



Photo: Joanne L.

Grasping Entrepreneurship

Stepping out to be our own boss is an exciting business. What I have learnt as an entrepreneur can be grasped by the mantra of 5 fingers:

- Thumb – The thumbprint is internationally used by institutions for identification. From NRIC, passport, bank account book to contracts, there is no mistaken identity. Knowing our unique strengths allows us to do things that we are more adept at rather than following what others are doing. It is more energising and less time-consuming. As a Gallup-certified Strengths coach, my fulfilment comes from awakening the potential in others, whilst using mine.
- Index finger – The index finger points and directs. As an entrepreneur, I am my own manager and adviser; there is no waiting for others to dictate what's next. I have to be proactive, from planning, farming, ploughing, doing what's necessary to even factoring in time for fun!
- Middle finger – Sitting in the middle, this finger is central to us. Our passion and calling is our compass. When we are clear about this, we are less likely to lose heart or stamina when we meet roadblocks or toil long hours. We will not be distracted nor change course when others are jumping on different bandwagons.
- Ring finger – The ring finger is often associated with relationship. Everyone you meet has a potential to be your client, supplier, referee, partner, mentor etc. I am grateful for the support that my clients have given me till today, and it is anchored on relationships built over the years.
- Pinky finger – Our last finger is the weakest. I am humbled when I acknowledge that I do not know everything. I take time to learn, even from circumstances and people whom I cross path with. As the world evolves at accelerated pace, so should our learning, including learning differently.

Finally and most importantly, when I put my fingers together, I learnt to pray and commit my business to my God, who has first called me into this.

About the writer: Irene Chia is the founder of Whitespace Management Consulting Pte. Ltd. She left her job as the head of the national matchmaking agency 15 years ago to pursue her passion and interest in organisational development. Whitespace provides coaching, consulting and facilitation in leadership, change and culture.