

The little princess



Please describe the most challenging managerial problem that you have faced and how you solved it. What did you learn from the experience?" I was born in Taiwan and spent the formative years of my life under the Eastern cultural influence. Up to age seventeen I led a protected life and my parents directed every move I made. Under their watchful eye I grew to be a conservative girl fully imbued with our cultural values and upbringing. While in Taiwan I lived life like a princess as I was the only girl in the family with nine cousin brothers. My every whim was fulfilled and I was the pampered family member. Despite this the upbringing was unadventurous. However my parents are forward looking and they instilled in me a desire to acquire knowledge and for this they supported my decision to move to the US for higher education.

It was a planned move yet the change of environment was amazing. It was as if I was transported to a different world, literally from a cage to freedom. I was used to living in a cocoon insulated from any influence save my own cultural traditions. I was brought up in moderation, taught at a catholic school, raised in a home amongst caring but authoritarian family, strict discipline and although luxurious but a straitjacketed life. I had always topped my class as there were little and controlled social diversions. Since I had a flair for music, it became a passion for me, and a decade of practice paved the way for a music scholarship to the States.

When I landed in the States I got a taste of freedom and for the first time I was on my own. I even got a job, a far cry from being spoon fed back at home. This was a heady feeling and led me to more socializing. Without parents and tutors to regulate my life I fell an easy prey to fun and frolic. For some time I managed to remain on top of my class, including the music

which was so dear to me. But excessive social activities took a toll on my grades and gradually I slipped so far back that I failed to graduate. That was the first time in life that I cried for myself.

The results shocked my family and angered my parents. I had failed them and hurt their belief in my capabilities. I must say that they are pillars of strength. Despite the setback they insisted that I stay back and complete my studies. This revitalized me enormously.

As the pain eased I stepped back and took stock of my life and found my life needed better management. I relocated to another city and earnestly restarted my quest for knowledge and degree that had eluded me because of my conduct. Gradually I picked up the pieces and finally I graduated.

It has dawned on me that life is no bed of roses and that responsibilities must not be taken lightly. Life needs to be managed and regulated just like a business venture otherwise there will be problems. It also taught me one simple but solid lesson; that perseverance pays and that failures are but small steps to success.