore make decisions on important matters (we have robust discussions and I don't always agree with their decisions , but that's part of the process). We hired an Operations Led (hi Hiro) who will drive actions in Indonesia. But there's more to do.

Here are some of my priorities, in no particular order. (I say some because it's hard to articulate all that needs to be done, and many actions are interconnected.)

- Fundraising . Being able afford more full-time staff means that we can spend less time firefighting/worrying about money and more time working on all these other things! I'm not great at fundraising and I'm really grateful for all the team members who help with this . Oh, and to fundraise effectively we need an up-to-date website, so yes, I am focusing on revamping the website.
- Documenting information and processes so that new team members easily understand expectations and how to carry out their tasks. This means that existing team members need to spend less time getting a new person up to speed. For an organisation whose efforts are driven by interns and volunteers that come and go, our ability to pass on institutional knowledge is critical. That's why we putting a lot of effort into Confluence. One of my pet peeves is when files in our Shared Drive are not organised (but I try not to think too much about that because it isn't the best use of my time right now).
- Encouraging staff to take advantage of learning opportunities that increases their self-efficacy. (If you've been to our DBC workshops, you'll know what it means.)
- Identifying team members whose goals and values align with WISE, and wish to be involved long term, then empowering them to be more involved in key roles.
- Attracting more interns and volunteers so we can get all of these things done faster. But first, we need to have the documentation and processes in place to be able to manage more people! Vicious cycle.
- Making WISE a place where people want to be. Cos, well, we want to create a society that everyone wants to be in, and a workplace should be no different. Also, we won't have a team if people don't want to be here .

While this is my goal, I actually spend very little time working on these priorities directly. Because **almost everything else** needs to be done.

But what do I really do?

Basically, anything that needs to get done but no one else is in a position to or has the capacity to do. A lot of it is providing inputs/feedback on what other team members have worked on, and stuff that only someone who knows enough about WISE can do. Just check out the tasks assigned to me on Jira.

And what is my day-to-day like?

You are probably not that interested in knowing, but I like talking about it because I have turned it into my own personal art so here goes!

I work multiple jobs (it's mostly a money thing, partly a learn-from-others-and-bring-it-back-to-WISE thing) and help babysit my niece and nephew on weekdays so I don't work the traditional 9-to-5! My day-to-day is also going to completely change again when my nephew starts preschool (my niece and nephew are very cute but I'd be glad to have my life back again cos my hours are brutal).

Working hours

I've experimented with different schedules and this is what works for me right now.

- 10 hours on Sundays (because no need to babysit on weeks) and 5 hours for the remaining days.
- On weekdays I work before 7.20am (cos that's when I start to help my mother out with my niece/nephew), while my nephew is napping (thank goodness he's taking long naps now) or cycling around the neighbourhood with my father, and after 6.30pm (cos that's when my brother and sister-in-law are both back from work).
- Because of this I try not to take meetings during the day, but often it can't be helped.
- If I finished my hours for the day, I'll exercise, because it's good for my soul .

I rarely work beyond 40 hours per week, having been burned by burnout before (hurhur). But I must admit that some tasks I don't log as official WISE hours, such as updating Confluence, which I do while watching tennis/curling/sport climbing or playing Caesar IV.

Deciding what to do

My todo list typically fluctuates between 10 to 20+ items over the week, and maybe 100 messages/emails (excluding spam) per day, so I have to balance between working on urgent tasks (e.g. grant reports) as well as non-urgent but important priorities (e.g. revamp website) while not holding up other people's work. My current system is:

1. Urgent tasks first (obviously)
2. When my inbox reaches 20, I clear it. If I answered all messages immediately, I would also get responses immediately, which pulls time away from my own tasks.
3. Toggle between a simple task (e.g. updating a document) and making progress on a big project (e.g. revamp website).

I typically choose one big and important project to work on at a time. That's all I have bandwidth for!

 That's it really. I hope that understanding my process helps you in some way.

Questions for me?

Use Questions for Confluence! Or comment below. Or Slack me.