

TALKING HEADS

# Dr. Reynaldo A. Carpio

Founder, President & General Manager  
Grand Monaco Estate Developers, Inc.

Interview by EM P. GUEVARA

**D**r. Reynaldo A. Carpio is a civil engineer, a geodetic engineer, has an MBA, has a Ph. D. majoring in Management Philosophy from the International Academy of Management and Economics (IAME), and is currently taking the Strategic Business Economics Program (SBEP) of the University of Asia & the Pacific (UA&P). There is no doubt that the 47-year-old founder, president and general manager of Grand Monaco Estate Developers, Inc. is committed to self-growth via continuing education. This, in spite of the successes he has reaped with his company and in various civic and professional organizations.

When Carpio started Grand Monaco in 2003, it was with a vision of helping Filipinos fulfill their dream of having a home. Offering affordable quality homes has always been the company's mission. Grand Monaco projects are mostly subdivisions, townhouses, and single two-storey four-bedroom units, with prices ranging from P2 to P4.5 million. Grand Monaco houses are designed with a specific Mediterranean look, particularly the architecture of Monaco, which is Dr. Carpio's inspiration following a month-long trip to the city state in Europe years back. Find out what makes the man tick in this interview with Business Agenda.

**BA:** How do you feel about the success of Grand Monaco?

**RC:** The great success of Grand Monaco is exponential and beyond my expectations. When we started in 2003, we started with only three houses, then it became five, then 10... In so short a time, we now have an inventory of about 2,000 units. Normally, the growth of a company is 10 to 20 percent a year. In seven years, the company's assets are now in the billions. I earned my first million at the age of 27, and my first billion 20 years later. I also attribute the success to my long-time employees, those who have been with me for 18, 20 years. When your people are loyal, it's a very big asset to a company because you can enjoy teamwork. And most of our executives are sent for continuing education, at company expense and company time. We now have four MA graduates, another four are enrolled in MBA, and seven in a special course on real estate.

**BA:** How would you describe yourself as a businessman?

**RC:** I am basically an entrepreneur. I started as a civil engineer, then a geodetic engineer. I started also as a small contractor, which was when I developed a strategy of going into real estate. I learned the skills of real estate construction... Entrepreneurship is doing a commercial venture with profit, and in Grand Monaco, we have a very huge market in OFWs. We simplified their entry through the packaging scheme, that's our strategy.

**BA:** What are your top three values in doing business?

**RC:** One, be fair in the conduct of

your business, treat your internal and external customers fairly and nicely. Two, be quality-oriented. In all our business products, *kailangan quality ang yari*, so you can expect repeat orders. The secret of success is in the many repeat orders. And three, I offer educational programs for my employees. Every time I encountered crisis in my life, I always go back to school to sharpen my axe. Continuous learning is continuous growing.

**BA:** What are the benefits of higher education for someone in your industry and position?

**RC:** Aside from the knowledge you acquire, you gain friends, who are also leaders in their own right. They may become your clients, business partners or consultants. Then, there's that added star on your shoulder. You are now looking at the bigger picture. You're able to achieve results in a different way, at a different level. That will rub off on your staff. *Mabitis ang prosesong pag ang kasama mo sa trabaho ay aral* (the process is faster if your staff gets a continuing education while they work); if they're well-educated, articulate and sharp; and if each are a perfect match with their jobs.

**BA:** How is the real estate/property sector now and what are its prospects this year?

**RC:** With the new (Philippine) President, the confidence of the business community has been regained. In real estate, if we use this company as a model, the future has become brighter. Seven out of 10 of our buyers are OFWs and we are feeling more growth. In the different niche markets, you can see developments left and right. Banks are now very aggressive in offering financial support to developers.

**BA:** Who are your idols in business and what do you admire about them?

**RC:** Locally, it's Manny Villar. Like him, I also started from rags to riches. I'm basically the Manny Villar Jr. in the Philippine setting. *Nag-umpisa rin ako* as a market vendor selling grocery items, *mga de lata, asukal, mantika* (canned goods, sugar, cooking oil)... *Kung sya 'sipag at tyaga,' ako 'sipag, tyaga at diskarte' ang slogan ko.* It's the 'diskarte' or 'abilidad' that will make the difference. For example, in my case, I believe that everything that goes beyond 5 p.m., you are working for your success. It's what makes you



extraordinary, it's what separates the men from the boys. I work 16 hours a day.

On the international level, my big idol is Donald Trump. He's a real estate billionaire who also started small. He is *madiskarte* and very passionate with real estate. He always thinks big and works like a champion.

**BA:** How do you instill loyalty in your associates and employees?

**RC:** We do that through the values and culture we were able to establish. The organization here is like a family setting. Their leader is approachable and easy to talk to, unlike in most big companies where the president is always behind locked doors, and there are many layers of bureaucracy. Also, we offer good education programs. *Nag-aaral na sila, may sweldo pa* (they go to school, at the same time, they also get paid).

**BA:** How do you keep your life balanced and deal with stress?

**RC:** Through discipline. To say you're successful, there are five areas you need to observe: family, health, wealth,

love, and the spiritual aspect. The family has to be strong and supportive. We work for our children's future and we should guide them. About health, you should take care of your physical fitness. I have my own gym where I workout for an hour every other day. I used to be very active with golf and shooting, *pero nagbabago ang hilig mo e.* Now I prefer to go ballroom dancing once a week. About wealth, it should be enough to sustain your needs and wants—to eat what you want to eat, to travel around the world, and enough to serve your family's financial requirements. It includes financial access to OPM, or Other People's Money—easy access to financial institutions to back up your expansion program. About love, it means love for your family, job, fellowmen and community. About the spiritual aspect, it means fear of God. *Mahalaga* that the leader is upright in character and attitudes; you have to be a role model. *Hindi lang batas ng tao ang dapat sinusunod, dapat pati batas ng Diyos.* You may be able to circumvent the law of men, but not the law of God.

