

Winky's Working Week

By Kevin Saunders

Woo Wan-ki, aka 'Winky', would be the first to admit that he was not the brightest kid on the block. In fact, he was quite an ordinary teenager. He had regular adolescent interests namely, spots, unintelligible music, girls, an occasional passing thought about boys; chatting on ICQ, surfing the net, basketball and of course, weekend barbecues with his 'brothers and sisters' – his very best friends. And he was always broke. And it wasn't that his parents were mean to him, because they weren't, it was just one of those things. And he didn't mind, because he, Winky, was quite content, thank you very much. But the one thing he did possess was an astonishing capacity to do well. In fact, ever since he was a nipper, he did well at just about everything. Hurrah for Winky!

His papa, however, did assure him that he would be able to earn money for himself soon enough. 'Remember, everything has its relative value my lad', as his papa always said. Hurrah for papa!

And soon enough, it was time for Winky to start earning, despite his inclinations to the contrary. Besides, he was getting tired of relying on handouts, even though his 'brothers and sisters' didn't mind a bit, because to them, Winky was one of a kind. And as they often reminded him, 'it's not what you've got but your family and friends that really count!' Hurrah for the 'brothers and sisters!'

Winky soon got a job at the Ma Faan International Import / Export Company Limited, located in a nondescript godown in Tsuen Wan. The family that runs it has many interests in Hong Kong and in China too, and is one of the territory's more established yet less visible clans. The sheer economic clout the clan wielded both as a group and as individuals was a constant source of speculation. Though nothing much ever surfaced in the local media, except recently, when a family member's activities came under particular scrutiny. Shortly thereafter, the reporter trumpeting the story awoke to discover her car

completely covered with ‘burial money’ and lashings of red paint. Shortly thereafter, the story and the reporter mysteriously disappeared. Funny that? *Hurrah for press freedom!*

So, it was to this company that Winky was to get his first taste of real work in the real world. Here’s what actually happened...

Monday, 8:15 a.m.

Winky reported bright and early, ready for a hard day’s work. To his dismay, he discovered that his first job was to make endless cups of lai char (milky tea) for his new ‘brothers’. And when not making tea, he enjoyed a close association with a broom. In truth, he was bored stiff, but being a good fellow, he cooperated with the ‘brothers’ and just did as he was told. Soon enough, the day was done. As he was about to leave, ‘big brother’ Tung called him into his smoke-filled cubicle and said, ‘la, I told the boss you did well today, so you report to ‘shipping’ tomorrow. Lucky you-lah!’ Winky was relieved, and with that good news in his pocket, he left the ‘brothers’ with a cheery wave and skipped off home.

Tuesday, 8:45 a.m.

Winky reported to the shipping department full of anticipation. He wasn’t quite sure what his duties were going to be, but whatever they were, he was determined to do his very best. And that’s precisely what happened. Winky was told to deliver some ‘precious goods’ to a chemist’s shop across town, and to cut a long story short, Winky did just that, much to everyone’s immense satisfaction. Upon his return, Winky was told that the big boss was pleased with his excellent work, and he could go home early. Tomorrow, he must report to the Sales Manager. “Wah – you’re so lucky Winky-lah,” said ‘brother’ Wong, “I’ve been here for years and I’m still waiting ... la, never mind-lah, good luck-lah!” Well, this news was music to Winky’s ears, and so with a big grin, he bade his new ‘brothers’ a fond farewell and traipsed off home.

Wednesday, 9:15 a.m.

Sporting a shiny new suit, Winky appeared before the Sales Manager, keen as mustard and ready for anything. The Sales Manager was a much-tattooed mean looking fellow who took one look at Winky and gruffly said, “All right Wanki-lah, now we’ll see what you’re made of...” Well, this quite astonished Winky because he wasn’t used to being called “Wanki-lah” – by anybody. So, fearing a miserable day, he decided to say nothing and just do his best. And that’s exactly what he did do.

The ‘sales team’ soon went out to visit a local client having ‘payment’ problems. Within minutes, Winky noticed that things were not quite as they seemed. So, feeling inspired, he prised-open a locked drawer and discovered a thick wad of crisp orange banknotes. This initiative surprised the Sales Manager, and the client with the payment problems even more so!

Suffice to say, Winky was the hero of the day; and once they’d settled their business with that most ‘untrustworthy’ client, they all repaired to the nearest watering hole to celebrate Winky’s smart thinking. Later, Winky was told that he was to report to the General Manager for his new assignment in the morning by the now sozzled much-tattooed ‘big brother’. This news was greeted with much merrymaking, but shortly thereafter, Winky left the ‘brothers’ to their fun, and with an even bigger smile, headed straight home.

Thursday, 9:45 a.m.

A car arrived to take Winky to his meeting with the General Manager, ‘big brother’ Ho. Winky was a bit intimidated by ‘big brother’ Ho ... in fact, nearly everyone was intimidated by ‘big brother’ Ho. This in itself was quite strange, as ‘big brother’ Ho was a small and feeble fellow; but he did have the freakiest way of looking right at you. And that weird hairdo -- what was left of it, now that was really freaky! Howsoever, once Winky had overcome his natural trepidation, he set about the task that he was set. And though he was new to the ways of ‘the business’, his quick eye caught what appeared to be an irregularity in the manifesto of a consignment of ‘precious goods’ about to be sent

to the USA (via a rather circuitous route). It seemed that someone in the shipping dept. was not too clever with their weights and measures ... or perhaps they were being just a bit too clever! After checking his facts and figures, Winky presented his findings to 'mr freaky' himself, and after an excruciatingly painful silence, was told to wait outside and say nothing to anybody about anything. Well, Winky didn't need to be told twice to keep his trap shut, so he did just that. About an hour or so later, Winky was summoned to 'freaky's' office and informed that what he had uncovered had been of immense value to the firm's interests. And thanks to his discovery, things were now being taken care of - even as they spoke. "Well done Winky," said 'freaky' - in his peculiarly effeminate voice, "...tomorrow, you report to the CFO. Now, off you go!" So, with an imperceptible grin creasing his features, Winky beat a hasty retreat and headed straight home.

Friday, 10:15 a.m.

The CFO was a mighty fellow. He must have been 6'6" if he was an inch. But the most astonishing thing of all were his huge hands; hands that could tear a telephone directory in half - or at least that's what Winky imagined, as he sat opposite him. After the brief formalities, Winky was given the task to learn 'the books' - and to guide him, he was assigned the veritable Ms Ping, who was both sexy and accomplished. She had recently earned her MBA, paid for by the company as a reward for her loyalty. So, in such pleasant and capable company did Winky find himself on that sunny Friday morning.

He was taken to an office next to Ms Ping's, to learn more about the business of 'the business'. And before long, Winky found himself thinking more about Ms Ping's figure than the figures before him. But, being a conscientious fellow, he concentrated on the job in hand and set to work. A little later, Winky happened across a slip of pink paper amongst the computer printouts he was perusing; it was a broker's 'buy' chit made out to Ms Ping for the sum of HK\$44,000. 'That's a bit strange' thought Winky. So, he made a few phone calls to do a bit of checking on his own.

Once he was certain of the facts, Winky confronted Ms Ping in her office. She became rather excited, but before he could continue, she got up and calmly locked her office door. Then, she slowly undid her crisp cotton blouse, revealing the most fantastic sight Winky had yet laid his eyes on. Winky's missile went ballistic. Then off came the skirt. Winky instantly forgot about all those misappropriated dollars and instead, concentrated purely on the business in hand. The next 25 minutes were beyond Winky's wildest dreams, but when all was said and done, Winky knew he still had to report the HK\$44,000 discrepancy to the CFO. And despite her offer to split the proceeds with him, and other enticing promises, Winky quickly zipped things up and headed straight to the CFO's office, evidence in hand, bulging with confidence.

The CFO listened quietly to what Winky had to say, and congratulated him on his steadfastness and honesty. Winky, who was by now a little concerned as to the fate of Ms Ping, asked the CFO what would happen next? In a flash, Ms Ping's flushed form was standing beside Winky; and she even placed a friendly hand on his shoulder. Winky was flabbergasted! "You see Winky, this was your big test ... when you work in this office, we need to make sure that temptations of any sort are not going to waylay you from your responsibilities. And young man, you've passed with flying colours - and might I say, according to Ms Ping - it was a sterling performance! Now, tomorrow, you meet the Chairman - he wants to see you himself." And with that, Winky, still rather starry-eyed about the whole affair was led out of the office and into a waiting car, and in the very pleasant company of Ms Ping, went home.

Saturday, 8:15 a.m. (On the green, at the 9th Hole)

Next morning, Winky was collected and taken to the Golf Course, where he met up with the Chairman and some of his 'uncles'. The Chairman spent most of the time talking 'shop' with them but when on the 9th green, he turned to Winky and said, 'Well Winky my lad, I want to say how delighted we are with you: your dedication to your work and the marvelous way in which you've integrated into the company in such a very short time, and most of all, the quick results your efforts have brought to the firm. And not

least of all, yesterday's test – which I'm glad to say you successfully passed ... and by the way, how is Ms Ping this morning?" – he said, with a wink, "...anyway, Winky my lad, it took me many years to get to be where I am today, and if you keep on the way you're going, I can see a very bright future for you indeed young man!"

"Thank you, sir" said Winky, his face quite reddened by all the attention he was receiving from the 'big boss', and not least his remark about Ms Ping's wellbeing.

"Now then, anything to say for yourself, laddie, eh?" - asked the Chairman, with an expectant air.

'Erm, yes sir I have...' replied Winky.

'Come on then my lad, out with it!' - barked the Chairman.

'Erm ... well sir, all I really want to say is this (sniff!) ... *thanks Dad!*'
