

An Incredible Journey, a Global Mind – YSP Seoul Study Tour

The study tour was arranged by the Young Scholars Program (YSP) from May 22 to 27, 2017, in Seoul, South Korea, offering us new YSP members rich learning resources and exposure to global culture. From my perspective, the study tour was very well organized. It included a pre-departure presentation to greatly familiarize us with the company background and a variety of activities during the week, which greatly enhanced our business understanding and cultural competence. The following are my learning outcomes and areas of personal development with regard to three domains of activities during the study tour—corporation visits, university visits and cultural excursions.

Corporation Visits

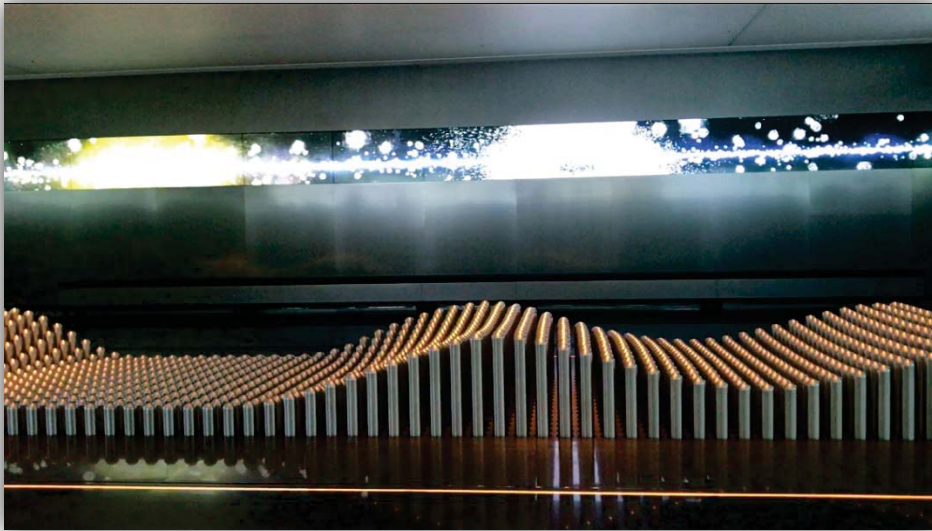
Visiting remarkable companies in South Korea was undoubtedly the highlight of the study tour. During the week, we visited a number of companies in Seoul and Busan that enjoyed global reputations. We built up a more complete understanding of the companies' operations and experienced their organizational culture, thus gaining some insight into the secrets of their sustainable success. On our first day there, we visited the Korea Exchange and learned about the Korean financial market, which I knew little about before. Expanding rapidly, the Korea Exchange is the most liquid financial market in the Asian region. In the following days, we also broadened our horizons through closer encounters with communication company MBC, cosmetics companies such as Aroma Pacific and Samsung. Korean popular culture has rocketed to success in recent years, and MBC has made significant contributions. MBC is a very successful media group and has created a great number of popular dramas. During the study tour, we had the chance to visit the company and uncovered the secret of its popularity. MBC interacts dynamically with people by inviting them to visit the company and creating joyous moments. I observed that they would not have achieved such success without understanding audience demand and delivering customer satisfaction.



At MBC, photos and words from visitors appear with the signatures of popular Korean celebrities and are displayed on the screen with the aid of technology, which creates a remarkable experience and enhances customer interaction

What impressed me most was the Hyundai Group, which is not only an excellent motorcar manufacturer, but also an expert in the heavy industry and electronics fields. The Hyundai motorcar factory we visited was specifically designed to improve the efficiency of manufacturing. I found that a

series of production lines was closely coordinated to maximize output. Moreover, the company took advantage of automatic machines. Workers played the role of inspectors to guarantee that the highly automated assembly lines were on the right track.



Hyundai Motors strongly emphasizes innovative design. In the Hyundai motor studio, YSP members observed displays of the designs. The designs were inspired by natural scenes like water, waves and wind. The dynamic curves representing the beauty of nature were faithfully reflected in the car designs, which was quite amazing.

Samsung also focused on cutting-edges, revolutionary, technological innovations which injected strong power into its continuous development. In Samsung Digital, we were offered the opportunity to know more about Samsung current technological achievements and how their technology could better the life of human beings in the future.



At Samsung Digital, the small pad visualizes life at home in the future. I was impressed by how the Internet of Things could facilitate our lives. All of the information related to cooking, such as the temperature of the food, could be displayed on the table.

University visits

Our group also visited Seoul National University, Korea University and Yonsei University. They are the top universities in South Korea that people usually refer to as “SKY.” We were given campus tours led by local students and grabbed the chance to communicate with them.



Yonsei University is quite international, like City University of Hong Kong, with rich exchange opportunities for students. It enjoys a rich history and pleasant environment.

Apart from campus tours, Seoul National University arranged a valuable lecture for us. Over two hours, we were greatly inspired by a renowned professor who had been a consultant for Samsung Group and Mckinsey. He cordially shared with us his experiences in business and his understanding of consulting jobs from professional and global perspectives. He gave us some suggestions to improve our competence in our future careers. In his opinion, community service, academic performance, health and adaptability are the four core characteristics that interviewers value the most. The lecture was nothing but beneficial for us new YSP members who had just stepped into the business field.

Cultural excursions

The study tour also immersed us in another culture and improved our cultural competence. Cultural excursions such as visiting parliament and the Demilitarized Zone not only widened our horizons but also enhanced our understanding of the Korean political, economic and cultural contexts. In addition, by participating in activities like Kimchi making and stamp making, I found Korean culture endlessly interesting and unique, and we also got to interact with local people.

We visited a traditional Korean temple in Busan and found that there were some similarities between Korean and Chinese culture.



The kimchi-making session was very exciting because I enjoyed the process of making the most authentic Korean food.



As a business student aspiring to be a future business leader, I need to improve my cultural understanding and tolerance and interpersonal skills in the context of globalization. That is why I believe that cultural tours such as this are beneficial to my personal development.

In conclusion, I feel very privileged to have participated in the Seoul study tour, which gave me a golden opportunity to nurture my abilities and broaden my horizons. I felt very grateful that Seoul National University and the YSP were so dedicated to creating a fruitful experience for us. Activities such as company visits, lectures and cultural excursions brought a lot of valuable benefits that other study tours could not do. I accumulated a lot of knowledge that could not be acquired from textbooks or websites. I came to realize the significance of operational efficiency, marketing strategies and technological innovations, which unquestionably lay a solid foundation for business success. Thus, I have set my personal development goals and will make efforts in the coming years to finally blossom into an outstanding business leader. I sincerely hope that the study tour will benefit more YSP members in the coming years.