

Paradigm

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The 4 Core Pillars

At the fundamental level, every organisation is supported by 4 core pillars; **People** (Talent & Knowledge), **Product** (or Service delivering the organisation's value proposition), **Process** (making things happen in a defined manner) and **Paradigm** that embodies the culture, climate and strategies that drive the organisation towards its vision. We could add the 5th **P** which is **Passion** injecting the emotional element.

While one could enter into endless discussions on which of the 4 or 5 "P" is more important, I am inclined to argue that **Paradigm** differentiates an organisation from its peers.

Paradigm or put simply is the "Mindset" of the organisation and its people in solving problems, developing innovative ideas to create new values or in the opposite direction, stifle growths at the organisation and individual levels.

I am sure all of us have come across many live examples of how the strong mindset of powerful leaders has led an organisation or a country either into successful or destructive path.

In the more complex and interconnected world that we live in, decision making has increasingly become more challenging arising from the greater need to engage a much wider segment of stakeholders; each defending its self-interest with added vigour supported by social media platforms.

Don't get me wrong as I fully support stakeholder engagement but such activity like other activities require resources and time and there is a need to take a balance approach.

Direct or Skirt?

In Singapore, other than the concerns over the gloomy economic situation and uncertainties over the next two years, recently, there have been active and lively debates on 3 topics: Changes to the Elected Presidency, Madonna's concert on 28 Feb and the Cross Island Line (CIL).

I will use CIL as an example to support my earlier statement on the greater importance of Paradigm.

From press reports either on print or online, there seems to be a 50:50 split on the two possible alignments. For the benefits of overseas audience, the debate; is whether the CIL should cut across the Central Catchment Nature Reserve (CCNR) thereby impacting

the core natural catchment area in Singapore or for a diverted route that skirt around the CCNR which is longer and at an additional estimated cost of S\$2B more.

Before I draw a line in the sand and incur the wrath of at least 50% of the “population”, let me share an observation I made recently at the “Future of Us” exhibition.

At the “Future of Us” exhibition, it further reinforces the point that given the scarcity of land in tiny Singapore, there are only two practical options; build UP or go UNDER. There is no third option of growing sideways.

Now, let’s put on our thinking hat and challenge our current MINDSET for this CIL.

The first question that came to mind: is there an alternative to the precious CCNR?

The Future Now?

Looking at Google Map, Pulau Tekong; the largest island appears to be similar in size with CCNR. Further research: Pulau Tekong (24.4 sq km) and CCNR (28.8 sq km). If Pulau Ubin (10.2 sq km) next to Pulau Tekong is combined, the gross land area for a potential new nature reserve is 34.6 sq km (20% more than CCNR).

The issue on hand is Pulau Tekong is the only island designated for military training and the implications if the island is “converted” into a Core Nature Reserve.

Before tackling this military training issue, our mindset of time dimension has to change. The future is not about 10, 20 years but 50 years and beyond.

Firstly, the type of military training that is required in the immediate and near future is already changing rapidly due the benefits and disruptions that technology brings. Secondly, the current deliberation on the two current CIL options seems to focus on more immediate time horizon of our liveability and environment in the next 10, 20, 30 years.

Before those of you who are naturalists come hard on me, I’m not suggesting CCNR be replaced with concrete “jungle” but to think very hard (paradigm shift) in how to transform the areas around our 3 key national “water taps”, MacRitchie, Peirce and Seletar reservoirs into a lively water hub that is integrated into the Smart Nation master plan for Singapore over the next 50-100 years!

Since there is no right or wrong answer, our future generations would probably look back and decide if a more forward looking decision was made by us now.

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