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Surina Shukri steers the interview from the back seat of a Mercedes E-Class

When you take part in a feature interview, it's easy to be lulled into thinking it will be a breeze. After all, how difficult can the questions be in a personality profile?

But as our Best Broadcast Interview nomination this week shows, they are sometimes the toughest.

And that's why Surina Shukri, CEO of Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation

(MDEC), is our shortlisted candidate for the **Hong Bao Media Savvy Awards 2019** for her appearance on 'BFM Originals' on BFM 89.9.

It wasn't just that the interview was mostly recorded in the back seat of a car (provided by the sponsor of the series) but then switched to an elevator and what sounds like Shukri's office.

It also wasn't that the presenter was gushing over her guest, constantly interrupting her to finish her sentences and pushing her own opinions.

No, the interview was bedeviled by the same issue as all feature interviews: the absence of a strong, newsworthy story that provides a natural focus. As a guest, you have to work much harder to provide that focus.

[Listen for yourself](#) and scroll down to find out my reasons for nominating her in the category of Best Broadcast Interview.

The **Hong Bao Media Savvy Awards 2019** resumes with our third round of nominations in Singapore and Malaysia in the following categories:

- Best Broadcast Interview, in association with **Meltwater**
- Best Online Interview, in association with **Shootsta**
- Best Conference Presentation, in association with **Dianomi**
- Best Live Webcast, in association with **The Streaming Company**

We launched the **Hong Bao Media Savvy Awards** to recognise senior local leaders for their communications skills, and to showcase authentic and credible home-grown communicators.

These are shining examples for other local business leaders, and to build a culture of excellence in communication, to maximise the potential of Asian companies in the Asian Century.

Each week **until November 30, 2019**, we are shortlisting a local corporate figure who has demonstrated excellence in a media appearance for the **Hong Bao Media Savvy Awards 2019**.

Click on the link below to enter yourself or another Senior Business Leader.

Here are three observations on Shukri's performance:

1. **She got her points across – phew!** She managed to navigate what otherwise risked descending into an absolute fluff piece and got her points across, such as talking about the need for Malaysian companies to go beyond their products and services by focusing on customer experience.
2. **Stories** – Shukri had some good stories to tell, such as some personal anecdotes about growing up in Taman Tun Dr Ismail, how her parents reacted when she broke her bond, and how she was offered the opportunity to come back to Malaysia after nearly two decades on Wall Street. A quirky part of the interview was a brief discussion about the age at which it is safe to send your son on the New York Subway on his own? To her credit, Shukri didn't reveal any embarrassing personal details, which is always a risk when you are prompted to indulge in some naval gazing.

If you know Surina Shukri, share this article with her and congratulate her on being nominated for the **Hong Bao Media Savvy Awards 2019**.

If you have what it takes, nominate yourself or your senior business leader for the **Hong Bao Media Savvy Awards 2019!**

Hong Bao Media provides media solutions for corporate and government clients in the Asia Pacific and Middle East.

Our three core businesses are:

1. Media skills and executive presence training and coaching for senior business leaders
2. Live webcast production from our green screen studios, or on-

- location
3. Active investments in a portfolio of blockchain and fintech start-ups

We operate two Integrated Communications facilities, one in Singapore's Central Business District and another in Kuala Lumpur's Central Business District. These consist of green screen television studios for on-camera recordings and webcasts, adjoining training facilities for small groups of senior executives.

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