

**WELCOME REMARKS BY YAP SU-YIN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF SBF FOUNDATION
& CHIEF SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER OF SBF, AT NEW HOPE COMMUNITY
SERVICES EMPLOYABILITY ROUNDTABLE**

Date: 24 July 2026

Time: 3PM

Venue: Transit Point @ Jalan Kukoh

Good afternoon. Thank you for joining us at New Hope Community Services Employability Roundtable.

2. My sincere appreciation to New Hope Community Services for organising today's event and for your steadfast commitment to this cause. I am also encouraged to see so many business leaders, HR professionals and community partners here. Your presence reflects something significant. We all recognise that Singapore's workforce challenges require businesses, community partners and government to work together.

3. Today is about that partnership. It is also one of connections. There are Singaporeans who are ready to contribute but remain outside the labour market. Some stepped away from work to care for their families. Some are managing physical or mental health conditions. Others are rebuilding their lives after difficult circumstances. These are not marginal groups. They represent a meaningful source of talent that many organisations have yet to fully tap. Too often, these individuals are viewed through the lens of their challenges rather than their potential. That represents a missed opportunity - for them, for employers and for Singapore.

4. At SBF Foundation, we believe inclusive hiring is about expanding opportunity. As the social impact arm of the Singapore Business Federation, we work alongside employers and community partners to build more inclusive and resilient workplaces through our flagship EmployWell programme.

5. Together with our valued partners - New Hope Community Services, Daughters Of Tomorrow and the Singapore Association for Mental Health - we are building stronger bridges between employers and individuals who are ready to work. Since 2022, more than

1,000 individuals have secured employment through EmployWell. Behind every placement is someone who has regained confidence, financial stability and dignity through work.

6. Many employers believe in inclusive hiring. But they hesitate. How to redesign jobs? What support is available? How to create workplaces where employees integrate better and thrive? To help, SBF Foundation developed the Strategic Talent Playbook in collaboration with Trampoline. It provides employers with practical guidance, proven case studies and information on the support available to help translate intention into action. In other words, it aims to reduce uncertainty. Because change is more likely when the first step is clear.

7. Allow me to illustrate this with one example: World Clean Facility Services partnered with New Hope Community Services to employ Sasha, who was returning to work after several years away from the workforce caring for her children. Within eight months, she had earned a promotion to one of the company's most visible assignments. For Sasha, employment restored confidence and opened new opportunities. For World Clean, the benefits extended beyond filling a vacancy. The company strengthened retention, gained confidence in inclusive hiring, and expanded its partnership with New Hope to create more opportunities for others. This illustrates an important point: When barriers that are unnecessary are removed, capability has a chance to reveal itself.

8. This afternoon's roundtable is intended to help more employers kickstart that journey. You will hear from community partners, employers and individuals with first-hand experience. You will learn about practical workforce strategies, available support schemes and approaches that have worked in real organisations.

9. I would also like to invite you to continue this learning journey beyond today. On 21 August, SBF Foundation, together with New Hope Community Services and the Singapore Association for Mental Health, will organise In Their Shoes, an immersive poverty simulation and learning journey. This initiative gives business leaders a deeper understanding of the realities experienced by vulnerable communities and explores how inclusive leadership can translate into more inclusive workplaces. Please join us.

10. Let me conclude with these observations: One of Singapore's greatest strengths is in making the most of our people. The next source of our competitive advantage may not

come from finding more talent, but from recognising talent that has always been there. Time and again, we have progressed because we recognised opportunities that others overlooked. Inclusive hiring is ultimately about seeing potential where others see obstacles. When more businesses are prepared to widen the circle of opportunity, we will not only build stronger businesses, we build a stronger, more inclusive Singapore. Thank you.