

UTM School of Computing Alumni Sharing Session: Inspiring Work Experience and Covid-19 Pandemic Challenge

Cisco Webex, 29th December, 2020.

Introduction:

The meeting was held online due to the Covid-19 situation and 4 of the UTM Computing alumni joined the meeting. The meeting was conducted through CISCO WEBEX and it took place on 29th December, 2020. The moderator of the meeting was Dr Johanna Ahmad who is currently working as a senior lecturer in the school of computing of UTM. At first, one of the honourable alumni Tan Yong Keong introduced himself. He studied software engineering in UTM and he graduated in 2019. He is currently working as a Data Science Engineer in Micron Semiconductor Asia. He also shares he has an experience of one and a half year as a Data Science Engineer. After that, honourable alumni Batrisyia Binti Azman Shah introduced herself. She is currently working as a Social Media Data Analyst in TM One and she has been there for a year including her internship. She graduated as a Data Engineer. After that, Mohammed Zamarul Akmal bin Mohd Hussin introduced himself. He is working as a Data Engineer in PPG Coatings. He is a fresh graduate of Data Engineering. Teo wen Long wasn't able to join the meeting.

The meeting was organized by TIS (SECP 1513), School of Computing, UTM.

Purpose of the meeting:

The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the UTM students to the professional life and the idea of what needs to be done to get a good job in the future. Since most of the students were from the first year, the Alumni shared their experience as a student of UTM and what they did to get a good job after graduating.

Points to note:

The alumni start sharing their stories about how they were able to get a job after graduation. Tan Yong Keong shared his experience at first. He was asked to share his experience about how he was able to get the job after graduation. He shares he used to participate in a lot of competitions and by participating in those competitions he gained a lot of professional skills and presentation skills. He also involved himself in freelancing. By involving himself in freelancing, he gained some of the technical skills. Then he gets an internship in Vitrox. He got the interview through the competition that he participated. He was also honoured with the chancellor award. He also shares since most of them are fresh graduates, they don't have much experience. So during the interview he was asked about the final year projects, postgraduate projects and competitions as well as hobbies and stuffs. He also shares he had to use his coding skills to pass the technical assessment also.

Zamarul's story of getting a job is different from the one of Tan Yong Keong. He got himself employed as a permanent staff in his industrial training company. He tried to expose himself by giving some ideas and opinions. During his internship, he had proposed to create monitoring dashboard. Since the company was using big data company environment, there were a lot of data coming in everyday but they were using a manual monitoring by using a big data tool. So, he proposed to create a system that can monitor all jobs at once within a single click which is a support dashboard. This proposal became his FYP. After that, he came under the attention of his supervisor.

Even after the employment of his company had frozen, his supervisor still tried to add him as a permanent staff.

Qistina's case was same as Zamarul. As she put in a lot of effort during her internship, she was offered a position while she doing her internship. Her supervisor wanted her to join the company to work on the project. She did the dashboard and was appreciated. She gathered social media data and interpreted that information into dashboard for their clients which was used to improve their branding. She also adds it's more on marketing sides. After that, Tan yong shares that he is currently working in a semiconductor manufacturing company and his job is to deal with factory loading optimization and gather a lot of data.

Insights and motivation:

According to Tan Yong Keong for learning new languages that are completely new for oneself -one should focus on learning the concept instead of focusing on the new languages to be learnt. By understanding the concept, it can help one from memorizing and eventually can learn a language for easily and get to know about its functionality.

And then from Qistina it was learnt about the skills that were learnt for better opportunities through internship- in such field one needs to attain great skill in python and excel and through internship one can develop that easily. Then by being productive and not to wait for anyone to teach us anything. Then she suggested not to limit oneself but to be open for more things and opportunities.

Then for permanent hiring possibilities from internship zamarul said that during Covid-19 learning new technical skills instead of fundamental skills that were learnt in university but also flourish for more. Then improving soft skills and taking online courses from code camp, EDX etc. Again, he asked to focus on new programs for building more capabilities. Then developing social skills which will help in detecting errors in one's project or concept.

Question and Answer session:

After being asked about the advices for the juniors who want to get accompanied with programming and what if one doesn't like programming then what are the do's along with

the ways to improving programming skills Tan Yong Keong said that more practice iinn coding by taking free programming test and exercises can be done. Then by taking real life problems and then thinking about it can help one to love programming.

Then after being asked about the ways to gain confidence in oneself Tang Yong said that one needs to participate in a lot of competitions and then to show high level of competence through sharing project ideas no matter what and to gain confidence speak with others along with sharing ideas.

Then Zamarul said on the same context that he joined a lot of programs and volunteered to expose to talk with others and joined some activities or games to present in front of the clients beside coding.

On this same context Qistina said that she also did a lot of programs and suggested not to be shy and to speak more by enjoying study life.

Then the question was asked that if the speakers liked university life more or their working life. Zamarul replied on this one that he enjoyed university life more because he had more free time where he could have time by himself and could do part time jobs whereas in work there is no free

time except lunch time ad weekend. He also added that there are a lot of responsibilities in job life which can not have any flaws or it might cause a great price.

Then they were asked about the CGPA requirements. They replied that in private sectors it doesn't matter a lot to have a high CGPA but to have skills is a must.

And another question be asked that will a student be hated for losing a competition. The reply was in a negative and the reasoning was done that we learn new experiences and new skills from competitions and we can also learn from winners. Lastly it was said that if we don't win competition we win experience.

Reflections:

From this Alumni sharing session we learnt about a lot of key components for enriching ourselves in both university life along with the internship life/permanent job life. We received a lot of motivation and some real-life hacks to grind to success and opportunities. We solemnly express our gratitude toward the alumni members for their contribution and making time to help us in gaining some major factors.

Submitted by:

Adib Bin Morshed (A20EC4008)

Ayaz Rahman Bhuiyan (A18CS4039)

Md Newaz Alam (A18CS4039)

Aaraf Islam (A20EC4001)

