

**SPEECH BY MS GOG SOON JOO,  
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AT THE ADULT LEARNING SYMPOSIUM**

**5 JULY 2012, 9.00 AM, RESORTS WORLD SENTOSA**

Minister of State for Manpower and National Development, Mr Tan Chuan-Jin

Chief Executive of the Singapore Workforce Development Agency, Mr Wong Hong Kuan

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

Welcome to our Fourth Adult Learning Symposium.

We are glad to have the opportunity to embark on this learning journey with you, to explore the latest in research, ideas and case studies in the arena of adult learning and vocational training.

Part of the Institute for Adult Learning's work is to help CET Professionals like yourself stay at the forefront of your practice. The changes sparked off by exogenous forces such as globalisation and technological advancement are coinciding with demographic changes, including multi-generation and multi-cultural workforce, which in turn present new and deeper challenges to us. Hence, this symposium hopes to bring the stakeholders of the national CET system together to collectively tackle these challenges that impact learning design and delivery.

### **Theme of the Symposium**

With the future oriented focus of the symposium, New Frontiers in Learning and Work, we have with us renowned experts who are thought leaders in their own field and all of whom are involved in various ground-breaking research and initiatives, e.g. we have a futurist, Mr Peter Schwartz, who will open the symposium with his insights on how we can navigate adult learning in this ever-changing world. Speakers such as Professor Jorgen Sandberg and Professor Leesa Wheelahan, challenge us to review our understanding of key concepts like competence and lifelong learning. While experts like Professor Stephen Billet and Dr Barbara Endel will inspire us, with learnings from the new models and programmes developed in their respective countries, that could help improve ours.

We have also added another dimension to the symposium by having our local researchers and practitioners speak alongside our international colleagues. This will help deepen our insights through local and international exchange. Hence, in the area of innovative practice and harnessing of technology to improve learning outcomes, we have international speakers like Professor Diana Laurillard from the UK and Professor Niki Davis from New Zealand, as well as our own local experts like Dr Linda Fang and Dr Soo Wai Man. Sharing on new developments in workplace learning, we have Professor Alan Felstead from the UK and Dr Gayle Morris from

Hong Kong, with the Singapore context being shared by our own head of centre for research in learning, Dr Helen Bound and her colleagues.

### **IAL's Research Strategy**

While the symposium is an anchor event for IAL to engage the CET community, our commitment to helping the community enhance practice and effectiveness is on-going. Hence, we have been growing our own research capabilities, beginning with the establishment of the three research centres in 2010:

- The Centre for Research in Learning (CRIL) which focuses on adult learning, teaching and assessment in formal, workplace and informal settings.
- The Centre for Skills, Performance and Productivity Research (CSPPR) which carries out research on the utilisation of skills at work and on factors that enhance productivity and performance.
- The Centre for Evaluation and Innovation Research (CEIR) evaluates programmes and conducts research that supports innovation in CET.

The strategy that guides our research programmes has been developed from extensive consultation with key stakeholders, from senior policy makers to participants in CET training programmes. Hence, while our approach to research is deliberately wide ranging, our engagements with practitioners and CET Professionals ensure that the research we produce is relevant to policy and practice. I am therefore pleased to present you the IAL Research Digest that encapsulates the research we have conducted over the last two years. If you have not gotten a copy yet, please collect it from the registration or customer service counter anytime over the next two days.

### **Acknowledgement**

The fourth symposium offers new elements besides the conference. Together with our partners, we have put up an exhibition showcase which aims to generate awareness of new CET learning tools and approaches, as well as a business platform to facilitate opportunities for collaboration, and for companies to seek out needed CET expertise. I hope you will find these enhancements a boost to your take-aways from the symposium.

These new offerings are made possible by our sponsors and partners. I would therefore like to extend my personal appreciation to them:

- Civil Service College of Singapore
- Center for Competency-Based Learning and Development
- Desire2Learn
- eLC
- EMC Corporation
- Kaplan Professional
- KnowledgeAdvisors
- MENDAKI Social Enterprise Network Singapore Pte Ltd
- NCS
- SMG
- Training Vision, and
- UK Trade & Investment

## Conclusion

To ensure that our CET Professionals can continue to meet the needs of our industries and workers, we must build solid bridges between the world of learning and the world of work, bring together business and labour, government and training providers, at the local, industry and national levels. The symposium is such a platform to do so. I therefore sincerely hope that with our slate of speakers and topics this year, the symposium could actively and positively contribute to your professional practice.

Thank you!