

# INSPIRING WORK EXPERIENCE AND COVID19 PANDEMIC CHALLENGE

BY TEAM ANONYMOUS



Figure 1: Poster of Sharing Session with UTM Alumni

The first time for the 2020/2021 first semester undergraduate program students from the Faculty of Engineering, School of Computing, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, have carried out sharing activity with UTM Alumni on 29 December 2020 (Tuesday) from 10.00 am to 11.00 am via Cisco Webex as shown in Figure 1.

Opening from Dr. Johanna Ahmad (Senior Lecturer UTM) as moderator of this activity, highlighted the purpose of this sharing session to motivate students by listening to sharing by alumni about their working experiences and their challenges during Covid 19 pandemic to current students. The event began with a warm welcome and introduction of speakers. The speakers attended were Mr. Tan Yong Keong, Ms. Batrisyia binti Azman Shah and Mr. Mohamad Zamarul Ahmad bin Mohd Hussin.

At first, Dr. Johanna asked the alumni about how they secured their jobs. Mr. Tan gave the idea of gaining professional, presentation skills and achievements by participating competition during study helped him secured his job. Besides, he also gained necessary technical skills through freelancer job. These skills helped him to pass the interview. Most importantly, he nicely tailored his resume because most companies tend to hire those with excellent both in technical and soft skills. Zamarul proposed the idea of being proactive as giving ideas and opinions to the company during his internship helped him obtained the job. For Ms. Qistina, she actively involved in a project during internship and caught the attention of her supervisor successfully helped her obtained the job in the company.

After that, the alumni were asked about their current project. Ms. Qistina is currently involved in a social media data project which gathers and interprets data into a dashboard for clients and management purpose. For Mr. Tan, he is currently optimizing his company's factory manufacturing and market demands based on the current factory technology used. The third question was about the platform used during development. Mr. Tan mentioned the platform he used such as Nifi and Spark in his career. They were also been asked on leaning new programming languages. For Mr. Tan, learning concepts is more important as same concepts can be applied to other languages. The fifth question was about tips of getting hired and the skills demanded. Ms. Qistina thought that being proactive in searching solution instead of waiting is important as well as learning new things are important. For Mr. Zamarul, learning new technical skills and improving soft skills are required as communication and teamwork skills are important because we need to work, cooperate, and talk with others in our career life.


There were also question about improving programming skill. In Mr Tan opinion, he believes practice makes perfect and having proper mindset is important. The alumni also shared their experience on gaining confidence. Mr Tan said that confidence can be gained from participating competition as these activities encourage us to give opinions. Ms Qistina and Mr Zamarul also agreed with his opinion. The alumni also shared their opinions on the importance of high CGPA. According to Ms. Qistina, most private sectors

focus on working ability instead of CGPA. Mr Zamarul also shared the same opinion, but he also said there is a minimum CGPA requirement. For Mr Tan, CGPA does matter and learning extra skills increases chances of getting employed.

They also shared their experience during study. Mr Tan shared some experience about participating competitions. He encouraged students to take part in more activities. He also said that the most important part of participating competitions is the experience gained. Ms Qistina and Mr Zamarul agreed with his statement. Mr Zamarul also shared about the difference between study and working life. The major differences are less free time and heavier responsibility held during career life as mistake during student life is more forgiving. Lastly, the alumni shared about their first-year experience. Mr Qistina encouraged students to join more programmes and project to learn and know more friends. Mr Tan suggested students to make friends with different people, participate competition to gain experience and confidence. For Mr Zamarul, he told students to blend into the crowds and know the buildings in the university.

In summary, we need to gain more professional, presentation skills, technical and soft skills, and achievements to secure our career after graduated. Besides, taking time to learn programming skills and new technologies are important to keep up with the evolution of technology. Apart from that, teamwork and communication skills are important for us to cooperate with others during our career life.

#### REFLECTION:

<p>Muhammad Faiq Haidar</p> 	<p>The strength of this conversation is a very rarely discussed topic that describes life after college, namely entering the world of work, especially in the field of informatics engineering. What I can learn is how to compete with others to get achievements, soft skills, skills, and insight into experiences in various job professions from Alumni such as interviews and work challenges that need to be fought well. However, it was very unfortunate that one speaker was unable to attend so that no additional experience could be heard. I got the motivation to be successful like my seniors in the future.</p>
<p>Tee Jun Hong</p> 	<p>I think the strength of the talk is it let me know more about the detail of career relating to computer science field to let me get more prepared before entering the workspace. Unfortunately, the talk had a weakness where there are too many participants and the time is limited so the question can be asked from the participants is limited also. After this session, I learned about the skills that I need as a computer science student for me to success in my future career life. It encourages me to learn more soft skills and computing skills to be able to compete with others.</p>
<p>Tay Wei Jian</p> 	<p>I think the strengths of the talk is it gave us the overview of things we need to prepare before we are entering the IT career such as technical and soft skills required and the attitude required to have in career life. The weakness is the programming languages that are highly demanded now maybe different in the future as technology keeps evolving. Based on this session, I learned that I need to be excel in both technical and soft skills as an IT student to compete with others. Besides, it motivates me to keep learning new things to adapt myself with the new technologies.</p>
<p>Mohamed Yasser Elrefaey</p> 	<p>As I see it, I see that the strength of this talk is it gave me information and details of what I need to prepare or get ready for in the career of the computer science workspace like what skills or requirements I need, what achievements I get to complete, what challenges I get to compete in to have in my career path as an IT student to get me to success in my career life, also I need to learn more things about the new technologies because it keeps evolving and I have to keep up with it have the best knowledge while competing with others and that would make me more confident and encouraged in my work for my future.</p>