

SP Alliance & Network

SP Alumni eNews

Mar 2024



**ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:
TRANSFORMED
BY THE POWER
OF EDUCATION**



Dr Jovan Tan

Lecturer, National University of Singapore
Diploma in Engineering with Business, 2014

THE PRAGMATIST WHO EMBODIES RESILIENCE

In the dynamic landscape of education and professional development, one inspiring SP alumnus shares his remarkable story of resilience and the transformative power of education.

SP - The Only Choice

For Jovan, enrolling in SP was a practical decision, as it was the polytechnic located closest to his home. Although his modest academic performance in primary and secondary school meant that his options were limited, he was still eager to take up a business course. Thankfully, SP's Diploma in Engineering with Business (DEB) offered an opportunity that fuelled his desire for a practical and industry-relevant education.

"Despite the accidental nature of my decision, which was driven by the process of elimination, I have never regretted choosing DEB. Reflecting on my experiences, I would still make the same choice if given the chance."

Navigating Challenges

Jovan faced financial difficulties during his time at SP, which forced him to balance part-time work with his studies in order to cover tuition fees and living expenses. A pivotal moment arose during his final year when ASUS, the computer and IT company where he was working part-time at, offered him the position of product manager. Thanks to the support of SP lecturers Mr Roger Chiun and Mr Chee Choong Yang, Jovan was able to take on this corporate job while still pursuing his diploma.

"From there, I went on to do other things, but that was the first and most significant stepping stone. Without the blessings of Mr Chee and the directors at the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE), it would not have happened."

Lessons in Life

Reflecting on his SP experience, Jovan underscores the profound impact of life lessons and the development of soft skills, particularly resilience. Balancing part-time work and studies taught him

the importance of making prudent choices, prioritising needs over wants, and adopting a lean approach. Despite the challenges, the struggles at SP contributed significantly to Jovan's personal and professional growth.

"Even though it was tough, I appreciate the experience because it shaped me as a person, built my character, and taught me a lot. It was something that most of my peers didn't have to go through."

An Empowering Moment

Jovan's fondest memory at SP revolves around the internship period, a time of significant personal and professional growth. As he was already working at ASUS, he opted to do his internship there. In his role as a product manager, where he was involved with determining the product line, Jovan felt that he was contributing to shaping the company's future, and by extension, the computing industry. This hands-on involvement left an indelible mark in his memory that fuelled his passion for the business field.

"The moment I realised that those decisions meant that the customers can only buy those products that I helped to select, I felt very empowered."

Unexpectedly Transformative

When Jovan embarked on a MSc in Management and later a PhD in Engineering at the National University of Singapore (NUS), he was surprised at how transformative the experience would be. The PhD journey, in particular, was challenging because he was transitioning from business to engineering courses. This required resilience, adaptation, and the creation of groundbreaking contributions to a field with which he was not familiar. Nevertheless, Jovan feels that his extraordinary academic journey enriched his life with unique insights.

"Through this experience, I realised that I can achieve anything I put my mind to."

Any constraints are just those I imposed on myself. That was my biggest takeaway."

Teaching to Give Back

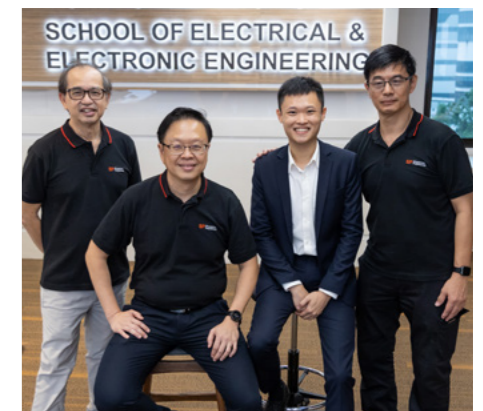
Today, Jovan remains in academia, building a career that is driven by the desire to contribute to knowledge transfer and mentor students. Lecturing at SP and later at NUS revealed the malleability and potential for growth in younger students, influencing his decision to join the Engineering Design and Innovation Centre at NUS full-time.

"If I can help as many people as I can, that's a win. So that's one of the reasons why I went into teaching."

Finding Contentment Every Day

For Jovan, success is defined by finding happiness and fulfilment in each day's endeavours, being content with what one has, enjoying the journey, and making meaningful contributions in both personal and professional aspects of life.

"To future SP alumni, my advice is to stay relevant and competitive. The workforce is dynamic, and having a unique skill set or 'superpower' is crucial to keep progressing and achieve more in your career and life."





Source: The Straits Times, 20 Jan 2024

Gen Z SP Alumnus Embraces Solo Adventures in the Digital Era

More and more Gen Z and young millennials in Singapore are immersing themselves in solo adventures, often seeking out uncharted territories. Many of them are leveraging social media platforms to fund their travels.

Take Dion Ong, for example, a 27-year-old who has pursued his wanderlust through a diverse array of experiences. After earning a Diploma in Tourism and Hospitality Management from SP, Dion followed in the footsteps of his cousin and elder sister, both flight attendants, by working as cabin crew from 2019 to 2022.

“I was supposed to fly for only two years and return to Singapore to get a full-time degree, but COVID-19 happened and I did not manage to save enough money. I did not want to touch my parents’ money, so I continued working,” he said.

However, Dion’s passion for travel diminished as he found himself visiting the same destinations repeatedly. In September 2022, seeking a new direction, he joined Lemon8, an app operated by ByteDance, TikTok’s parent company. Lemon8 had gained popularity in Singapore that year for its diverse catalogue of lifestyle content.

Today, Dion supports himself through brand sponsorships on social media and operates an online jewellery business called Delicate Ornaments, which he established in 2020. He also manages a YouTube channel under the handle @diongdion, in addition to his active presence on TikTok and Lemon8, with over 7,000 followers across these platforms.



Source: Today, 3 Feb 2024

The Future of Polytechnics in Singapore

Polytechnics in Singapore have grown more popular as an educational choice. The reasons for this include better outreach programmes, diversification in courses, as well as close industry links. They also play an important role in Singapore’s push to place more emphasis on skills instead of grades, but they do face challenges. These include the wage gap between university and polytechnic graduates and the speed at which skills become obsolete.

The Ministry of Education said that the five polytechnics will continue to “maintain close partnerships with industry partners through co-development of course content, internships, and work attachment opportunities, to ensure that our students are equipped with the most updated knowledge and skills to thrive in the future economy”.

It added that it is reviewing admissions into polytechnic year one to better recognise the different subject levels taken by students. To ensure their graduates remain relevant as skills evolve at a quicker pace, several polytechnic leaders like Mr Soh Wai Wah, SP’s Principal and Chief Executive Officer, said Continuing Education and Training (CET) is crucial. Acknowledging that adults have different learning needs, SP has micro-credentials for adults to learn from bite-sized modules that can be stacked for higher-level recognition.

To help adults acquire job-relevant skills at a comfortable pace amidst their busy schedule, about 30 per cent of its CET programmes are held online for flexible learning, he added.

SP Alumnus’ Upskilling Efforts Earns Recognition and Success

At the age of 22, Roy Ee felt that his career options were limited. He was then working as a commercial air-conditioning technician at Keppel FMO, a local integrated facilities management company. Despite holding a National Trade Certificate 2 from ITE, advancing proved challenging.

Determined to break through, he pursued a Diploma in Electrical and Electronic Engineering from SP in 2007, followed by a Bachelor’s in Facilities and Event Management from SUSS in 2011. Roy’s commitment to self-improvement didn’t go unnoticed by his employer. In recognition of his upskilling efforts, he was eventually promoted to the position of company director.



Source: The Straits Times, 30 Jan 2024

On-Campus Privileges



SPORTS FACILITIES

Alumni access hours:

GYM@POOL

Weekdays : 12pm - 4pm | 6pm - 9pm

Saturday : 9am - 7pm

SWIMMING POOL

Weekdays : 9am - 4pm

Saturday : 4pm - 7pm

Please note your SP Alumni e-card and any form of identification is required for verification purposes. SP Sports Facilities may be closed due to curriculum or events without prior notice.



SP LIBRARY

SP Alumni eCard holder is entitled to 20% off annual library membership fees.

Library membership is required to enter SP Library. [Click here](#) to find out more.

OPENING HOURS:

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Off-Campus Privileges



SINGAPORE POLYTECHNIC GRADUATES’ GUILD

10% discount for ala-carte menu at SPGG F&B outlets (SPGG Coffee Hub & The Restaurant)

Terms and conditions apply



THE ESCAPE ARTIST

10% discount for the entire bill

Terms and conditions apply



PLAY V-ROOM PTE LTD

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Terms and conditions apply



LAO JIANG SUPERIOR SOUP

10% off total bill

Terms and conditions apply



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NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO?

Just graduated from SP < 6 months ago and feeling like life's thrown you a curved ball?

Contact our friendly SP counsellors for short-term counselling support if you need.

Email SP: contactus@sp.edu.sg with subject 'Requesting for Counselling'





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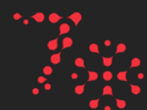
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