

SPEECH

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ភាពជាអ្នកដឹកនាំនៃស្ត្រី
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP
JOURNEY OF BECOMING

ADB

MY "TWO CENTS" ON LEADERSHIP

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កៀត អភិវឌ្ឍន៍
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Ignite

Hello everyone. My name is Aphivath. Before I start, I would like to briefly introduce myself. I am from Battambang province, and I came to live in Phnom Penh in 2002. I had just graduated from high school and decided to continue my studies in Phnom Penh. I was raised in a low-income household. My father passed away when I was 18 months old, so my mother had to play the role of mother and father. She is a wonderful woman.

I would like to say thank you to her for always encouraging and trying to meet the needs of her children, no matter how difficult it was. When we first came to study in Phnom Penh, we did not have any contacts here and my sister and I decided to rent a house. While living there, we studied worked and taught English at the same time. Teaching English allowed us to earn some pocket money.

At first, I never thought of getting involved in business when I was planning what I would do after I graduated. I wanted to find a job with good salary to take care of my mom and bring her to Phnom Penh.

After my graduation, I worked for different companies for about a year. I didn't like someone giving me orders, go left, go right, even though I don't mind if it's coming from someone more capable than me or their orders are logical.

I thought maybe it would be better if I started running my own business. If I failed, I knew at least I could teach English to support myself. When we started with running my company, we didn't have enough capital and we decided to borrow to get going. During that time, the interest for \$10,000 was \$200 or \$500 US. I was very worried about being able to pay this back and could not sleep.

What if I couldn't earn enough to pay the interest? But I comforted myself with the fact that I was not using the loan for gambling or anything ill-intentioned, I was doing it for business. So, I pressed on and told myself I would make it.

After I kept trying, our customers recognized our efforts and started to believe in us. We started getting bigger projects. Later, I opened a wedding business with my friends as well as a tourism company. Today, I also operate an air conditioner and electronics wholesale company.

Leadership is very broad, leadership is like an art. We find a way to lead our team to achieve a common goal, and achieving a common goal is important because a company cannot run with only one or two people.

One company needs many people and the sharing of many ideas. So, we have to find methods to create a collective mindset where people know and care for each other and want to achieve the same goal.

Personally, I act like a parent. I always think that when our child makes a mistake, we blame them or chastise them, but we do not think of abandoning them. Likewise at work, when someone makes a mistake, it's never a consideration to give up on them or fire them.

We give them a chance, explain things to them and guide them. I always tell them that if it is their first mistake, it is okay. However, if they continue to make the same mistake, then it becomes more than a mistake, it's negligence.

For me, a good leader is someone who sets a good example for others. For instance, when we make an appointment with an employee, we make sure we're on time. How can they trust us if we're not on time?

Another important thing is considering quality of work over quantity of work. It is important for each person to put his heart and soul into work, so the work goes smoothly.

Thus, we have to work together as a family. We have to learn to live together, adapt and trust each other. I have to be able to put myself in my employees' shoes. We cannot do anything on our own since we work as a team. I believe that everyone has their own way to lead their employee. I came today to share my opinion.

I am thankful for my team. Our spirit is strong and unified. I am here today because of them. and I hope some of my advice may be of use to the community and the next generation of entrepreneurs. Thank you for your time.