

SCHOOL OF COMPUTER ALUMNI SHARING SESSION

INSPIRING WORK EXPERIENCE AND COVID-19 PANDEMIC CHALLENGE

Do you need some advice for work experience? Well, there is an event called Inspiring Work Experience and COVID-19 Pandemic Challenge on 29th December 2020, from 10 am to 11 am organized by Technology and Information System (SECP 1513), School of Computing, UTM. This event is performed virtually on Cisco Webex with our moderator is Dr. Johanna Ahmad. Together with 3 UTM alumni, Qistina Batrisyia binti Azman Shah, Tan Yong Keong, and Mohammad Zamarul Akmal bin Mohd Hussin. Qistina Batrisyia is a data engineering degree graduate working in the social media Data Analyst under TM one. Tan Yong Keong or known as YK is a Degree Software Engineering graduate working in the Data science engineering division under Micron Semiconductor Asia Operations while Mohammad Zamarul is a Degree Software Engineering graduate working in the Data engineering division at PPG Coatings.

1.0 What is the purpose of the talk?

In this Alumni Sharing Session, the three speakers shared their experience as well as piece of advices in preparation for the professional world and how to encounter COVID-19 pandemic challenge. Hence, the students, especially the first-year student could get lessons and insights about how to face the professional world, learn new things and tasks and create own chance to secure the job.

Tan Yong Keong explained that in empowering soft skills, the students need to join in much organizational activities. Another speaker, Mohamad Zamarul Akmal shared that during this pandemic, go for some websites that offer us to learn new skills such as new programming language at freecodecamp.org. The last speaker, Qistina Batrisyia, also focused on the how to become a someone to ask us to do something but find the solution and offer our deeds. They also agreed to say that having great soft and technical skills are two most valuable elements to get hired by a company especially during this pandemic.

2.0 What happen in the program?

At the very beginning, students were given to scan the QR code for attendance. Then the speakers introduced themselves and briefly explained about their current working place also the new project. After their introduction, Dr. Johanna introduced herself and shared with the audience about her educational background. So, the first speaker to share his experience was Tan Yong Keong. He shared his journey from being a student of Software Engineering in UTM to the position he is in today. The next person was fresh graduate, Mohamad Zamarul Akmal. He shared his experience of being an intern of a company and how he got permanent job in the company by his idea that he proposed. After him, Qistina Batrisyia, also a fresh graduate started her journey of getting a stable job. She is also working in the same company in which she did her internship. The speakers shared about the projects in which they were currently working and what were their roles in that projects too. Then they told the audience about the technical skills that students need to have as an aim to get their desirable jobs. Moreover, they gave emphasis on the participation in different types of programs and competitions during the university life because they believe that it has helped them in securing their desirable jobs as well as to be skilled in their respective fields.

Questions were asked by the students during the session and they also managed to answer during the session. According to their experience, if we want to join the private sectors then our CGPA does not matter that much but in case of government sectors, CGPA definitely has some impacts. Then they discussed on how to stay motivated on a daily basis. Furthermore, the speakers shared their hobbies with us or what they like to do in their free time as well as how their first-year experience in UTM. They also left some advice to the students on how they should spend and enjoy their first year out here.

3.0 Summarize the content of the talk

This Alumni Sharing Session thus gave the students an idea and inspiration to overcome the very complicated issues and situations where the mental and physical ability are subjects to a specific situation. For instance, COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone from every aspect, whether economical or socially as well as psychological.

Nevertheless, we as human have proven that we can adapt even the situations that are very tough and critical. As an example for that, Tan Yong Keong, Qistina Batrisyia and Mohamad Zamarul who are representing a good model for new students by their hard work and determination, persistence and perseverance in their work and daily life during the tough unstable times. For Yong Keong during his university life, he used to engage into many competitions in order to qualified himself to be successful data engineer. Moving to Mohamed Zamarul who caught his supervisor's attention by providing creative ideas like United Dashboard so it can store all the company's data at one dashboard as well as taking online courses in programming had helped him to secure a job. Lastly, Qistina who managed to obtain her career by working hard in her internship project which paved the way for her to secure a job as Social Media Data Analyst.

To sum up, making excuses of not being able to improve ourselves during the tough times and the critical situations is a false claim, they have been proven that nothing impossible if we put hard work and determination in whatever we are doing. In addition, they have a common feature among them which is the consistency and the urge to learn a new skills and experiences in order to secure a permanent job as well as to reach the level of professionalism in their jobs.

4.0 Reflection

From the talk, we have learned about the importance of developing soft skills such as critical thinking and technical skills like managing the code to secure our job in the future. We also learn that during the internship, we will gain more new knowledge that slightly different from our syllabus such as learnt a new language to complete the project and the benefit when we be proactive and perform well, will make the company acknowledge us. We also learn the difference between private and government sector which is the sector in private more focused on technical skills and soft skills of an IT employee while in government, they will focus on CGPA first.

The strength of the talk is it is well managed because all the panels and the lecturer tend to answer all the questions clearly from the student within the times allocated. Additionally, no technical problem from the talk occurs such as internet problems which will cause distraction and lagging. The weakness of the talk is it is less attractive due to minimized usage of the slide presentation to display all the points given by the panels.

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