

Classified Post  
**Career Forum**

# Sharing the keys to success

Thank you for your contribution to making the extended two-day Classified Post Career Forum a great success that offers even more opportunities for jobseekers.



Our third Classified Post Career Forum successfully took place at Kowloon Shangri-La, where university students and recent graduates benefited from career advice given by top professionals and met with a wide range of premium employers. The forum also included Topical Seminars, CV Doctors and the Shadow a CEO Programme. Another new highlight included a chance for participants to win a place on a company tour at K11 Concepts or Microsoft Hong Kong.



The training session on situational self leadership gave insights on strategies that participants can use to achieve higher levels of satisfaction from their work.



Successful young entrepreneur Ray Chan encouraged participants to start up their own idea-based business and added that the key to business success was the ability to make people happy.



Professional career advisers provided a one-on-one CV consultation service.



Supporting CEOs shared their thoughts on leadership qualities and philosophies, as well as their personal experiences of running global businesses.

## Supporting Partners and Exhibitors:



# Shadow a CEO Programme

## Congratulations to the finalists

Eighteen elite candidates were selected for the final-interview stage of the Shadow a CEO Programme, after first-round interviews were conducted at the Classified Post Career Forum on March 6 and 7, 2015. They are now one step closer to this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience the working life of a renowned CEO and to picking up some essential management tips.



**CHAN Chi Hun, Bernie**  
Faculty of Business and Economics  
The University of Hong Kong



**CHAN Sook Mun, Stephy**  
Graduate School of Business  
Heriot-Watt University



**CHAN Wing Hang, Avis**  
Faculty of Business and Economics  
The University of Hong Kong



**CHENG Hang**  
School of Engineering  
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology



**CHENG Hoi Lam, Karen**  
School of Hotel and Tourism Management  
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University



**CHUNG Annie**  
College of Business  
City University of Hong Kong



**CHUNG Wing Lun, Aaron**  
Faculty of Science  
The University of Hong Kong



**FARHAN Ahmed Musthafa**  
School of Engineering  
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology



**LAI Ho Kei, Derek**  
Faculty of Business  
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University



**LAM Sze Yeung, Aaron**  
College of Business  
City University of Hong Kong



**PUN Chuck Hey, Eric**  
Faculty of Law  
Chinese University of Hong Kong



**QIAN Christina**  
College of Business  
City University of Hong Kong

# Classified Post Career Forum



**SHAN Lai Wing,  
Lorraine**  
Faculty of Engineering  
The Hong Kong  
Polytechnic University



**SHIH Ting Yu,  
Julius**  
Faculty of Business and  
Economics  
The University of Hong Kong



**TAM Yeung Hin,  
Sky**  
Faculty of Business  
The Hong Kong  
Polytechnic University



**TAM Wai Chung,  
Aquila**  
School of Business  
Hong Kong  
Baptist University



**TAN Xinyi,  
Sherry**  
School of Business  
Hong Kong  
Baptist University



**YUAN Chu An,  
Titus**  
College of Business  
City University of  
Hong Kong

Once again, we are very pleased to have the following CEOs support this valuable programme and provide an unforgettable learning opportunity for the programme winners.

## Supporting CEOs



**Ms LAU Ka Shi, BBS**  
Managing Director & CEO  
BCT Financial Ltd and  
Bank Consortium Trust Co Ltd



**Sr Vincent HO**  
President  
The Hong Kong  
Institute of Surveyors  
Managing Director  
Freevision Limited



**Mr SONG Hoi-see**  
Founder and CEO  
Plaza Premium Lounge  
Management Limited

Stay tuned to *Classified Post* for updates on the Shadow a CEO Programme

# Classified Post Career Forum

H I G H L I G H T S



## On the road to success

Career Forum provides students and graduates with advice and opportunities to get ahead, writes **Freda Wan**

Students and recent graduates sharply dressed in business attire and eager to boost their career prospects flocked to the Classified Post Career Forum at Kowloon Shangri-La in Tsim Sha Tsui on March 6 and 7.

The event, which for the first time was spread over two days instead of the usual one, attracted jobseekers from a wide variety of personal and academic backgrounds.

Exhibiting organisations covered a broad spectrum of industries, ranging from accounting, insurance and finance to public utilities, the civil service, healthcare, retail, social media and surveying.

Many exhibitors were represented by their current management trainees and younger employees, giving students a better flavour of the corporate culture of their potential future employers.

The Shadow a CEO Programme was again a major attraction. Selected forum participants who registered for the programme had their first interview on one of the two days, hopeful of being picked for this horizon-broadening experience.

Selected students will have the rare opportunity to spend three days shadowing a chief executive, observing at close range the day-to-day decision-making of a leader and senior manager.

For this iteration of the programme, the three executives are Lau Ka Shi, managing director and CEO of BCT Financial and Bank Consortium Trust; Song Hoi See, founder and CEO of Plaza Premium Lounge Management; and Vincent Ho, president of the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors and managing director of Freevision.

Lau and Song also gave presentations as part of the forum's series of topical seminars. During the wide range of seminars spread across the two days, career options were discussed with insight on useful skills for young professionals keen on making their mark early.

The competitive world of start-

ups was also covered by 9GAG founder and CEO Ray Chan, who advised on succeeding in the social media industry, while emphasising the importance of having fun when pursuing career goals.

The forum was also on hand to help with that single step that can launch a successful career journey of a thousand miles – the job interview. Participants were able to sign up for sessions with a CV doctor, who gave vital feedback about how a human resources professional would read a CV. A topical seminar from June Tam of recruitment firm Robert Walters also lifted the lid on how to ace early-career job interviews.

To round things off, forum

participants who collected five stamps – each one given after speaking to a different company exhibitor – were able to apply for the chance to join company tours to Microsoft or K11 Concepts, involving behind-the-scenes insight into professional life at the two companies.

### CONTENTS

- P1** Career Forum Overview
- P2-3** Topical Seminars Highlights
- P4** Student Feedback

## SPECIAL REPORT: CLASSIFIED POST CAREER FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

# Powering up for success

Past and present graduate trainees at HK Electric shared their stories at the Career Forum, writes **Freda Wan**

**P**eter Leung, customer installation engineer at HK Electric, said he regularly applies what he learned as a graduate trainee at the company in 1997 in his business decision-making. "What I learned all those years ago is still in my mind, helping me make good business decisions," said Leung, who now manages a team of more than 30.

"I made many friends as a graduate trainee. The camaraderie built over all these years means that if I need to solve a problem, support is just a phone call away. This is extremely valuable."

Leung was among three former HK Electric graduate trainees who shared their experiences at the Career Forum. They encouraged engineering students to consider the company's graduate programme.

Another graduate trainee, Jacqueline Chan, is now an environmental engineer. She joined in 2011 and completed three years of training. She told forum participants how job rotations in different departments vastly broadened her horizons.

"In the project division, I saw how project management is done, while in the commercial division, I learned about the preparation of a tender," she said.

"In the public affairs department, I organised outreach programmes. In the investment department, I learned how to select and evaluate overseas investment projects."

The wide exposure would not have been possible if she had simply been an engineer working only in one department, she said.

One of her most memorable experiences as a graduate trainee was attending training in Thailand with two other engineers. "We were surprised to learn that even though Thailand is a developing country,



HK Electric senior training officer Cheri Ho (third from left) talks to graduate trainees past and present (from left) Ryan Leung, Jacqueline Chan and Peter Leung.

their environmental awareness is just as strong as in Hong Kong," Chan said, showing photos of her training at a power plant in Ratchaburi Province, Thailand. "The management of their power plants also met very high standards."

HK Electric's graduate trainees are put on a fast track to becoming professional engineers, said Ryan Leung, who joined the programme in 2013. Professional engineering qualifications are awarded by the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers

(HKIE). As training materials for HK Electric trainees are jointly developed with HKIE, the content has practical and direct relevance to their future jobs and responsibilities as engineers.

Leung said he gained a broad network at HK Electric and in the wider engineering profession. As part of this, he was master of ceremonies at an event held by the HK Electric Institute last year. The institute enables retired engineers and senior engineers close to

retirement to share their knowledge with the company's young engineers.

HKIE also plays a key role in preparing young graduate trainees for career advancement with its President's Protégé scheme. As part of the scheme, Ryan was selected as one of nine young engineers to shadow the HKIE president at public events, seeing first-hand how he operates. Now, he looks forward to organising an exchange programme in Tokyo and community activities with other president's protégés.

The speakers said that the fun does not stop after young engineers complete the graduate trainee programme. Peter Leung said his work servicing customers remains challenging and wide-ranging.

He and his team create solutions to help SMEs launch their businesses sooner, and at higher energy efficiency. "I interface with different customers, from residential to SMEs and large corporations. My work also involves electric vehicles, smart grid, and data centres."



June Tam

## Be prepared and positive to ace interviews

**S**tudents and jobseekers must be prepared and have a positive mindset for interviews, explained June Tam, manager of the IT - financial services division and IT - contract division at Robert Walters, to forum participants.

"You must understand that the employer would not be interviewing you if they were not interested in hiring you," Tam said. "At the same time, you must have the mindset that you truly want to get that job."

Tam shared a range of insights and suggestions on how to ace job interviews, from interview etiquette to techniques to market oneself in group interviews.

"In a group discussion, try to start

your point tactfully," she said. "For example, say something like: 'I echo the point of the other candidate, but I would like to elaborate further.' Don't appear too aggressive, and don't let anyone think you are personally attacking the other candidates."

The current job market may seem bustling with opportunities, Tam said, yet many graduates become impatient when they apply for jobs and have to wait a long time for a response. They become even more anxious when they are not invited back for a second round of interviews.

Staying positive is key. "If, in the middle of the interview, you believe your performance is not good, don't just give

up. Be consistent and maintain your enthusiasm. Many interviewers purposely give candidates a hard time. They want to see how you react under stress."

Tam has also seen candidates get impatient with the interviewer for asking about their past experience. Candidates mistakenly think that everything is already written on their CV, so there is no reason for the interviewer to ask. "They want to see your interpersonal communication skills," Tam said.

Fresh graduates may face particular challenges, as they have limited professional experience to demonstrate that they are suitable for a job. Candidates should illustrate every claim

with examples from either summer internships or academic projects.

"Before the interview, be sure to prepare two examples in detail," Tam said. "Think back to two projects, make sure you are able to talk about the process, any obstacles you overcame, your methodology, and the results achieved. Two is enough; five might be overwhelming to the interviewer."

She added that while fresh graduates may think they are at a disadvantage, job candidates with more work experience face other pitfalls, such as speaking too much about their past careers, without allowing the interviewer to ask questions. *Freda Wan*

# Effort trumps passion

9GAG founder Ray Chan advises entrepreneurs to be wary of trends, writes **Carrie Chan**

**F**ollowing your passion or chasing trends can harm your chances of success as an entrepreneur, says Ray Chan, the CEO and founder of online humour community 9GAG.

Speaking at the Career Forum, Chan said it is more rewarding to focus on your positive traits, work hard and find clever solutions. Rather than having a grand mission, his venture simply started in 2008 from a side project aimed at bringing happiness to people. "This is especially needed in developing countries, where it is not easy to share happiness and connect different people," Chan said.

9GAG is an online platform and social media website where users upload self-generated humorous images. The name 9GAG comes from the Cantonese term *gaau gag*, which means making fun.

It received funding in 2011 from 500 Startups, an accelerator programme based in Silicon Valley. Some of its investors were also early backers of Facebook and Twitter.

Chan advised aspiring entrepreneurs against simply following their passion, which others might not share. "Most people's passions are not linked to a career. When you are looking at something so obscure, your future will be dim."

Rather than chasing dreams, Chan, a law graduate, has his own slogan: "Follow your effort".

"When you have spent more time on something, you will have created some good results and have a sense of achievement. When you become better and better, you will naturally like it. Passion is the result," he said.

Chan added it is important to be wary of trends. By the time you have read about a trend, "it is already too late. When the government starts to build up a fund [to support an industry], it is also too late."



Ray Chan says those considering a startup should decide whether it would solve people's problems. Photo: Kennis Kwok

Consider people's needs and whether the company will dominate the market in 10 years' time, he said. "Successful people are good at doing something that contributes to the community. A website needs to solve people's problems. It needs to be very easy to use so users will come back again."

Asked why his fundraising exercise started in the US, he said most of Hong Kong's rag-to-riches

stories are irrelevant to the internet. "We did not think that Hong Kong was not good, but we wanted to focus on the internet business."

For those wanting to join 9GAG, he said they need to truly identify with their mission. "If you want to join 9GAG, you need to believe in our vision in making this world a better place and in advancing your career," he said.

When asked about when would

be the best time to quit a job to start up your own business, Chan said he first started setting up 9GAG in 2008, while still working full time. It officially started working as a company in 2012.

"It was not a quick decision as my family often needs my support," he said. "You need to assess your opportunity cost and see whether you have confidence that you can earn back that level of salary again."

## Traineeships take the stage

**A**s students approach graduation, many are still weighing their options for the next step. Some want to gain work experience; others want to continue graduate studies. Many want to travel, or take a gap year. As it turns out, they can have it all.

The Mountbatten Institute runs one-year traineeships in investment banking and finance in London and New York.

"This is a life-changing opportunity for young people," said Phenthip Chomprang, marketing and recruitment director at the institute. "They will be working in well-established companies and studying while living abroad."

Students or recent graduates are placed in a one-year traineeship in the investment banking or finance sector, in either New York or London. Placements in the past few years have been in firms such as UBS, Barclays, Deutsche Bank, JP Morgan, BlackRock Investments, Citi and HSBC.

The programme also includes compulsory classroom training and seminars roughly three times a week. At the end of the year, participants earn a postgraduate certificate (PGC) awarded by an accredited UK university.

Participants pay US\$12,000 for the PGC to join the programme, but receive approximately US\$13,000 over the course of 12 months as a monthly stipend.

They are also provided shared accommodation in fully furnished apartments, and a healthcare and utilities allowance.

Perhaps the best part of being part of the programme is the fact that it solidifies a participant's CV, providing that competitive edge from having worked abroad for a year in the world's business and financial centres. **Freda Wan**



Virginia Choi

## HR requires can-do candidates

**B**eing proactive, having good communication skills and being ethical are prerequisites for graduates looking to enter the HR field, said Virginia Choi, executive council member of the Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management (HKIHRM).

Choi said candidates need to demonstrate an ability to interact with people and handle computer work at the same time. "HR is almost like marketing - you are selling your company to others. There are also occasions when you need to handle incoming interviews and exit interviews at the same time," she said.

A can-do, proactive attitude is what employers are looking for. This can often

be traced in aptitude tests. "There is no discrimination between different academic qualifications. You need to show an eagerness to learn. Attitude and personality are of foremost importance."

As HR professionals deal with personal data on a daily basis, it is also essential to be ethical. "[At interviews], if you don't know the answers, you had better be honest. The interviewers need to know whether you have integrity. They are very good at spotting people's traits in just 15 minutes," she said.

Other competencies can be learnt on the job. These include professional knowledge, being customer-focused and the ability to forge business partnerships.

Most entry-level HR professionals also need to get prepared for upgrading their knowledge on the job. "There are some HR roles which only require staff to call up people for interviews," she said.

"However, nowadays, you most likely need to be involved in more aspects and it is important to enhance your knowledge."

One of the ways is through joining the HKIHRM, which started offering mentorship programmes about three years ago to groom the next generation of industry leaders.

It also organises joint projects with institutions in China, the UK and other European countries to exchange information on HR practices. **Carrie Chan**



Phenthip Chomprang

## SPECIAL REPORT: CLASSIFIED POST CAREER FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

# An eye-opener for students

Jobseekers impressed by variety of opportunities and quality advice. Reports by **Carrie Chan** and **Freda Wan**

## Steven Yip Tung-ho Baptist University

As part from the chance to visit prospective employers, the Career Forum gave Yip, a final-year business administration student, more understanding of his prospects in various industries. "[Linking this to] the development of companies is very important. The forum has given us a platform for future careers," he said.

He explained that it is essential for jobseekers to offer value to their prospective companies. "We need to offer value to the company to show our

performance, rather than [just expecting things] from it," he said. "If there is good performance, one can surely stand out."

He was particularly impressed by the advice given at the Shadow a CEO Programme counter, which was to read more to broaden his knowledge.

While his specialisation is in human resources management, he was surprised by the variety of jobs for which he could apply. "There are many choices. I only learnt at this forum that I could consider entering the quantity surveying industry, despite my background as a business student," he said.

He found out that some of the

problem-solving skills he has learnt in HR courses are applicable to other business areas, such as marketing. He was also interested in the management trainee programmes on offer. The hotel industry was one of his preferences as it is a major growth area in Hong Kong.

He discovered that, for management trainee programmes at hotels, it is necessary to work as both a front line worker and in the back office. "There is then the chance to practise different modes of operation as we shift around every few months. Our knowledge would not be just limited to our own studies."



## Shirley Tsang Oi-sz PolyU

It is important for graduates to explore the scope of career opportunities for which they are eligible, Tsang said.

A third-year student at Polytechnic University, Tsang explained she was at first attracted by the wide array of management trainee programmes at the Career Forum after her university had informed her about the event.

But after visiting the forum, she said she was surprised by the variety of opportunities available to her. For example, as she is majoring in global supply chain management, she was advised that she could apply for a licence in the security industry, even though her major was not related.

The forum not only connected Tsang with companies, but also equipped her with more job-interview skills. She made it a priority to visit the Shadow a CEO Programme counter, where she was interviewed for the scheme.

She said the interview was very informative and inspiring. "It was a very in-depth interview in which we not only talked about my previous job experience, but also social issues and ways of improving."

Most importantly, as Tsang did not have any job experience in the logistics industry, the advisers helped her identify the skills and experience that could be transferable to future jobs. "This means that even if I do not have relevant experience in dealing with suppliers and customers, I can still try the logistics industry," she said.

The advisers at the forum also suggested Tsang develop some cooperation skills by doing team-building training. "I learnt that many organisations are looking for candidates as team players. They value collaboration experience."

She was pleased about expanding her network at the forum, discovering more about her prospects in various industries, and with the advice she received.



## Ying Li Baptist University

As master's student in accounting at Hong Kong Baptist University, Li was attracted to the forum by the Shadow a CEO Programme speakers. "There are many career events in town, but the opportunity to hear directly from CEOs made this special," she said.

Li, from China's Jiangsu province, will graduate this year with a Master of Science in applied accounting and finance. She was eager to speak with employers in the finance industry at the forum, but she also approached employers in other industries and asked them about roles in their companies.

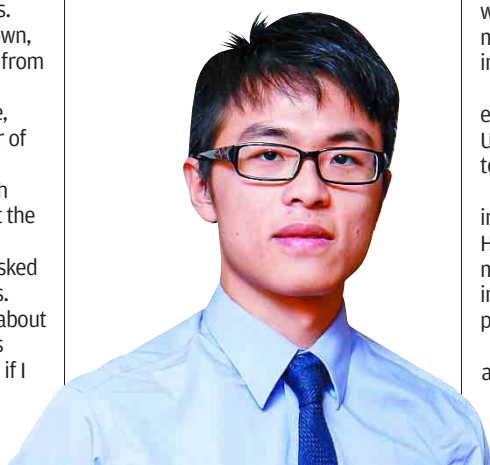
"This is an opportunity to learn about companies in depth," she said. "This level of depth would not be possible if I was only researching about these companies online."

## Aaron Chung Wing-lun HKU

Chung, a physics student from the University of Hong Kong, came to the forum mainly to attend the talk by Lau Ka Shi, MD and CEO of BCT Financial and Bank Consortium Trust.

"These are interesting companies and [Lau is] a CEO I'd like to shadow," he said, referring to the Shadow a CEO Programme, which he hopes will help hone his leadership skills. He is keeping all options open for when he graduates in August - from joining the corporate world to becoming an entrepreneur.

He says past career fairs he went to tended to be industry focused, with most companies from finance, real estate or construction. "There are fewer career fairs featuring companies that would interest a student in the sciences."



## Jimmy Tang Baptist University

The Career Forum was a valuable opportunity for Tang, a Bachelor of Business Administration student with a concentration in human resources management (HRM), to gather information about his future career.

Instead of trying to impress employers at the event, the Baptist University student took the opportunity to meet and learn from HR professionals.

"HRM cuts across different industries," Tang said. "Today I observed HR professionals in action, and I learned more about how companies structure internal training and organise trainee programmes."

Apart from gathering information and networking, Tang looked into management trainee programmes to explore broader career options.

## Annie Chung CityU

As final-year marketing major at City University, Chung came to the Career Forum with a singular purpose - she wanted to meet potential employers in banking and finance, as she was determined to start a career in the industry after graduation.

However, once she arrived, she saw the variety of industries represented and decided to speak with as many potential employers as possible.

Her motivation partly came from the Company Tours lucky draw. To enter, jobseekers needed to collect five stamps from speaking with employers from five different companies. The winners got to enrol for company visits to either Microsoft or K11 Concepts.

"This way, students are more motivated to speak to employers," Chung said. "It is an effective way to encourage students to broaden their horizons."

Chung added that she had interesting conversations with real estate and surveying companies at the forum. She said this was helpful to her, even though she might not end up pursuing a career in those industries.



## Farhan Thaka HKUST

As student at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), Thaka enjoyed interacting with employers directly at the forum. He was also excited to receive feedback and advice about his CV, cover letter and interview performance, all in one day.

"I wanted to know what skills and acumen Hong Kong companies are asking for," he said. "It's also helpful to know

what mistakes I have made in interviews. I often find it difficult to answer unfamiliar questions, but now I know more about how to tackle them."

Thaka, who is from Chennai, India, is studying a one-year Master of Science programme in integrated circuit design engineering.

Although India has a strong technology sector, Thaka believes that there are more opportunities for electronic engineers in China. "Hong Kong has great opportunities, and I can gain more experience here."