

Mourning for Tanya Phonanan, the Thai Mind Map Pioneer

This year, Dr. Surin Pitsuwan passed away. Last week, it was regret that Mr. Tanya Phonanan, a human capital development expert died at the age of 72. I would like to take this opportunity to write about him as a good lesson for the young generation people to follow.

I worked with Mr. Tanya Phonanan during the past 10 years. In the first stage, each of us did our job and hardly had cooperation. We knew each other because our works had the similar direction. We develop and manage people. Mr. Tanya Phonanan got Economics Degree from Kasetsart University. He furthered his study in Japan. He travelled for gaining experiences in several countries especially in Europe. He learnt about life for many years. It was his good experience.

He had opportunities to work in several fields. He had work experience with the private sector. He met Mr. Tony Buzan. Then, he became Mind Map guru.

Whenever I met Mr. Tanya Phonanan, he was humble and polite. He interestingly positioned his life. He got along well with everyone. He always honored other people. He was ready to make valuable contributions to the society. Everyone was happy to meet and talk to him. He led his life based on morality. He was happy to contribute to the country.

Later, I had more opportunities to work with him in human capital or human resource development. We were partners.

Whenever I met him, he always said that I used to nominate him to join the overseas conference nearly 30 years ago and it broadened his paradigm.

In 2009, both of us received Thailand HR Top 100 Award from Human Resource Institute, Thammasat University. This was our pride.

Mr. Tanya Phonanan had a lot of achievements which made him qualify for this award. We used to plan to write a book together. However, I could not come on the appointment because I could not make it. He was a great writer. We terribly regretted losing him.

I also had an opportunity to interview Mr. Tony Buzan as recommended by Mr. Tanya Phonanan. It was a great honor for me to know Mr. Tony Buzan. Both Mr. Tanya Phonanan and Mr. Tony Buzan greatly honor each other to introduce Mind Map to Thailand. They created good opportunities for Thais to learn the new concepts.

Mr. Tanya Phonanan succeeded in working on Mind Map. Up to the present, there have been more than 300,000 Mind Map students. Mr. Tanya Phonanan happily worked with passion and applied it to Thailand. He had good team. His wife has been highly dedicating to Mind Map work. Moreover, I invited him to teach Ph.D. students in several universities. Furthermore, I invited him to teach in my several leadership programs. Millions of people know Mind Map. It was a very successful work.

I had an opportunity to learn from Mr. Tony Buzan. I know Mr. Tony Buzan's education background. He has 6 Bachelor's Degrees. 3 are in the social science field. The other 3 are in the science field. Then, I become aware of the value of the thinking comprising of system thinking from the left brain and the creative thinking from the right brain.

This lesson should bring about creating the balance in Thai educational programs. The scientists or mathematicians usually lack the right brain perspective. They have hard skill but lack soft skill. Therefore, many of my programs focus on both hard and soft skills. I am proud to have opportunities to teach doctors and engineers to change mindsets and focus their learning more on soft skill. I got these recommendations from Mr. Tony Buzan and Mr. Tanya Phonanan.

It is regretful that human capital experts are known in limited groups and do not receive much attention. Thai media are interested in politicians and movie stars. I would like to write about Mr. Tanya Phonanan. I want the mainstream media and my Thai network to learn about the virtue and capabilities from a great human capital developer and manager who has passed away.

“His virtue remains with us.”

Prof. Dr. Chira Hongladarom



On July 29, 2009, Prof. Dr. Chira Hongladarom and Mr. Tanya Phonanan received Thailand HR Top 100 Award of HR Academic & Consultant Category from Human Resource Institute, Thammasat University.



Mr. Tanya Phonanan invited Prof. Dr. Chira Hongladarom to interview Mr. Tony Buzan, Mind Mapping Guru on the TV Program on May 29, 2009.



Mr. Tanya Phonanan , Prof. Vicha Mahakun, Mr. Anurat Kongtoranin, Dr. Sirilak Meksang and Dr. Veerachai Khuprasert were the panelists on “How can 8K’s and 5K’s develop Thai Human Capital for ASEAN Community?” at the Public Seminar and 8K’s and 5K’s: Thai Human Capital for ASEAN Community Book Launching Ceremony on February 28, 2012 at Sri Burapha Auditorium, Thammasat University (Tha Prachan Campus).

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