

Tuning in to the Leaders

with Ms Ang Bee Lian



Ms Ang Bee Lian holds statutory responsibility as the Director of Social Welfare at the Ministry of Social and Family Development. She also provides views and advice on the standards of social work and professional practice and capability in the sector.

Qualified as a social worker, she started as a child protection staff and practised in several settings. She also holds a Masters in Social Policy from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Ms Ang has worked extensively with the statutory and voluntary sectors in the children, youth, elder care, disability and juvenile rehabilitation settings, and in a variety of policy, practice and management roles. She takes a keen interest in helping others understand the social work profession and in equipping and empowering the younger generation to take leadership in serving the vulnerable in society.

In this session, Ms Ang will share 10 lessons on leadership for social service professionals as the sector moves forward. She will show how essential the heart and mind is as a social worker and the importance of integrity and authenticity in policy and direct practice.

1 Developing People

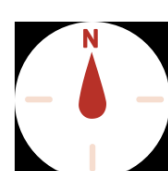
- 1 Autonomy: give people some space to do what they want to do
- 2 Mastery: train people to be good in what they do
- 3 Purpose: revisit the motivation behind why they do what they do

Results in motivated individuals

[Hear more in the video titled "Leadership in the Social Service Sector"]

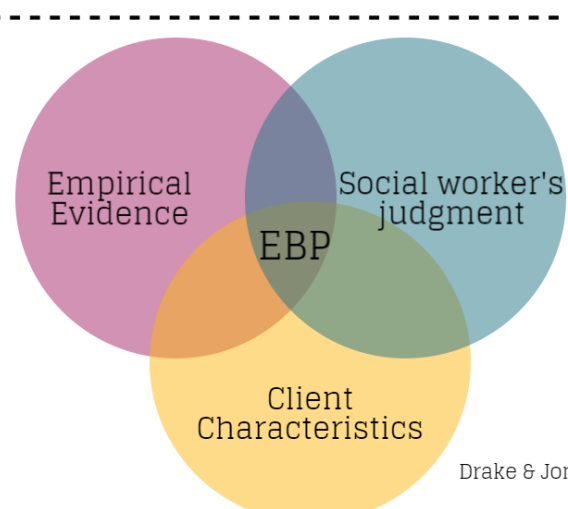
2 Pursue a Purpose even when no one is looking

“Think about what keeps you going. Stay on course and follow your true north.”



3 Evidence-Based Practice

Not everything done out of a compassionate heart is helpful. What can we learn from theory that can help us?



EBP is the integration of 3 major factors - empirical evidence, judgment and client characteristics.

Drake & Jonson-Reid, 2007

[Hear more in the video titled "Creating Policies and Programmes that Work"]

4 Policy is Implementation, Implementation is Policy

It is insufficient to have a good policy or framework. Implementation that results in outcome needs equal attention.

It is important to communicate clearly the spirit or intention behind the policy or project.

[Hear more in the video titled "Creating Policies and Programmes that Work"]

5 Engage the mind, heart and spirit

- MIND** : think purposefully about an issue
- HEART** : be able to empathise
- SPIRIT** : hold on to the soul of the work.

6 The Importance of Context



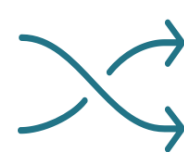
Poverty looks different in different countries. We need to be aware of the context when designing interventions. Context gives something meaning and relevance.



Learn the principles and perspective for contextualising.

7 Aim for Outcomes; Strategize with the Process

“Develop meaningful Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). KPIs should guide and not be something you chase after.”



[Hear more in the video titled "Turning Intention into Outcomes"]

8 Make Social Work Obvious



Be able to clearly articulate what Social Work is

What is Social Work?



Similar to the act of sewing, Social Work is like a craft.

It is hard work and requires skill to bring about positive social outcomes for individuals, groups and communities.



Social Workers are like helicopters.

They have the ability to go down to the bottom to help the person and lift him up. At the same time, they are able to scan the environment and work with systems.

9 Be Consultative, yet decisive when it counts

“If you try to get collective wisdom, you'll get more out of it. At certain stages you want to be much more consultative and facilitative. But there comes a point when you have to make a decision, then explain and clarify why that decision is taken.”



10 Maintain System Capability



Focus on the weakest link

Once the weakest link is right, the other parts can be strong.



Keep oiling the system

Keep on taking stock, because people change, they move in and out. Any system will always have lapses. It is important to oil the system to prevent crisis.

[Hear more in the video titled "Leadership in the Social Service Sector"]