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LEADING HIGHER INSTITUTION

Leadership Traits, Dreams and Achievements

UNIVERSITY LEADERS' ENTREPRENEURIAL
EDUCATOR BOOTCAMP (UNILeeb)
CASE STUDY

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Chief Editor
Nik Maheran Nik Muhammad

Leading Higher Institution:
Leadership Traits, Dreams and Achievements

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Preface

University Leaders' Entrepreneurial Educators Bootcamp (UniLeeb) is a program hosted by UMK and funded by AKEPT with the aim to enhance entrepreneurial leadership competencies among university's leaders. AKEPT provides a platform for renowned leaders in higher education institutions to impart their knowledge and skills to their future successors based on their best practices. These invaluable sharing of success stories and experience are usually passed from word of mouth and rarely documented. Taking a different stance from a famous quote, 'leaders are born, not made', this book aims to inspire the readers, especially the future leaders, to learn from the incredible journey made by nine remarkable leaders in higher learning institutions.

Therefore, this book provides a compilation of stories presented in a case study of nine (9) successful leaders. Their traits, dreams and achievements were shared in this book to inspire the potential leaders of higher institutions which focus on leadership traits, dreams and achievements of a leader can stimulate the reader's critical thinking. We hoped this book would be a good starting point for the upcoming series of a recorded knowledge-sharing session from our local intellectual to all local and global readers.



Acknowledgements

In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the Most Merciful,
All praises are to Allah S.W.T the Almighty for blessing the Taufik and Hidayah and giving us the opportunity and strength to accomplish this book.

Finishing this book is indeed not an easy task. Though with great difficulties, we had given our best efforts to give an outstanding output. Thus, it is hoped that this book can help the students and public at large, especially those with interest in leadership to become successful in their undertakings in the future.

We would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to the Higher Education Leadership Academy (AKEPT) for taking the initiative to publish this book and not forgetting to the contributors of the book who are the participants of the UniLeeb program. Last but not least, to everyone who was directly or indirectly involved, for being supportive and patient throughout the accomplishment of this book. The acknowledgment also goes to the university leaders for giving us the opportunity in producing this piece of manuscript.

Thank you.

Synopsis

The manuscript explores the various leadership styles, dreams, and achievements of 9 renowned leaders in spearheading the institutions of higher learning in Malaysia. All the case studies were the result of sheer hard work and compilations done by 9 groups of authors through a series of interviews with the respective leaders within the course of 3 to 4 months.

The first case study **“Bulldozer in Action: In Bridging the Underdog to the Top”**, talks about Prof. Dato’ Ts. Dr. Noor Azizi Ismail, dubbed as the 'bulldozer' in bringing the underdogs to the top and nurturing them to their fullest potential.

The second case study entitled, **“Aligning Academics' Competence to the University's Expectation: For the Better Future of All”**, is about Prof. Awang Bulgiba, who is an expert in strategizing the governance of the university while meeting expectations of the academics.

The eighth case study **“Leadership in Action: Founder of CEO@ Faculty”** revolves around Prof. Dr. Arham Abdullah, whose leadership skills has bridged the gap between industry and academia in just six months through his brainchild, the CEO@Faculty Programme .

The third case study, **“Shadowing a Great Leader”** discussed how the author aspires to follow the footsteps of Prof. Datuk Dr. Raduan Che Rose who uses the Swift Eagle leadership style in shaping and restructuring one of the youngest higher learning institutions in the country.

The fifth case study entitled **“Nurturing Future Leaders in Research and Innovation via Knowledge Sharing and Exchange”**, centers around Prof. Dr. Mohd Shahir Shamsir Omar who started the initiatives to provide supportive working environment for 'otai' and young academics in creating a more effective and productive academia.

The sixth case study, **“The other side of the coin: creating opportunities out of difficulties”** features the story of Tuan Akmal Abdul Manap, the struggles, and challenges in dealing with the transition from public to the private higher learning institution.

The seventh case study **“Fight It or ‘Buy’ It?”** highlights the story of how Prof. Datuk Dr. Mohammad Shatar Sabran managed to build his dynamic team and get everyone to work harmoniously together using his strategy of ‘buying them in’ and this strategy has also helped him to resolve one of the toughest challenges and crises in his career.

The fourth case study, **“Academic Leadership and Leadership Challenges of the Vice Chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)”**, showcases Prof. Dr. Faisal Rafiq Mahamd Adikan’s implementation of sustainability leadership during his years as the Vice-Chancellor of USM.

Finally in the last case study **“Transformational Leadership in a New Era”** brings the readers the story of Prof. Datuk Dr. Marliham who rose from the bottom of the management ladder and within the span of ten years became the president of one of the leading private institutions in Malaysia.

The sole purpose of this book is that it could be used as an example and reference to everyone who aspires to become great leaders one day. As the saying goes, “A good leader leads by example and not by force”, hopefully, all the stories and experiences shared here by these authors will help to mold the young minds into becoming the next generation to lead the higher learning institutions to the pinnacle, locally and globally.

01 CASE STUDY

Bulldozer in Action: In Bridging the Underdog to the Top

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PROF. DATO' DR. NOOR AZIZI BIN ISMAIL

Prologue

Professor Noor Azizi let out a long breath. His feet moved slowly as his gaze watched every corner of his new university, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK). On his first day in UMK, Professor Azizi was imagining the pain and struggle that would be accompanying his long journey in transforming the university from nothing into something. Of being established for a decade ago, UMK seems to not have progressed that well when it is still stuck at the bottom three in the Malaysian public university ranking. "This university has almost nothing to be proud of. I will transform this university into what everyone can be proud of and look forward to being with. I will make it the top entrepreneurial university in the country. Although it is going to be hard, I know I can do this". Professor Noor Azizi promised this to himself.

Leadership Characteristics

Prof Dato' Ts. Dr. Noor Azizi Ismail is the Vice Chancellor of Universiti Malaysia Kelantan appointed for a three-year term effective Jan 7, 2019. Professor Noor Azizi holds a doctorate in Accounting and Information Systems from Loughborough University, United Kingdom; Master's degree in Accounting Information Systems from the University of Memphis in the United States; and a bachelor's degree in accounting from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).

He began his academic career as a lecturer of Accounting Information Systems at Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), before being appointed as the Dean of UUM School of Business (Research and Innovation), and as the Dean of UUM Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business. The development of the Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business (OYAGSB) of UUM owes much to the strong and capable leadership shown by its founding dean, Prof Dato' Ts. Dr. Noor Azizi Ismail (2011-2015). A man with a strong vision and leadership skill, Professor Noor Azizi was instrumental in making OYAGSB a respected, relevant, and responsive business school in the country. Through his keen observation and deep understanding, he knew what a business school should have to make its mark on the international stage.

Charismatic

As a person, Professor Noor Azizi carries out his life as usual as others. Yet, he is often viewed as a passionate and charismatic person especially by those who know him and have experienced working directly with him. At home, Professor Noor Azizi is found to be energetic and a family man. This is usually shown from his sharing in his social media, as family is also a number priority in his life besides his job. In reaching out to more subjects and audiences, Professor Noor Azizi loves to use social media especially in making himself more visible to the world. To him, social media is an essential medium of visibility for a leader and organisation to share knowledge and promote branding.

The "Bulldozer"

With the support of everyone at the School, Professor Noor Azizi embarked on an uncharted journey to internationalisation. Though perilous it may seem, the journey yielded expected results. The long, hard work was not without gain. Defying all odds, the School succeeded in getting international accreditations of ABEST21, AMBA, and AACSB. Now, the School can stand tall with its achievements and as one of the business schools to be reckoned with.

Having sketched out his excellence at the Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business (OYAGSB), Professor Noor Azizi continued the glory of his leadership in UUM as he was later appointed as the deputy vice-chancellor (Research and Innovation) of UUM. Other than being the top management in the university, he also served the ministry as the deputy director-general of higher education in the Ministry of Education from July 2017 to December 2018. In January 2019, Professor Noor Azizi's journey with UMK began as he was appointed as the vice-chancellor of the university.

