

INTERVIEWS

- Q: You beam with such pride and happiness when you speak of your children Mr. Lee!*
- LYS: I'm very happy that they have all become successful people. I did not have the chance to do my degree, so I'm very proud that they all had the chance. All my children have a lot of ambition.
- Q: If I could steer the interview back to the firm for a moment Mr. Lee. I'm just curious, do you have anyone in the firm you are particularly close to?*
- LYS: No. We seldom go for lunch together or meet outside of work. A lot of us just care for the work. We seldom go out and "hee-ha-hee-ha"! *[Animated hand gestures follow.]*
- Q: 50 years is a very long time to be at one firm Mr. Lee. I might get into trouble for asking this, but haven't you ever considered leaving?*
- LYS: *[Laughs]* I never once considered leaving! I think Shook Lin & Bok pays better than a lot of other firms. If I had opted to go to a smaller firm, I would constantly have had to worry about their financial status. It wouldn't have been secure. Plus, the firm gave my son a grant to study. If I were to have gone somewhere else to work, the Partners would have said I'm ungrateful! *[Laughs]*
- Q: Would it be right to say that Shook Lin & Bok offers some sort of security then?*
- LYS: Security la. Unless you do something wrong, then they will sack you! *[Laughs]*
- Q: Do you have any advice to the future members of the Shook Lin & Bok family?*
- LYS: *[Laughs]* I am not qualified to give any advice!
- Q: Now that you have reached the 50-year milestone, how long do you see yourself going on for?*
- LYS: It depends on the nature of the work. What is given to us; if we know, we do. If we don't know, we tell the lawyer in charge, and he/she will tell us how to solve the problem. If I don't know how to do something, I tell them outright. So it's really up to them. To answer your question, I will carry on for as long as I can.
- Q: In your 50 years here, who are your most memorable bosses?*
- LYS: Those have passed away or the present bosses?
- [I break out in laughter, believing Mr. Lee was showcasing his wit. I then find out it was an honest question. Mr. Lee eventually saw the humour in his question, and joined in with laughter.]*
- Q: Anyone at all Mr. Lee...*
- LYS: Lorraine Esme Osman, Tan Teow Bok, Cheong Kee Fong. Both Lorrain and Tan have passed away. As far as the present bosses are concerned, I enjoy working with Ng King Hoe.
- Q: Thank you for the interview Mr. Lee. It has been an absolute pleasure. All the best to you.*
- LYS: Thank God it's over. I don't like interviews because the more you quote, the more it will backfire. Silence is golden.
- Once the interview had ended I felt obliged to tell Mr. Lee that the interview was such an eye-opener to me; that it was a perfect mix of information and wisdom, to which he responded with much humility, "No la, I still don't understand why anyone would want to publish something like this." Although Mr. Lee had a point when he said "silence is golden", it's hard to imagine it applying to him. I believe his perspective is more than worth its weight in gold.