

**WELCOME REMARKS BY YAP SU-YIN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF SBF FOUNDATION
& CHIEF SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER OF SBF, AT COMMUNITY MARKETPLACE
2026**

Date: 01 July 2026

Time: 9AM

Venue: *SCAPE The Underground Theatre

Good morning, everyone.

A warm welcome and thank you for joining us at our Community Marketplace.

2. It is encouraging to see so many business leaders, HR professionals and community partners gathered here today. We are here because businesses face a common challenge. Across the industries, finding and retaining talent has become so much harder. The labour market, as you know, is tight. Expectations are changing. And many employers are asking the same question, which is, where will tomorrow's workforce come from?

3. Perhaps the answer is to widen the talent pool. Across Singapore are capable individuals who are ready to work but remain overlooked by traditional hiring practices: women returning from caregiving, persons managing health conditions, and individuals trying to rebuild their lives after setbacks. All of us know someone like that or have been through this period ourselves. They're not looking for charity. What they're looking for is opportunity. For employers willing to think differently, you represent an untapped source of resilience, commitment and also capability.

4. And that is why SBF Foundation believes inclusive hiring is not simply a social responsibility. It is a workforce strategy. As the social impact arm of the Singapore Business Federation, we work with employers to build a more inclusive and resilient workforce through our EmployWell programme. Since 2022, we have helped to place more than 1,000 individuals into employment.

5. The evidence is increasingly clear. Companies that embrace inclusion often gain access to new talent, strengthen employee engagement and improve retention. But how do we strengthen employee engagement and improve retention? What are we putting in

place to make sure that transition is smooth? Inclusive hirers have shared with us instances when adjustments cost little or nothing. The question then is no longer whether inclusive hiring matters. It's how businesses can get started. Many employers want to, but may be a little unsure where to begin.

6. To shift the conversation from good intentions to practical action, we are soft launching the Strategic Talent Playbook today. It has been developed in collaboration with our partner, Trampoline. This practical e-guide helps employers assess their readiness, understand available support, learn from real case studies, and identify practical pathways from work trials to job placements. You may be thinking: I want to do this, but how can I afford it? Within this playbook sits the SBF Skills-First & Inclusive hiring Workforce Transformation Guide, to shed light on grants that corporates can tap for inclusive hires.

7. Inclusive hiring is not about making one big leap. It's about making the first practical step. And you are already half a step there because you are here today with us. In the playbook are case studies. One example featured in the playbook is Playmade. Facing manpower shortages, the company redesigned shifts around school hours, making it easier for mothers returning to the workforce to apply. One of them was Rosalind, who returned to work after a decade of caregiving. The result was not only a successful return to employment for Rosalind, but stronger retention and a larger talent pool for the entire business. This is what inclusive hiring looks like when it is done well. Not lowering standards, but redesigning work to unlock talent that already exists.

8. Today's community marketplace is intended to help you take that first step. Around this room are 22 community partners, each with deep expertise in supporting different talent communities. Invite them to be your workforce partners. They understand both jobseekers and employers. They can help identify candidates, provide job coaching, advise on job redesign and support both employers and employees throughout the hiring journey.

9. So my invitation to you is: have a conversation, meet a community partner, explore one job opportunity placement in your organisation if you can. At SBF Foundation, we believe business success and social impact reinforce one another. When more people have the opportunity to contribute, businesses can gain committed talent, individuals gain

dignity through meaningful work, and collectively, Singapore builds a stronger, more resilient workforce.

10. Thank you for joining us today. I hope you enjoy the conversations ahead, discover new partnerships, and get fresh ideas on how inclusive hiring can strengthen your organisations.