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Hon Martin Liao Cheung-kong, GBS, JP
Chairman
Sub-committee to Study the Formulation of Long-term Youth Policy and
Development Blueprint
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong.

Dear Honourable Liao,

“Assistance in promoting upward mobility of young people”

Thank you for inviting Employers’ Federation of Hong Kong to express views on the above subject.

Young people are the future, hope and pillars of Hong Kong. It is a shared responsibility of all stakeholders to provide a favourable incubation ground for our young generation to grow and flourish, possessing with global perspective, proactive mind-set and positive thinking.

It comprises two aspects in addressing the employability and upward mobility of our young people, namely, quality and opportunities. In light of the ageing population and increasing number of emigration in the recent years, it is the golden time for our younger generation to climb up their career ladder to fill the gap owed to manpower shortage.

Element of practicum and industry knowledge

Hong Kong, being a world city, needs a diverse spectrum of skillsets for different industries and job functions. Owing to various reasons, unfortunately, mainstream academic-focused education overshadows the equally important technical, vocational and professional training for our workforce. We are facing a serious problem of skill mismatch, and shortage of engineers and other professionals as well as manpower in skilled trades. We thus appreciate the Government’s initiative to review the Sub-degree education, which is an important stage for young people to map

their personal and career development. Periodical review of the education curriculum will ensure our youngsters equipped with right skillsets.

Regardless of the choice of professional study, graduates entering into the job market will face with unprecedented challenges in adapting an environment far more complicated than school life. It requires graduates' strong determination and lengthy learning curve to reach full potential. The Federation is of the view that close partnership between education institutions and respective industries in providing job-oriented trainings or placement opportunities will help our youngsters familiar with work environment at early stage and shorten the learning curve significantly after then.

Prerequisite skills for graduates

With aid of advanced technology, both business and individual are facing with intensive global competition and are required to make timely and appropriate response nearly around the clock. In addition to hard core academic or vocational knowledge, quality employees are expected to possess with attributes of being positive, proactive, resilience, self-confidence and with right mindset in order to meet the escalating demand of the current fast changing society. More importantly, we are eager to look for talents who can grow and develop with the organisation. The eagerness to learn and to excel himself in terms of language proficiency, communication skills, organisation abilities, logical thinking, etc. makes one stand out from the others. We believe, these skills can be acquired through extra-curricular activities such as group project, job attachment, corporate activities, etc. in addition to formal lecturing.

Broaden the horizon

Keeping competitive is the key for career progression and it implies not only professional knowledge but also in terms of insight and horizons. Continued study and on-the-job training should be encouraged and supported to keep our talents ahead in the job market.

The Federation encourages active involvement of the business sector in enriching our youngsters' knowledge on work practices, so as to enhance the "preparedness" in entering the workforce and to grow with the organisation. These may include:

- Participating in business-school partnership programme to equip students with industry information and experience e.g. corporate visit, job shadowing, job placement, etc.
- Involving in student project or competition in relation to business



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proposal/entrepreneurship to share real cases

- Senior and young executives sharing their experience through seminar or mentorship programme
- Devoting resources for staff learning and development

Simultaneously, the Federation is of the view that international exchange programmes co-ordinated by the Government and schools/tertiary institutions could be expanded to benefit more students as possible. Collaboration with the business sector to provide young executives with similar exposure could also be explored. On the other hand, we look upon the Government's championship in assisting youngsters of disadvantaged families to enjoy the equal opportunity for learning and development.

Hong Kong strives only when our youngsters strive. The Federation shares the same determination in working for the future of our young people and is ready to bridge the business community for this purpose. Please feel free to contact me should the Committee need to discuss with us further.

Yours sincerely,

Louis Pong
CEO