WAI HEN CONSTRUCTION PTE LTD
偉亨建筑私人有限公司



Over Two Decades of Expertise

Wai Hen Construction was established about a decade ago by Alvin and his wife, Shean. Alvin has over two decades of experience in the industry, initially starting off as an architecture company and subsequently establishing multiple construction companies prior to Wai Hen. As someone who is trained in the technical field and is always on the ground, Alvin is in charge of overseeing project management. Shean, on the other hand, comes from a design background. Upon graduation from university, the two worked at other companies to gain experience, before finally deciding to set up their own business 10 years later.

"We wanted to explore a different path, one that would present more growth opportunities," shares Alvin. "We believed that starting our own business would challenge us in many ways and force us to constantly innovate, instead of being stagnant. Running our own business is different from working for others, as the learning curves are steep and there are always new skills to pick up and new things to learn every

Singapore Prestige Class Award, Top Business Service & Quality Award and Aspiring Woman Entrepreneur Award 2021/2022

day." They also believed that pursuing an entrepreneurial journey will ultimately lead to more rewarding results compared to being an employee.

Alvin and Shean share three children. Wai Hen Construction is named after their son. They also run two other firms that are named after the other two children.

When asked what differentiates Wai Hen Construction from other building contractors in the market, Shean shares that they pride themselves in their well-trained in-house workers. "A lot of the competitors rely mainly on sub-contractors or specialists, but we make it a point to train our in-house workers to be skilful in many areas and are able to take on jobs that other contractors may not be able to," she says. Having a pool of skilled in-house workers also allows them to better meet client's deadlines, provide more competitive pricing, and boost the company's credibility especially when it comes to winning tenders. Wai Hen team is currently made up of 50 employees in total.

Speaking of vision for the company, Alvin shares that they are currently in the midst of upgrading their BCA license from C3 to C1, and this is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Having specialised in private projects, Wai Hen Construction is also expanding to take on government projects starting from next year, which will include upgrading and rebuilding of HDB, community clubs, linkways, etc. "We are also hoping to expand the team to double in size, and are constantly looking at ways to diversify our offerings to clients and to be able to take on various new jobs," he adds.



Completed in 2021

Navigating the Pandemic Through Forward-Thinking and Skilful Planning

As with many other businesses, Alvin and Shean also had to navigate through the unprecedented challenges that the global pandemic brings. "At the beginning of 2020, when we first heard the news about the emergence of Covid-19, we were already recruiting more manpower because we foresaw that the situation was going to escalate. True enough, many of our competitors struggle with lack of manpower during this period because of the border closures," Shean says. Even then, they noticed that the construction workers were in low spirits, due to the rapid outbreaks of the virus at the worker's dormitories. They even offered some additional benefits to boost the workers' morale and help them cope with the situation at the time.



Completed in 2019

Apart from manpower issues, the rising cost in raw materials and delays in shipping and logistics were also two major problems that Alvin and Shean had to deal with. They had to negotiate pricing with suppliers and purchase in bulk to lock in the prices, because the increase was rapid and uncontrollable. Even until now, Alvin shares that the material prices are still increasing every two weeks. The cost for steel, for example, is constantly rising by about 10%. "Our plan is focused on controlling costing, maintaining manpower resources, and putting contingency plans in place for any unforeseen circumstances," shares Alvin. Fortunately, due to their quick thinking and prompt actions, Wai Hen Construction managed to weather the toughest storm of Circuit Breaker, and business had mostly resumed to normal since August 2020. This also results in them earning more trust from their existing, and potential future clients.

Employees are a Company's Greatest Assets

Alvin and Shean believe that good manpower management is an important aspect of running a successful business. They make it a point to look after the welfare of their employees, and make sure they feel appreciated for their hard work. "We have workers of different nationalities:

Bangladeshi, Indian, and Chinese. If not for COVID-19, we would usually have a buffet meal to celebrate the different holidays throughout the year, to make them feel appreciated.

Outstanding performance, such as early completion of a project before the deadline, will also earn them incentives to recognise their hard work," shares Shean. At the same time, they also recognise the importance of issuing warnings for any work violation, especially those related to the breach of safety regulations, which is crucial in this line of profession.

Taking the Road Less Travelled

To Alvin and Shean, taking on the journey to be entrepreneurs is definitely not easy, but it has been rewarding in many ways. "We get to meet so many people from different walks of life and learn from each other," shares Shean. "It also brings us a great sense of achievement when we see our clients satisfied with the final results, especially when we manage to accomplish it by controlling costing as well. Our clients and partners such as the architecture firms and engineers have also poured in their support by signing our track record form and sharing their testimony, which is a testament to our hard work and credibility over the years in this industry."

Having been serial entrepreneurs, Alvin and Shean share a few nuggets of wisdom when it comes to starting your own venture. "Start by figuring out what your passion is, and then hone the skills that are necessary to succeed in that field," says Alvin. "For me, this has always been my passion. Many people, especially the younger generation, may think that this industry is not glamorous and require a lot of hard work, but the truth is, there is nothing that can match the satisfaction that you get from building something from scratch into the final products. That being said, everyone has to find out where their strength lies, and be willing to seize the right opportunity as it comes. Being able to manage stress is also another important thing to learn if you want to be a successful businessperson."

Shean could not agree more. "Running your own business definitely comes with a ton of challenges, but one must be willing to embrace them in order to succeed. There is definitely more pressure in being an entrepreneur, as there is a lot more at stake, including the livelihood of your employees in your hands. Sometimes the pressure is so great that there will even be times you will have trouble sleeping or eating," she shares openly. "It is not always going to be smooth-sailing, but do not give up easily. If you persevere enough, the end result will be worth all the hard work and sleepless nights."

For more information about Wai Hen Construction, please call +65 6909 0608. They are located at 2 Yishun Industrial Street 1 #03-15, North Point Bizhub, Singapore 768159.



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