Engineers pen book to spark interest in profession

By Jermyn Chow

Can a book written by engineers give their industry an image makeover?

The pioneer batch of graduates from the Nanyang Technological Institute (NTI) – now known as Nanyang Technological University (NTU) – hope so.

Facing declining interest in the discipline over the years, these first-generation engineers from the Class of 1985 have come together to put out One Degree Many Choices, a paperback volume of stories about the ups and downs of their careers.

They said engineering today has slumped from its heyday in the 1970s and 1980s, when it was the career of choice among students.

That is why the alumni hope this book will reignite interest and passion for engineering among today's young people.

Former member of Parliament R. Sinnakaruppan, who spearheaded the effort, said he hoped the book will change the perception that “engineering is not cool”.

"Many people think engineers are square, but with the candid views expressed in this book, hopefully people will see that engineers are actually all-rounded individuals," said the 53-year-old chief executive officer and chairman of the Singapore Education Academy.

Mr Liu Fook Thim, 50, chairman of the book committee, said he hoped the stories, which talk about the struggles of engineers in their careers, would appeal to the young.

The alumni are also aiming to raise at least $500,000 to start the NTU Student Leadership Fund, to provide financial support for students who are less well-off.

The book, which costs $19.90, will be available in major bookstores after its launch on May 2.