ALUMNI SHARING SESSION:

INSPIRING WORK EXPERIENCE AND COVID-19 PANDEMIC CHALLENGE

Date: 29th December 2020 | Time: 10:00am-11;00am | Moderator: Dr. Johanna Ahmad, Senior Lecturer

INFORMATION

The talk was conducted by UTM School of Computing and moderated by Dr. Johanna Ahmad, senior lecturer of School of Computing. The alumni of UTM were also invited as speakers.

The speakers were Tan Yong Keong, Qistina Batrisyia binti Azman Shah and Mohamad Zamarul Akmal bin Mohd Hussin.

Tan Yong Keong (YK) is currently working as a data science engineer at Micron Semiconductor Asia Operation. He graduated as a software engineer in Jun 2020.

Qistina works as a Social Media Data Analyst in TM One. She also freshly graduated in Jun 2020 as a data engineering student.

Zamarul graduated as a data engineer in June 2020 and currently holds the position of a data engineer at PPG Coatings (M) Sdn. Bhd.

This talk was conduted on 29th December 2020 from 10:00am to 11:00am by video conferencing via Webex Meeting.

PURPOSE

- The purpose of this talk was to give information and motivation to the students such as how to survive and excel in studying by sharing speakers' experiences and tips.
- Other than that, the speakers also shared their experiences working in today's environment during Covid-19 pandemic.
- The students also had the opportunity to ask questions related to study, working experience and the courses.

TALK EXPERIENCE

At the beginning of the talk, we were all curious to know what it's like for already-graduated pupils to work amidst the current world pandemic. We knew that as students the world pandemic did not make learning and teaching an easy process. So what is the experience like for those who had graduated and currently having jobs?

Throughout the talk, students were very keen to ask questions. A majority of those questions were related to CGPA. But as the talk continued, we began to learn that CGPA was not the only important part of obtaining a job in the future. The best part of the talk was getting to hear the personal experiences from the moderator and speakers.

GETTING A JOB

YK: For the working experience and the criteria for getting hired, CGPA is only a part of the criteria in which the company hires you. You also need to have extra skills and non-academic stuff in order to get hired.

Qistina: For working place, the private sector didn't look much at the CGPA but in the government sector yes. You also need to have skills like technical skills, soft skills . Companies also want to see whether you can work in a team or not.

Zamarul: You need to improve your soft skills because it is an important part in any company. For the criteria in private sector, they didn't look much at CGPA because they considered technical skills more.

REFLECTIONS

Strengths from the talk:

-Motivated students to continue to pursue their studies with eagerness to be successful in the future.

-Made students realize that they are capable of getting a job if they continue to work hard and be passionate in life.

-Gave meaningful insight on personal experiences which connected with all members of the audience.

- Involved a diverse panel of speakers.

Weaknesses from the talk:

-Did not mention the struggles they went through

-The talk was organized online which made it hard for the students to go through the experiences with the speakers.

-Could've invited more experienced speakers and given more tips on how to get admitted to a company.

Motivation, Insights & Information gained from the session:

1) Importance of technical skills. Examples that were given by the speakers include knowledge in programs such as Excel and Python. While not everyone can acquire the same skills, the saying "practice makes perfect" is very much true in order to become better at any task.

2) Importance of soft skills. While learning new fundamental technical skills, you must not forget to enhance your soft skills. Soft skills can improve the way in which you work with others.

3) Stay focused but enjoy the journey. Enjoy your studies, stay motivated and work with others instead of working alone. Be proactive but remember to discipline yourself and and prevent mistakes.

INSPIRING ASPECTS FROM THE TALK

1st Alumni: Tan Yong Keong

Tips on how to improve programming skills: "Know and understand the code you are working with and apply the necessary skills depending on the project. Practice a lot to know the code well and learn by using 'leadcode.com' and other online courses. When you are doing a program it is like creating something new where there is no solution for it yet."

Ways to improve your confidence: "I participated in many competitions in order to train my confidence especially in front of the public. The result of the competition is not important, at least you have put your efforts into the event and successfully completed it. Having confidence is important because after doing a project you will need to explain it and present it to the audience."

Tips on staying motivated: "I have a mindset that I need to create something that can contribute to the world. That mindset keeps me motivated."

2nd Alumni: Qistina Batrisyia binti Azman Shah

Tips on learning new skills: "To learn new skills you need to be proactive when doing things. Don't wait until somebody teaches you or tells you how to do it. Just go find the solution by yourself or ask the professionals that know. You need to be eager to give your efforts in any field. in order to learn new skills."

Ways to improve your confidence: "join the programs or competitions that need to present or share ideas. Because these kinds of projects or programs can help expose yourself a lot."

Tips on staying motivated: "Nowadays, to stay motivated on a daily basis, you need to love the job that you do and this keeps me motivated all the time."

3rd Alumni: Mohamad Zamarul Akmal bin Mohd Hussin

Tips on learning new technical skills: "Take online courses in e-learning, codecamp or training program in DataStar. Many courses are offered online instead of offline and you can join anytime and get a certificate when you finish the courses. Soft skills and teamwork skills also need to be practiced."

Ways to improve confidence: "Join programs and volunteer to present and talk with others. This is the best and fastest way to improve your confidence."

Tips on staying motivated: "I am always excited to learn new things and not every person has this chance. Also a lot of caffeine has helped me most especially with staying alert."

SUMMARY

From the talk, you can learn the following:

- the tips to improve programming skills and confidence
- benefits of joining competition
- ways to keep motivated
- the different working environment

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