

**IMMIGRANT LIVING:
101 AND BEYOND**



MONETTE ADEVA MAGLAYA

EIGHTY percent of things don't matter; twenty percent do. So why agonize when we can cut to the chase? Oftentimes, the reason is that we still don't have the analytical ability, perception or maturity to know which is fluff and which is meat.

Vilfredo Pareto, an Italian sociologist in the late nineteenth century, introduced the concept of the 80/20 rule which states that in any given group, only 20 percent will constitute what is important and the remaining 80 percent will be trivial. This rule is referred to as the "vital few" and the "trivial many". While this concept was originally meant to be applied to the principles of economics and sociology, the 80/20 rule can be applied to just about anything that involves a list or a group of elements in daily life. Using the Pareto principle will clear your life of overwhelming junk.

The 80/20 Rule

The art of being wise is knowing what to overlook.

—William James

In a list of goals for instance, using the Pareto principle will force someone to prioritize the top two or three goals that are significant to him. Use this principle when dealing with a list of things to do for the day. Recognizing the few important ones and doing them ahead of the trivial ones will keep you from being sidetracked. Our to-do lists become shorter, more realistic and more manageable.

A mountain of tasks can overwhelm. But those who slice and dice can get things done. Many try to get around by nibbling at the small, easy things around the edges, putting off the more important ones for later until time is up and the important ones are left undone. By making it a habit to spot the important ones first and "slay these dragons" ahead of anything else, there is a certain sense of calm that one acquires even if not everything in the list has been done.

The nature of modern life screams for many things to be done all at the same time. With time saving devices purportedly meant to squeeze as much as can be done in our waking hours, expectations can become unrealistic. The stress of trying to do too much too soon only builds up

stress that can make anyone ill. Using the Pareto principle cuts through the muck. Weighing things according to importance may even be more valuable than learning how to multitask. This acquired skill of gauging the value of tasks can add so much to the quality of one's life freeing up more time to simply sit back and enjoy life.

The wonderful thing about adopting a "Pareto frame of mind" is that you begin to develop the habit of clear thinking that not only gives you more time, it can also provide you with more space—clutter free. If you want to simplify your life, you can look at your possessions and decide which things are important for you to keep and which ones should be sold or given away, thus reclaiming the space for you to enjoy. You can also apply this to the clutter of too many unrelated hopes and dreams that are in that future state of being called the "Someday Isle". You can narrow these down to only the important goals and be free of the downright preposterous. The brain also benefits from using the 80/20 rule. In lengthy, circuitous discussions of problems and solutions, having a sharp,

incisive mind helps one to get down to the root of the problem quickly, shorten the angst and pain of indecision and come up with the right solution in less time it normally takes to mull over a problem.

Einstein must have subscribed to this principle. In his admonition to find simplicity out of clutter, he advises to try not to remember anything that can be looked up in a book, or for these tech-savvy times, in the internet. He who was noted for having a poor memory when he was young probably refused to burden his brain with the unimportant thus optimizing its functions and allowing him to plumb the depths of the secrets of the universe. Reserving the full capacity of his towering genius for unraveling the mysteries of time and space and for writing down his profound thoughts about the universe and its Creator, life and living, he exemplifies a life that made a difference at the highest rungs. But even for most of us who lead largely mundane lives, applying the 80/20 rule in the way we spend our time, and consequently our lives, can help transform us into far happier creatures.

Nota Bene: To ask questions, send feedback and requests as well as to inquire about advertising in any or all of the 6 print editions of Asian Journal in California, Nevada and New York/New Jersey and/or advertising in the Print Edition Online of Asian Journal, e-mail monette.maglaya@asianjournalinc.com.

The Voice of FilAmerica

Political empowerment is still a treasure that eludes us as a community here in America. While we are the second largest Asian American community in the United States, we have yet to harvest the power that comes from our numbers. The Voice of FilAmerica features elected and appointed officials – regardless of political affiliation – in the different US states who are of Filipino ancestry. As your Filipino American community newspaper, the Asian Journal recognizes the fact that we all have a responsibility towards bringing political empowerment to fruition, especially for our future generations. It is our hope to have our voices heard all over America.

Rosby Teopaco

City of Carson Planning Commissioner

by JOSEPH PIMENTEL
AJPress

FILAM Rosby Teopaco believes in the power of one.

"One person can make a difference," he told the Asian Journal. "It doesn't have to take a corporation to get things done."

Teopaco is hoping that he can make a difference in his new elected position.

Most recently, the City of Carson appointed Teopaco to serve as a member of the Mobilehome Park Rental Review Board commission last December.

Teopaco will be responsible for reviewing the mobile homes in the area, interviewing the owners and discussing ways to maximize land use, which includes the possibility of selling or converting the land for mixed use property. He also needs to convene with the board to recommend to the City Council regarding related matters.

The youthful looking, 62-year-old Teopaco from Angeles City, Philippines said that it's a tremendous honor to serve on the board.

He said he began his political career with the City of Carson by volunteering in Mayor Jim Dear's office. He was stuffing envelopes for the Mayor when Dear approached him to be more involved.

"He asked me if I was interested in serving a committee," recalls Teopaco. "I gave him all my information, applied for the position, and I was appointed."

Teopaco said he earned the position because he's a long time Filipino community worker. He's worked in a leadership capacity in several different FilAm organizations the past twenty years from San Fernando Valley, Hawaii and now in Carson. In Hawaii, he helped build a FilAm community center in Waipahu.

"There's nothing like that over here," said Teopaco. "Someday



I'd like to have a center like that here."

Teopaco is also an entrepreneur. Teopaco has owned several businesses. Currently, he serves as a marketing specialist for Hopp Home Health Services, Inc.

Teopaco said he believes, as the baby boomer gets older, the younger FilAms need to step up and contribute more to the community.

"They need to get more involved," he said. "I understand they want to go to Las Vegas, dance along the Sunset Strip, but you need to manage your time. It just takes two hours a week to get involved with the community. Once you do get involved you'll realize the importance of being a Filipino."

"They [The younger generation] have to be the modern heroes," he added. "The old people don't have the energy. The younger people have the energy."

Until then, Teopaco will continue his advocacy. He knows the dearth of the number of FilAms in elected positions.

He believes in always giving back. It's a reason why he serves as a mentor to many young Filipino kids and teenagers. Like many successful people, he follows a code that has led to his success.

"Clean living, following the golden rule of 'Do unto others as they will have you do', satisfy intellect, take care of mother earth, spiritual health and go after your passion," he said. ■

**IMMIGRATION
EDGE**



ATTY. DANIEL HANLON

THE US Department of Justice, Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) recently issued a new rule that changes the consequences affecting a person who has been granted voluntary departure (VR) in immigration court when filing a Motion to Reopen a case or a Petition for Review to a US Circuit Court. Effective January 20, 2009, the new rule stipulates that any grant of VR terminates upon certain filings after a hearing before an Immigration

Voluntary departure: New rules!

Judge and that a grant of VR is abandoned if proof of the payment of a VR bond is not provided to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) within 30 days. Although the rule was purportedly issued to protect people who choose to appeal an order of removal while accepting an alternative grant of VR, critics believe that it may unfairly limit a person's rights in immigration court.

Voluntary Departure, commonly known as "Voluntary Return" (VR) is an application for relief from removal or deportation an individual may request to avoid a forced deportation. Simply stated, it allows the applicant to depart the US in lieu of an order of deportation at his own expense and on or before a date set by the Immigration Judge. While a person may request VR only to avoid a deportation, VR is often requested as an alternative to another, more substantive, form

of relief, such as Asylum, Adjustment of Status, or Cancellation of Removal. In these cases, a grant of VR allows the person to leave on his own if the IJ denies the applicant's main request for relief.

The new rule principally deals with situations in which VR is requested as an alternative form of relief. Previously, a person denied an application for substantive relief but granted voluntary departure for a limited period could appeal the denial of the substantive relief application and the grant of VR would be preserved until after the appeal was decided. While this rule protected many people, it also created anomalous situations when a person granted subsequently sought to reopen the case to apply for new relief. The reason is that if a person overstays the period in which he was granted VR, he is penalized by losing eligibility for adjustment of status and cancellation of removal. In these cases, the grant of VR alone could render the person ineligible for the new relief.

Under the new rule, if a person was granted VR but denied substantive relief and files an appeal, the grant of VR is terminated upon the filing of the appeal. Similarly, a grant of VR terminates upon

the filing of a Petition for Review of a decision from the BIA which denied substantive relief but reinstated the IJ's initial grant of VR. The rule also requires that IJ's and the BIA provide adequate notice of these conditions and the effect of failing to depart under a grant of VR.

In practice, VR has long been used to allow a person to leave by himself if his application were not granted, and not simply be left with an all-or-nothing option of a grant of relief or deportation. The new rule effectively forces an applicant's hand into this unpalatable choice. On the other hand, the new rule will prevent the situation where a person becomes eligible for relief, but is ineligible for having overstayed the previous grant of VR. As with any change in the immigration law, the true effects may not become known until the rule is implemented and the lawyers are left to argue over its interpretation.

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(Advertising Supplement)

**MINDING
YOUR FINANCES**



ATTY. RAYMOND BULAON

THERE may be some good news for struggling homeowners facing foreclosure. A few days ago, Senator Dick Durbin introduced new legislation in Congress which, if passed, will give bankruptcy judges the power to modify mortgages on residen-

New bankruptcy law to make mortgage modification easier

tial real estate. This practice is currently prohibited by our current Bankruptcy Code. The bill is appropriately titled "Helping Families Save Their Homes In Bankruptcy Act of 2009."

Similar proposals in the past failed to get enough support to get through Congress. This time, however, with the dark cloud of a recession looming over the horizon, this new proposal seems to be on fast track and is on top of our legislators' priority list.

Recent voluntary efforts to modify mortgages have helped

stem the tide of increasing foreclosures but are not as effective as they should be. And even with the \$700 billion Wall Street bailout fund (handed out to banks at taxpayers' expense), more than 8 million homeowners are still at risk of foreclosure. This new bill costs taxpayers nothing. If passed, it will help keep families in their homes by giving bankruptcy judges the power to modify mortgage loans on a debtor's principal residence (reduce principal amount based on the home's current value), extend the time

for repayment while reducing monthly payments to make them more affordable, waive pre-payment penalties, and adjust the interest rate on the loan.

In 2008, there were more than 1 million personal bankruptcy filings. About 60% of these cases included mortgage debt. Allowing debtors in bankruptcy the chance to modify their mortgage while at the same time dealing with all of their other financial issues will hopefully provide families the fresh financial start that

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Motion to reopen based on marriage may be granted

IMMIGRATION HIGHLIGHTS



ATTY. CRISPIN LOZANO

Question: What is a motion to reopen?

Answer: A motion to reopen is a request to the Board of Immigration Appeals to reopen a case when an alien has been ordered by an Immigration Judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) removed from the United States

Question: May an alien ordered removed from the United States marry a US citizen and request his or her case be reopened to apply for adjustment of status?

Answer: Yes. The Board of Immigration Appeals has issued an en banc decision granting a motion to reopen to apply for adjustment of status after the commencement of the removal proceedings may be granted?

Answer: The BIA modified the rule based on Matter of Velarde-Pacheco, to allow reopening for adjustment, in the exercise of discretion, only where five conditions are met:

• the motion to reopen must be timely filed (within 90 days of a

final order);

- the motion must not be numerically barred;
- the motion must not be barred by Matter of Shaar, or other procedural grounds (in Shaar, an alien who had failed to depart the US prior to the lapse of a granted period of voluntary departure was ineligible for relief;
- the respondent must present clear and convincing evidence indicating a strong likelihood that the marriage is bona fide; and
- the motion must not be opposed by the USCIS.

Question: What is the basis of the BIA in modifying the prior case decisions?

Answer: The BIA noted that the rule, in conjunction with the regulatory time and numerical limits for motions to reopen and the inability of the USCIS to adjudicate visa petitions within 90 days, serves "to deprive a small class of respondents, who are otherwise prima facie eligible for adjustment, of the opportunity" to apply.

Note: This is not a legal advice.

Hot news of the week

Filing under the new late amnesty settlement starts on February 1, 2009 and ends on January 31, 2010. The requirements are: (a) the applicant came to the United States on a valid visa before 1982 and fell out of legal status between 1982 to 1988. (b) The violation of status must be known to the government. (c) They must have resided continuously in the United States from before 1982 to 1988. Some denied amnesty applicants may file again this time if (a) their application has not been adjudicated or (b) their Temporary Resident Status has been proposed for ter-

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