

In this article, I reflect on my participation in a recruitment competition and the discoveries I made during the competition.



*An indoor group photo taken after the recruitment competition*

### **My Discoveries and Learning—Learning with Paper**

Fanny Young, my high school business teacher, was very creative, and believed that in-class learning should always relate closely to the real world. In a Grade 12 Human Resources class, she decided to hold a recruitment competition by separating the students into two groups: managers and apprentices.

The first round of the competition was about creativity. Inspired by the marshmallow challenge, the assigned “managers” challenged everyone to create the tallest possible object that could stand on the floor using only one piece of A4 paper, scissors and glue.

While others were busy folding and slicing the paper and gluing together the pieces, looking worried, I did nothing but stand there, wearing a calm smirk. What that calmness covered was my brain cells running at bullet-train speed.

When the time was up, I was still standing still with my hands in the air, holding the original piece of paper. The whole class was looking at me, confused.

“Like many pieces of art with separate parts,” I explained, “the lower part of my product is myself—it is an object I created using the paper only and can stand on the ground. So my height should be factored into the result.”

What came with winning first prize in this A4 paper challenge was the elation of being able to think outside the box. Spending time analyzing a scenario, imagining options and creating solutions, I realized, is far better than trying mindlessly to achieve a goal. At the end of the day, it’s not how many times you’ve tried that matters, but how high you can get in a single try. Learning, by which I mean the active learning that strengthens and accelerates the activities of our brains, is what empowers us to gain this height.