

1. The IPS-Nathan Lecture was not meant to be a free consultation, but I knew when I asked Mr Yeo that I wasn't going to get the usual series of lectures. So let me begin by thanking you for agreeing and for delivering your three so-called "lectures". They were anything but lectures. I do not want to summarise what Mr Yeo said in detail, except to note in passing that in the first lecture, he revisited Singapore's remarkable rise from post-independence uncertainty to a global manufacturing powerhouse and the pivotal role that EDB played. In the second lecture, he touched on how we transformed ourselves into a hub for biomedical sciences, and then finally today he offered us a candid and forward-looking assessment of the growth of Singapore enterprises, followed by a series of remarkably pointed questions.
2. As I said, it is impossible to summarise what Mr Yeo says. You have to take him as a total package, the whole caboodle. He is living proof of the saying, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts". Two plus two has never equalled four where Philip is concerned—sometimes it is five, six or more. And I'm told that he's thinking of entitling this series of lectures "Neither Civil Nor Servant: Singapore's Disruptive Economic Playbook". I have to say that "neither civil nor servant" is a clichéd way of describing him, so I probably won't approve of this title. Actually, what is unique about him is not that he is neither a civil servant nor a particularly servile one. There are many civil servants who are neither civil nor servile. What is unique about him is that he is an entrepreneur who somehow found himself in government. He has been an innovator, a risk taker, sometimes even a gambler, a venture capitalist who strayed into public service. He broke things and moved fast long before Mr Zuckerberg came on the scene. And it was a stroke of enormous good fortune that we had someone like him at a very crucial time in our history.
3. I might stress one highlight about him and also about this series of lectures, and that is his unwavering belief in the power of talent. He's a mentor who has nurtured many young leaders, who are now not so young, and he has founded many scholarship programmes. It's a style of leadership that consists of finding the best people and letting them do their best. And it's a style of leadership that perhaps he learned from his own mentor, Goh Keng Swee, who I remember once saying that you must always get the first-class person and put him in charge of any organisation. Because if you get a second-class person, it will be third-class all the way down. I think some of the people here have remarked on the people whom you have nurtured in your career.
4. Finally, I would like to thank the moderators: Mr Chng Kai Fong, who did the first session, Dr Lisa Ooi, and of course, Ms Aw Kah Peng for the final session. Thank you all for the insightful questions that you asked and the lively discussions we've had.
5. We have two more S R Nathan Fellows lined up. Next semester, which is around the corner, will be Mr Piyush Gupta, the former CEO of DBS Group, followed by Dr Shawn Lum of Nature Society. So see you all next time, and thank you again, Philip, for a unique series of lectures.