

From Good to Great

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INTRODUCTION

It is indeed a pleasure and an honour for me to pen this editorial as I embark on this journey as the new Editor-in-Chief for the Journal of Health and Clinical Sciences, the official journal for the Faculty of Medicine Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to all the members of the Editorial Board for initiating and subsequently driving this journal to its current position. I am pleased that the journal has met its planned timeline in achieving the due recognition and rise to greater heights in the new future. As the official journal of the faculty, it has an important role in supporting the faculty to achieve its goal as a Centre of Excellence in medicine.

From the very beginning of my tenure as the Dean of this young faculty, I have always been cognizant to the potential and opportunities that presented to us in more ways than one. Potential is a beautiful word to best describe the current state of our medical faculty. It is filled with hope and optimism towards continuous progressive success and possibilities of greatness in the future. All faculty members, both academicians and non-academicians who had decided to be part of this interesting journey, carry with them the roles and responsibilities that are entrusted to them with commendable dedication and commitment. Over the years, since the establishment of our faculty until now we have produced thousands of graduates, hundreds of research articles, and all other achievements that either influenced the Myra scores or were part of the ranking criteria, which enabled us to be consistently considered as a significant faculty or institution to work with.

However, potential is about the capacity to develop into something better. To quote some of my favorite authors, Jim Collin [1] mentioned in his bestseller; ‘Good to Great’, where most of this write up is based on, stated that Good is the enemy of Great’. I believe that is the main reason why so few of us or so few of our teaching institutions have achieved their full potential towards being great.

Warren Bennis [2] suggested that we must have some kind of measurement or criteria to know if the dream we have matches the ability we have proven. This is very much relevant in the context of transforming from good to great. So what does it take to make that transformation possible? The fundamental mindset is to ask ourselves these three question to identify if what we want to do is possible:

1. Do we know the difference between what we want and what we are good at?
2. Do we know what drives us and what gives us satisfaction?
3. Do we know what our values and priorities are, and what our organization’s values and priorities are?

Measuring these differences will reveal many of the obstacles between what we want and the reality now. Then we should ask ourselves whether we are able to overcome those differences in order for us to change to our desired position.

LEADERSHIP

Everything falls or rise on leadership [3,4]. Leadership is about managing people and their dynamics, which are

continually changing. The main challenge of University leadership at various levels is to create change and facilitate growth. The changing scenarios within the education world, changes in the demography and psychology of the students, together with the different expectations of its stakeholders, demand higher level of leadership. The good news is, leadership and success are our birthright [5].

All of us are leaders in our own rights. Leadership does not begin and end at the very top. The Deaneries, heads of departments, coordinators, executives, clerks, customer service operators, and just about anyone who comes in contact with others has a good reason to learn to lead [6]. We should be thinking about our leadership development not merely as a career path, but more importantly, it is about advancing our team. Lead ourselves well and at the same time lead our people better and help members of our team to become more effective. This will be profoundly important in transforming from good to great.

FIRST WHO...THEN WHAT

People are not the most important asset, the right people are [1]. Great vision without great people is irrelevant. "First who" is very simple idea to grasp but a very difficult idea to do and sometimes very difficult to change. The need to put right people at the right seat at the right time is the fundamental for transforming from good to great. The right people does not require motivation or being tightly manage, they are self-motivated by their inner drive to produce the best results and to be part of creating something great. When leaders have the right people to work with, it will be a smooth ride to adapt to changing directions in a fast-paced evolving world. When leaders have the right people, they will do everything within their power to build a great institution, not because of what they will benefit from it, but because they simply cannot imagine settling for anything less. Good to great institutions understand a simple truth: The right people will do the right things and deliver the best results they are capable of, regardless of the compensations and incentives, or in other words, the rewards and benefits.

Yes, compensations and incentives are important, but for very different reasons in good to great institutions. The purpose of a compensation

system should not be to get the right behaviour from the wrong people, but to get the right people at the right place, and to keep them there. In his case studies, Jim Collins gave an examples of Nuxor, a steel manufacturer company, who built its entire system on the idea that you can teach farmers to make steel, but you cannot teach work ethics to people who don't have it in the first place. Nuxor system did not aim to turn unproductive people into efficient hard workers, but it aimed to create an environment where hardworking, effective and innovative people would thrive while the opposite people would either jump or get thrown off the bus. I particularly like some of the suggestions that Jim Collins gave to improve our Who:

1. When in doubt, don't hire, keep looking
2. When you know you need to make people change, act
3. Put your best people on your biggest opportunity, not your biggest problems

The essential components in people are:

1. The ability to get and keep enough of the right people
2. The best people don't need to be tightly manage
3. The right people want to be part of building something great

Great people doing great things and the best of what they are good at; combined together consequently will transform good to great. Finally, no matter what we aim to be or achieve, if we don't spend the vast majority of our time with the people we love and respect, a great life will continue to evade us. My most important personal belief towards having a great life is to be the right person and surrounded by the right people.

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