

INSPIRING WORK EXPERIENCE & COVID 19 PANDEMIC CHALLENGE

school of computer alumni sharing session



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed <https://images.app.goo.gl/bM56hCvS9zxUh6YY6>

SUMMARY

A webinar on “Inspiring Work Experience and Covid-19 Pandemic Challenge” was conducted from 10.00 am to 11.00 am on 29th December 2020 by using Cisco Webex as the platform. This sharing session was moderated by Dr Johanna Ahmad, senior lecturer from School of Computing UTM and presented by School of Computing Alumni who are Mr Tan Yong Keong, Ms Qistina Batrisyia Binti Azman Shah and Mr Mohamad Zamarul Ahmad bin Mohd Hussin. The webinar started by introducing each of the speakers regarding their degree, career and their company by the moderator. In this sharing session, the speakers shared their experiences and gave useful tips as well as advice about ways to get a secure job. Before the webinar ended, the participants were given a chance to have a Q&A session with the speakers to ask anything they were curious about.

MOTIVATED SHARING

By N.Syahdina, M.Aiman, C.K. Wei and L.J.Yee

The session discusses each speaker's life experiences and how they achieved success in their fields. Tan Yong Keong, who is now a Data Scientist Engineer, talks about his university life, while also giving advice to students ranging from the topic such as confidence to learning new languages. Mohamad Zamarul, a Data Engineer, was asked to give insight about his work surroundings, how he managed to be hired even though there were two more interns who were better academically than him. Qistina Batrisyia, who is a Social Media Data Analyst, talks more in-depth about what kind of the mentality we should have as well as to keep pushing ourselves to the limit.

The first speaker in the Alumni Sharing Session webinar is Tan Yong Keong who graduated in software engineering and is now holding a position as a Data Science Engineer. During his university life, he has partaken in many competitions which gained him many professional skills. He also does freelance jobs which improved his technical skills. Tan Yong Keong spoke about applying for jobs in which he mentions the jobs require him to have good soft skills as well as a clean resume. He mentioned that the job interviewer tends to ask about his final year projects, coursework projects and participation in competitions. His current project is about factory loading optimization in a manufacturing company to suit the market demand.

Tan Yong Keong was asked to give advice on how to learn multiple new languages which is more important in the industry now than ever in which he responded by advising us to understand the concepts in one language instead of learning and memorizing new languages as a whole so that we can spread the similar concepts that we find on other languages.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed <https://viconsortium.com/vi-education/virgin-islands-wvi-to-offer-new-minor-in-data-science-this-fall->

He was also asked to give a tip to the students who enrolled in software engineering but didn't like programming. The software engineer graduate responded by advising them to do exercises which are available even on the internet. He also said that to love programming, the students need to envision themselves achieving bigger things than just codings, such as making an application or creating new software.

Tan Yong Keong also shared a perspective that confidence can be trained, and students need to train it by presenting ideas or projects through competitions. He also mentioned that to keep yourself motivated; we need to have a mindset of helping the world with our work. As a final note, Tan Yong Keong advised to be productive and to stay safe.

The second speaker who is Mr Zamarul, currently a data engineer in PPG Coatings (M) Sdn. Bhd. He has mentioned that his successful method to get the current job is by proposing to create a system which can monitor all jobs at once by a support dashboard during his internship in the company.

Mr Zamarul also shared with us 2 vital tips to be hired which are learning extra and new technical skills and improving our soft skills. He suggested we join online courses that can be accessed through e-learning, Edx and Code Camp as well as a training program which is Data Star to gain extra knowledge and enhance our hard skills. Furthermore, Mr Zamarul also emphasized that good communication and teamwork skills are the prominent soft skills that we ought to master.

He shared the means for him to gain confidence is by joining a lot of programs that need to do presentations and he usually volunteers himself to be the group representative to present to the others. In addition, he said that the main differences between career life and study life are time and responsibility. Then, he mentioned that responsibility in a career is heavier than the study life because the serious mistakes that we made in career will definitely affect our future career and cause us difficulty to be hired. Thus, he encouraged us to discipline ourselves by minimizing mistakes during study life.

Moreover, Mr Zamarul also said that the method he utilised to stay motivated in his career is he treats the job as the previous opportunity to learn new knowledge and he appreciates it. He mentioned that we can discuss with our university and industrial supervisors regarding the wage and overwork experience during the internship.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed <https://images.app.goo.gl/ph2abCXsGT5yeqZR6>

Ms Qistina is a social media data analyst, working in a private sector and in her position now since her internship. During her internship, she showed a lot of effort in joining a project. Her manager as well her supervisor asked her to join TM One to further the project. Her project is more on marketing site, the social media project is basically about gathering data and use the information to improve their client's brand.

The tips that she shared is to be proactive and do not wait until someone teach you how to do something, instead find the solution or ask a more educated person. Her advice does not try to limit ourselves and try to learn new things and mingle around with people. She also said confidence can be trained by joining many programs, exposing ourselves to others, try to speak up more and do not be shy. Last word from her is stay safe, make friends, try to have fun and do not stress yourself.

To summarize, the speakers of this sharing session were our graduated seniors who just started their career journey. They were Mr Tan Yong Keong, the Data Science Engineer of Micron Semiconductor Asia, Ms Qistina Batrisyia Binti Azman Shah, the Social Media Data Analyst of TM One and Mr Mohamad Zamarul Ahmad bin Mohd Hussin, the Data Engineer of PPG. In the sharing session, they shared about their career, tips to increase chances for getting hired, ways to increase skill and enthusiasm in programming, ways to get confidence to speak and share ideas with others as well as the difference between study life and career life and so on. From this webinar, we managed to receive valuable advice from our seniors and get a picture of our future career life and ways for us to get hired.

REFLECTION

To be put in a nutshell, the talk gave exposure to us on how our university life impacts our future career. The strength of the talk is their journey to who they are right now. They explained how their internship and participation in competitions boost higher chances to be employed.

The weakness of the talk is the talk was very short and the speakers shared less about their hardship and their most difficult moment along their journey. Also, we found that the webinar is emphasized more on sharing alumni work experiences whereas the covid-19 pandemic challenges are less mentioned. We think it can be improved by sharing some activity's photos regarding the speaker while they are sharing. Thus, it can be more attractive to the audience. We also recommend that the questions can be shared in the slide during the Q&A section as it will act as the guideline for the speaker to answer it and also easy for the audience to capture the idea shared by speakers.

In short, the talk motivated us to do well in our studies in order to have a better future career. We also should improve ourselves by learning new technical skills and sharpen our soft skills as practice makes perfect. Besides, we also concur that mindset is an affirmatively important element that we should learn and possess because a good mindset will lead us to be successful in every aspect of life.

University is an excellent platform for us to learn and be well-prepared for future career life. Technology and information systems are undergoing advanced and sophisticated development. As the Bioinformatics' students, we ought to be well-informed about it as well as equip ourselves with the comprehensive knowledge and skills in order to contribute to the people and make the world better in the future via technology.



*Written by
Nik Syahdina Zulaikha Binti Badrul Hisham,
Lee Jia Yee,
Muhammad Aiman Bin Abdul Razak,
Chong Kah Wei*