

# Making A Good Thing Better



by  
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Some optimists might swear that behind every successful man is a woman. If that holds true, the Labour Movement has taken it a step further in that behind every successful worker is a successful company and everybody in between.

As a departure from the time-honoured practice of saluting individuals in the annual May Day Model Worker Award, the Labour Movement this year came up with the Model Partnership Awards that were bestowed on 126 individuals and a further 173 unions, companies and Government agencies on 16 May 2009 in a ceremony at Downtown East.

Classified under Institutional and Individual categories, the awards recognise and reinforce the need for organisations and individuals to work together for mutual benefit especially during the current world economic downturn.

Faced with the crisis, NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Heng Chee How asked: "Are we going to worry ourselves sick or are we going to do something about it? And so for this year, NTUC has adopted a slogan which we call 'Upturn the Downturn'. We believe that when you are faced with difficulties, never say die, never give up. Always believe that you can do something about it and put our minds, our



spirits to it. So we 'Upturn the Downturn'."

However, doing it alone has its limitations, "but if we do it together, then it becomes a lot easier because many hands make light work and unity is strength. And it is because of this that we have decided this year when we celebrate May Day that we must particularly emphasise and celebrate partnership. Because partnership, working together, supporting one another, encouraging one another, is going to make a big difference in whether Singapore and Singaporeans can come out of this recession stronger than before and whether we can 'Upturn the Downturn'.

"We have every confidence that no doubt, yes, there is this global downturn, no doubt there is an economic contraction, no doubt we are seeing more retrenchments, and more unemployed people. But when we unite, we as

**“ They (the awardees) have shown us what it means to really put in the effort, keep up the spirit in upturning this downturn. To enhance the employment and employability prospects, to help the companies stay cost competitive, to build a better capability for the future.”**

Heng Chee How

a people, as a country, will come out stronger and come out in better shape than any country on earth."

DSG Heng elaborated: "At the company level, we have management, unions, and workers working hand in hand to make sure that companies survive and that jobs are saved for our workers. At the individual level, we don't just wait for things to get better, we don't just wait for other people to come and save us. We do our part for ourselves, we do our part to help one another. So as workers, as supervisors, as trainers, as Industrial Relations Officers, as employability coaches, everybody has a role, everybody plays his part."

However, he said that it would not be possible without the trust and unity at the national level among the tripartite partners consisting of the Government, the employers represented by the Singapore National Employers Federation and the Labour Movement – the spirit of helping each other in good times and bad.

DSG Heng added that it was precisely because of this strong tripartism that there were three guests-of-honour on hand to present the awards – Manpower Minister Gan Kim Yong, NTUC President John De Payva and SNEF Vice-President Bob Tan.



Three Guests of Honour... (from left) SNEF Vice-President Bob Tan, NTUC President John De Payva and Manpower Minister Gan Kim Yong.