



*“Go into
wider fields!
Women, go for it!
Young people,
never get stuck –
keep moving.”*

The career journey of a member: **Sophia Ch'ng, FIA**

CFO AmMetLife, Kuala Lumpur



Getting into wider fields

Sophia has had a fast paced and diverse career. While many actuaries start out in traditional areas and eventually graduate to full time risk roles, Sophia started in treasury consulting, moved on to risk and then to a variety of senior roles in insurance. She had not yet finished her exams but was recruited to be the Risk Manager for the Commonwealth Games in 1998. There were 6,000 delegates and she had to identify risks across a very broad portfolio as well as work with a diverse group of people from event and venue managers and those concerned with safety (crowd control, fire, terrorism etc). *‘The coordination was intense with so many different parts to consider, but a worthwhile experience.’* The games ran without a hitch, due to careful planning and risk mitigation strategies.

Following this she worked her way up the ranks in a variety of department chief roles from product development, appointed actuary, marketing, strategy and finance in a range of premier insurers including: Prudential, Great Eastern, Zurich, ING and now AmMetLife.

When asked what her key messages to those starting out are, she said,

‘Do what makes you happy and fulfilled. You need to know what makes you excited and committed.’

‘When you think that you have 70% of the skills required for a new challenge – go for it! Do not hold back.’

‘Being a good actuary is not just about the technical capability – it’s about how you apply logical thinking.’

It is no wonder that in 2009 she won the Young ASEAN Manager Award, who knows what the future will bring, but given her history it will probably be bigger and brighter.