

Interns turn idea into reality

NTU students develop app that facilitates communication between workers and earn 10-week internship

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They were given a month to devise a solution to a human resources problem faced by semiconductor maker Systems on Silicon Manufacturing Company (SSMC).

In March last year, the students from Nanyang Technological University (NTU) came up with a mobile app that facilitates communication between employees. It is now being implemented company-wide.

The opportunity to turn their idea into reality was a surprise to team leader Glen Lim, a final-year business student at NTU.

The 25-year-old and three other students were part of the university's first run of NTU Peak, a programme launched last year that aims to transform high-calibre students into industry-relevant business leaders by

letting them network with senior management and work in cross-disciplinary teams.

The month-long mentorship had the team engage with different SSMC employees, from new hires to experienced workers.

Tasked to find a way to increase employee retention and morale, the students collected information on what makes workers join and stay in SSMC.

PITCH

Afterwards, they delivered a 10-minute pitch of their proposal to the top management, which Mr Lim said was a rigorous experience.

He said: "They are sharp people with many years of leadership experience, and they can quickly pinpoint your mistakes and areas of improvement."

That led to a 10-week internship for the students where they

attended coding classes and were given resources and expertise from the information technology department to create the mobile app from scratch.

The app they developed cuts down processes and facilitates communication between employees.

Mr Lim said the unique aspect of his experience was how much autonomy they were given.

He said: "Interns are not usually placed in roles of importance, but my ideas were valued at SSMC."

Mr Lim's three team members, who come from different cultural backgrounds and different disciplines in NTU, including chemistry and economics, clicked well.

Said Mr Lim: "We had different solutions to the same problem. They came up with things I hadn't thought about before and



(From left) SSMC human resources director Hanif Mohamed and Mr Glen Lim, a final-year business student at NTU. TNP PHOTO: SEAH KWANG PENG

brought fresh perspectives."

The team was mentored by SMCC's human resources director Hanif Mohamed.

Mr Hanif said: "I was impressed by the students' comprehension of the problem and their ability to effectively manoeuvre bureaucracy to bring the app to fruition."

According to Mr Loh Pui Wah, director at the NTU career and attachment office, the NTU Peak programme was well received last year with 160 students applying for 24 places in its first run.

Professor Ling San, NTU provost and vice-president (academic), said: "Through such

experiential learning, students can hone their leadership and critical thinking skills and sharpen their career skills in the process, such as communication, business development, and so on."

Mr Lim, who is looking to start a social enterprise in leadership and personal development after graduation in July, is ready to make full use of the experiences and connections gained during his stint at SSMC.

"It truly opened my eyes to the corporate world and enabled me to see how company leaders lead their teams to success."

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