

the SUNDAY TIMES

EMPLOYMENT TIMES

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Fluency: Leading in the Midst of Change

Some of you may remember the 1985 hit song, "We are the World," produced by Quincy Jones and an inspiring cast of musicians who sang about working together, past our differences. Or perhaps you remember the tremendously successful United Colors of Benetton ad campaign back in the 1980s, celebrating young faces of every color, signaling the look and feel of a world without borders. Media images like these showed us the world and nation, as we wanted ourselves to be -- pictures and soundbites of many races cooperating, communicating, and sharing opportunity and fortune.

If only it were that simple. Almost 25 years later, we are still struggling to make that vision real -- in our business practices, in the running of our cities, and, now, in the context of great cultural, demographic, and economic changes brought on by globalization.

As 21st century leaders, you know that building, guiding, and sustaining truly diverse communities is tremendously diffi-

cult work. Over the last decade, city populations and workforces have changed faster than at any point in history -- job relocation, mobile commerce and ease of travel have changed our cities' demographics quickly and often. Immigrant and new communities continue to influence and change the culture of our cities. Young families and children supplant the aging baby boomer generation, again, changing the character and priorities of a community.

At the same time as we become a more diverse, more prosperous nation, our cities have also become more segregated. In fact, studies from SUNY Albany, UCLA, and the Harvard Graduate School of Education have reported that segregation of our children has worsened over the last decade, even as we live in more integrated areas. As newcomer groups grow in critical mass, so does the tendency to organize along racial, ethnic, or other group-affiliated lines. Changing demographics and the growth of ethnic enclaves

have made race awareness and identity politics an effective means of voicing the needs of some of our cities' otherwise marginalized groups.

Amid all of this, civic and corporate leaders are confronted with difficult choices every day. Worthy projects from different community sectors must compete for limited resources. Appointments and commissions must be assigned in ways that satisfy all the interests represented in our constituency groups, assuring each of them adequate representation. From time to time, leaders also face crisis-fueled change, forcing them to guide their communities quickly through controversies.

Does this sound stressful? Indeed, scenes of a diverse community can be those of chaos, fiefdoms, even balkanizing, as some futurists and scholars predict. Alternatively, some see these times as momentous, opening the door to the grandest and most inspiring of challenges.

How does one lead a community, whether local or global team, in the midst of huge demographic and economic shifts? How do leaders create communities where all constituents feel included, counted and equally receiving of the opportunities offered by a community? And how do we have difficult conversations that turn our best intentions into action and accountability, not only from our leaders, but from ourselves?

The answers to these questions are certainly many and varied, depending on a community's specific composition and the issues it faces. Nevertheless, one of the most important skills of a leader through changing times will be a skill set of cultural fluency. This is not necessarily language fluency, as that term is usually used. Fluency is the skill set of understanding and being understood past apparent borders. To know one's constituents and address their needs effectively, 21st century leaders must practice and hone their fluency skills.

Over the past few years, I've talked to many fluent leaders: opinion shapers, thought leaders in business and communities, artists, teachers, media creatives, all who understand that their ultimate success depends on how deeply and quickly they can identify common ground and transcend boundaries between their constituents. Fluent leaders are servant leaders who willingly assume the place of liaison, the diplomatic negotiator, the arbiter of compromise.

What are some of the qualities of a fluent leader? They understand the value of nuance. They readily deal with complexity, knowing that solutions to real problems



require many levels of information and analysis. Every one of the fluent leaders I've interviewed is also insatiably curious. They are lifelong learners who have honed their vision and their life's purpose through constant exposure to different experiences.

Perhaps most importantly, these leaders also understand that the practice of fluency is not a Pollyanna-esque, naive vision of the world, where a handshake, a kind word, or a dabble into a diversity program will suffice. It is quite the opposite. Fluency work is hard "detail" work that requires courage.

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Cornucopia Banking Vacancies

Cornucopia Lanka (PVT) Ltd is the local arm of "Cornucopia Asia", rated as one of the Top Twenty innovating consulting outfits in South Asia in 2010. Presently operating in Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai (India), Dhaka (Bangladesh) and in Singapore. We are seeking qualified professionals in the age group 30-50 years to fill following vacancies in a leading Financial Institution in Sri Lanka.

Chief Operating Officer -R1-

The COO reporting to the CEO will be responsible for all revenue generating functions including Corporate and SME Banking, Consumer Banking, Treasury and the centralized operations of the Bank.

Applicants should possess a good University Degree/ Professional Qualification in Banking, Business Management or Finance, preferably with an MBA with at least 15 years of experience in a recognized international or local bank. The candidate should be results driven, self motivated and have strong written and verbal communication skills.

He/She should have hands on operational experience and a proven track record with consummate leadership skills to lead a team of top professionals

Chief Risk Officer -R2-

The CRO will report to the CEO and will be responsible for the overall management of Credit Risk, Market Risk and Operational Risk of the Bank under an integrated risk management system.

A good University Degree/ Professional Qualification in Banking, Business Management or Finance, preferably with an MBA and over 15 years experience, of which at least 10 years should be as Head of Credit Risk Management. Exposure to Market and Operational risk management is a must. Applicants should possess good analytical and report writing skills, conceptual understanding, interpersonal skills, facilitation skills and have the ability to work independently.

Head of Corporate and SME Banking -R3-

The incumbent will report to the COO and will be responsible for managing the corporate & SME banking unit at the Head Office and Branches.

Applicants should have a good University Degree/ Professional Qualification in Banking, Business Management or Finance. The candidate should be results driven, self motivated, resourceful and have client orientation. He/She should have hands on operational experience in managing credit and retail business lines and a sound grasp of the financial services sector with consummate leadership skills to lead a team of top professionals.

Manager Leasing -R4-

The successful candidate will be responsible for consumer and corporate leasing at Head Office and the Branches.

A good University Degree/ Professional Qualification in Banking, Business Management or Finance preferred. 10 years experience in the leasing industry with sound knowledge of leasing products and procedures is a must. Should have good interpersonal skills and a flair for brand and channel management and marketing the products for achieving brand profit targets.

Manager Housing -R5-

The successful candidate will be responsible for the entire range of housing finance and associated products at Head Office and Branches.

A good University Degree/ Professional Qualification in Banking, Business Management or Finance preferred. A minimum of 10 years in consumer lending with a sound knowledge of managing housing products and procedures. He/She should have good interpersonal skills and a bias for revenue generation.

Manager- Personal Finance -R6-

The successful candidate will be responsible for personal finance at Head Office and Branches. The portfolio will include developing Product Policy Guidelines.

A good University Degree/ Professional Qualification in Banking, Business Management or Finance is a must. 10 years in consumer lending with a sound knowledge of personal finance products and procedures. Good interpersonal skills, communication, social skills and a bias for revenue generation is a prerequisite.

Competitive remuneration packages will be on offer. Experience in Islamic banking will be an added advantage, though not essential. You are invited to apply in confidence, with full career and compensation details, within 10 days and by e-mail. Please quote the respective Ref.No and Job Title in your application:

Marketing Communications Manager -R7-

He/She will be responsible for all marketing and public relations related activities of the Bank, including internal and external communications and liaising with advertising agencies and the media.

Applicants should possess a good University Degree/ Professional Qualification in Marketing with a minimum of 5 years experience in a similar capacity. He/She must have an outgoing personality with proven skills in brand communications, PR, building sound internal and external relationships, networking and brand building. He/She should also be IT and Business savvy.

Head of Treasury -R8-

The Head of Treasury will report to the COO and be responsible for all Treasury front office operations including Fixed Income, Money Market, Foreign Exchange and related activities.

Applicants should have a University Degree/ Professional Qualification in Banking or Finance, preferably with an MBA/ CFA. Over 10 years experience in the Treasury division of a recognized local or international bank will be advantageous.

Treasury Executive -R9-

The successful candidate will report to the Head of Treasury and will be responsible for carrying out dealing room activities of the treasury in Fixed Income, Money Market and Forex.

3 years of hands on experience in the Treasury Division of a recognized local or international bank is a must. A good university degree will be a definite advantage.



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