

Mr David Chung Fun Choo
— Biomedica Group

Write stuff

By WONG SHER MAINE

THE simple action of writing down his goals instead of dreaming about them all day is what Mr David Chung Fun Choo — a laboratory technician turned chief executive officer — reckons is one of the keys to his success.

For the 59-year-old founder and top man of Biomedica Group, a multinational manufacturer and distributor of life science products and solutions with a revenue of \$21.1 million, penning his goals was a habit he started in 1978, when he decided to become an entrepreneur and sell laboratory equipment after a decade of drawing a monthly salary as an employee.

His goal would read something like this: “To earn more money so I can provide my two daughters with a better life.” His daughters were then aged three and six, and Mr Chung (right), as a laboratory technician, was earning \$300 a month.

What he did not contend with was his kindergarten-teacher wife’s disapproval of his going into the comparatively risky sales line. “My wife almost left me!”

he says, chuckling. “She did not talk to me for one week.”

Mr Chung managed to double his monthly income in three years. “I was a trailblazer in the market, working 18-hour days,” he says.

Although he managed to do well enough to start his own company, Lab Essentials, in 1981 the good times did not come for years yet.

Mr Chung said money remained scarce. “A lot of times, to keep the business going, we ran short of cash. It was lucky we had a good bank supporting us, and I was really focused on my original goal of wanting to have a good life for my daughters.”

The magic moment only came six years later, when Lab Essentials, renamed Biomedica, formed an arm called Bio-Focus Saintifik to market and distribute medical laboratory products and equipment in Malaysia. The company also ventured into the life sciences market.

“We saw a 30 to 40 per cent increase in revenue. After 1987, that’s the time I felt we were definitely on our way. I immediately bought my parents a pair of cruise



tickets,” says Mr Chung.

From aiming to make his first million, the goals he writes down nowadays are far loftier, like seeking a public listing for the company.

The one thing Mr Chung did not shoot for was to be a winner in the Rotary-Asme Entrepreneur of the Year Award. He says: “Am I

not a little too old for this? It was my staff who got all the information from my computer and submitted my profile.

“Having said that, I do hope my simple story will inspire those who want to strike out on their own. That with a lot of hard work, Lady Luck will smile on you. In that sense, I have been blessed.”