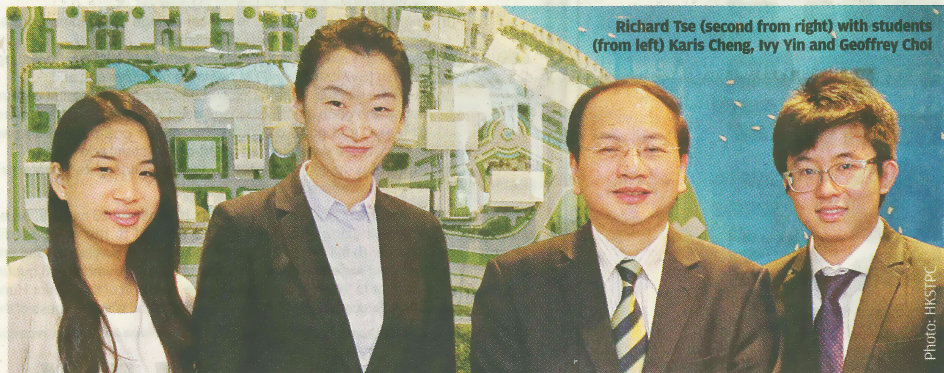


Shadow my leader

Classified Post's Shadow a CEO Programme gave students an inside view of top-level business, writes **John Brennan**



Richard Tse (second from right) with students (from left) Karis Cheng, Ivy Yin and Geoffrey Choi

Photo: HKSTPC

Seeing the big picture at HKSTPC

It was three students, two days and one happy experience at the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC), with Richard Tse Kin-pang, vice-president of finance and corporate services, keen to share what it is like to work in the company's upper echelons.

After four-and-a-half years in the public body, one concept Tse was eager to get across was the importance of "thinking wider", as he always has stakeholders in mind when making business decisions.

Tse organised the two-day job-shadowing exercise to get the message across, including elements such as financing arrangements, IT projects, corporate communications and sustainability reporting.

Starting with a briefing on the company's vision and mission, Tse took students to meetings with four department heads on different corporate issues. They later joined a pitching session, where technology

companies show off innovations and ideas on how they can work together.

Between meetings, Tse wasted no time in ensuring the students were occupied and were constantly learning. He was impressed with their energetic approach and eagerness to learn.

For the students, it was not simply just an eye-opener, but also an opportunity to pick up some invaluable advice before embarking on their careers.

"I have certainly learned a lot from Richard, mainly about the success factors for top management, such as the four 'A's," says Geoffrey Choi Cheuk-lun, a Chinese University student who is to begin a career in investment banking. Choi says he will keep in mind the fact that the four 'A's - attitude, ability, action and achievement - are interdependent.

Choi also felt that, thanks to Tse, he had acquired a management mindset. "Always thinking about the worst side, to dig out any potential questions on the project or deal, is critical to success," he says. "Having a mindset that expects the

worst enables you to be well prepared [through contingency planning] and able to handle crises more smoothly."

Karis Cheng, a final-year student in finance and marketing at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, caught a glimpse of what the corporate world is like for a fresh graduate. "Richard explained how sometimes fresh graduates are [too] excited about showing everyone our ability," Cheng says. "We are overly concerned with the message we want to get across to our boss or co-workers, ignoring what they truly want to see or hear from us."

Ivy Yin Hai-tao, a master's student at City University specialising in management, says the most important advice she learned from Tse was that a leader should be magnanimous and care for others.

"I learned this not from his words, but from his behaviour," she says. "From the initial interview until the very last minute, he cared about our feelings intensely."

Ben Kwok