

Ho Kong Soon | Group managing director, Matrix Concepts Holdings Bhd

PATRICK GOH/THE EDGE

Success through simplicity



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Matrix Concepts Holdings Bhd group managing director Ho Kong Soon believes that every problem or situation can be broken down into smaller, simple steps that will lead to a solution. This philosophy has helped him in his current role, and he has led the company to become a recognised and respected name in the property development industry.

For his leadership and commitment to providing quality products and services, Ho was named Outstanding CEO at *The Edge Malaysia* Property Excellence Awards.

Born in 1967, Ho grew up in Slim River, Perak. A naughty child, which he readily admits to being, he had little interest in his studies but that soon changed when he realised a good education would be necessary if he wanted to get ahead in life.

"Education is not a guarantee of success but it is a platform or foundation for you to survive," he says.

He eventually did well enough to enter Form 6, which he completed in Tapah, another town in Perak, after which he entered Universiti Malaya on a scholarship to study engineering.

Upon graduation in 1992, he was bonded to work for two years at a local company. However, after three months of "boring, repetitive work", he decided being an engineer was not for him, broke his bond and paid a penalty to be released early.

Within the same year, Ho went to Seremban in Negeri Sembilan and got a job in property development. He learnt a lot — especially when dealing with the local authorities — and decided that this was the industry for him, liking its pace and dynamic nature. In 1997, he joined Matrix Concepts.

Leadership thoughts

Ho believes that one can become a leader by acquiring knowledge through reading and learning from others who have good leadership values. However, a leader's role is more than just steering the ship.

"A leader is a person who can bring about a positive impact on society, people and the surroundings. The most important is that [the impact] is everlasting, leaving a legacy," he says.

Leaders have to be able to look at a situation and adapt as required, he adds. "There is no one



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solution for everything because everything is always moving and changing, whether it's time or society."

While learning from others is important, as are reading and being exposed to different thoughts and practices, the key to success is in the application, says Ho.

"I don't like people to tell me what the theory says. You must tell me how to apply it, how to implement it. There must be a distinctive action plan, what objective you want to achieve, what decision needs to be made and how effective it is. You create a differentiation this way. If you just follow what is given, the result will be ordinary. Ordinary is not good enough in today's competitive market," Ho asserts.

He highlights the Movement Control Order (MCO) during the pandemic, which was a telling period for Matrix Concepts. The group was able to pivot and adapt to the new normal quickly without massive disruption to its operations.

"I cannot say the MCO or the pandemic had no effect on the company but we tried to minimise [the effect]. Why we have succeeded is because we have built resilience."

Ho believes that to build this resilience, one needs to have a strong team and the ability to

MOHD IZWAN MOHD NAZAM/THE EDGE



HO KONG SOON
MATRIX CONCEPTS HOLDINGS BHD

Ho (centre) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong, *The Edge Media* Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus Au Foong Yee and *City & Country* editor E Jacqui Chan



Ho explaining the overall concept of SIGC Residences at its launch in 2016