



ITP

LINK

The Newsletter for Members of the Institute of Training Professionals

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A Good Morning with Sam Ying

By Ms Angie Yu, FITP



Sam Ying, a familiar name to most of the training practitioners. Sam spent more than 20 years in Training & Development Field, but he was actually not a T&D people in the early stage of his career. He was a senior lecturer in University of Lingnam before. He started first as the Administrative Assistant to the Chairman of a listed company, where he

had short period of time managing the Jumbo Floating Restaurant. For better management, he suggested the use of Dim Sum order card in his restaurant which was non-existent in Hong Kong at that time, the practice was then widely adopted by other Chinese restaurants in Hong Kong. It is not uncommon to find such a practice in other parts of the World, too. He kept

very close relationship with the then Hong Kong Tourist Association (HKTA) . He successfully made Jumbo Floating Restaurant an icon of Hong Kong in tourists' mind by having the boat appeared on the cover page of the HKTA's promotional pamphlet. He also successfully fought for the extension of annual check up of Jumbo's iron vessel from once a year to once every 2 years, so as to reduce the productivity lost of the restaurant by 7-10 days a year to 7-10 days for every 2 years. To look back, he also admitted that the management experience he's got in the early stage of his career did lay a strong foundation for his contribution in the T&D Field.

He joined Management Development Council (MDC) in the late 80s. MDC was actually the Research and Development arm that supported T & D field in Hong Kong. As the Principal Adviser of MDC, his mission was to bring in the latest management concept which was non-existent in Hong Kong at that time. The "Project-based Learning" (similar to "Action Learning" now), "Competencies" and "Entrepreneurship Training for SME Owners" he introduced in the early 90s are all examples he fulfilled his mission. Among them, he enjoyed the most the "Entrepreneurship Training for SME Owners". In the old days, SME owners used to enhance their management skill and business sense through trials and errors, the course provided them a valuable chance to learn from others' experience, shorten their learning curve and increase their professionalism. The alumni eventually formed the "Hong Kong Chamber of Small & Medium Business" (HKSMB) for

providing the members with the related supports and protecting interests of all members. The formation of HKSMB did give Sam satisfaction and a sense of achievement.

For his unforgettable experience in the T&D Field, he would say the launch of the "Business Start-up Training" in 1998. Given the economic downturn at that time, Sam believed that the support to those redundant people to start their own business would help them make a living and reduce unemployment rate. However, most of the stakeholders like bankers, government officials did not buy in this idea. They thought that it was too risky to lend money to jobless people. Sam spent one year to successfully persuade the government to fund the formation of "Business Start-up Centre" in MDC which provide consulting and training support for those who would like to start their business. Though not full support could be obtained from stakeholders at that time, the government's later support to the establishment of Social Enterprises, the increasing number of people who start their own business and the increasing number of related training courses organized by the NGO in these 10 years did provide good evidences that his insistence on "Business Start-up Training" in 1998 was correct. Sam said, "As a training people, it was unexpected that I can create such an atmosphere. This is also why I find this experience unforgettable."

If you are thinking of joining the T&D Field, Sam said, "It is not difficult to grasp the skill. It is a matter of hard work and experience. However, you must have a

passion to develop others.” He enjoys working in this field, he has found this field very interesting. But he said, “This field is interesting only if you are willing to be forward looking, creative and willing to breakthrough. It is important to get something extraordinary out of the ordinary. In the journey to introduce new things, you have to overcome a lot of different things. It can be difficult, stressful, but it is fun... Some Training people may be too conservative; they just like to follow what the others are doing. As such, after working in the field for certain years, they will find the job boring.” This is really a valuable advice

if you are thinking of joining this Field.

I agreed with him that whether the job is interesting or not depends very much on your way to handle it. T&D provide us opportunities to try new things as we are the “Change Agent”, it is our willingness to take the first step to get our job satisfaction. I know Sam for quite some time, but never can I have such an opportunity to chat with him on a Saturday morning. I enjoyed sharing his work experiences. They were not only interesting but also inspiring, and I actually benefited a lot. That Saturday morning was really a Good Morning for me.



“Passion” - the Key to Success

By Ms Pauline Tsang, MITP

Ocean Park aspires to be the world leader in connecting people with nature in a theme park environment. In its over 30-year relationship with Hong Kong, it has built up a solid and impressive track record in combining entertainment and education.

Despite the challenges encountered over the years, the passion shown by

the management team has enabled Ocean Park to differentiate itself from other entertainment bodies and become an entertainment leader in Hong Kong. Truly, we were able to experience this passion first-hand during our CPD visit to the theme park on Saturday, March 7, 2009.



Photo taken during the talks by the Management Reps of Ocean Park prior to a guided tour to the Lowland Area. More photos are available at the Photo Gallery of ITP Website.

In addition to numerous new products and attractions that have been introduced over the years, what sets Ocean Park apart from its competitors

surely is its participative management team which believes in the importance of innovation and investment in human capital. “We advocate good

communication. We believe that by sharing their experience, employees can learn a great deal.” says Mr. Brian Ho, Human Resources Director. Also sharing with us on their management as well as training and development aspects were Ms Mimi Fu, Training and Development Manager, and Mr. Joseph Leung, Executive Director Revenue.

Coaching

The park has a substantial variety of skilled and non-skilled employees, ranging from performers, technicians, to kiosks sales people and many others. To champion the learning in such a range, coaching has been found to be the most effective tool for championing learning across this wide range of skill sets and thus for building an effective workforce. Within a narrow scope of people, it is not easy to transfer skills and practice what you have learned. By injecting resources to develop a core layer of competent coaches, especially at the supervisory level in the organization, Ocean Park has been able to lead and train people who are fresh or have yet to be prepared for the job. Their excellent team work is illustrated by tight collaboration and close supervision and in the end, is capable of executing the ideas from the top level of management.

Communication

The park emphasizes a direct and efficient communication, especially in its operation. Needless to say, the park needs people to react and make

quick decisions, particularly when interacting face-to-face with customers. To deliver quality customer service, it is the key to keep one’s ears and eyes open during the interaction. With the 360 degree communication, from back to front and top to bottom, employees receive regular feedback on what they need to do and how they can improve. The dedication of training professionals involved in all these instances of employee communication certainly boosts the cohesiveness within the organization.

Reward and Compliments

The park favours the direct and instant appreciation of employees’ efforts, in order to engage them with the organization. The HR team delivers a range of different rewards and recognition programmes to strengthen the employees’ spirit and ensure their contributions are properly recognized.

Conclusion

In Ocean Park, we see the positive reinforcement from the senior management team that keeps the employees’ momentum going. All programmes that are related to learning, communication as well as reward recognition are driven by the passion of its management team. Staff, managers and HR team are truly treated as business partners and we reckon it is this very passion that’s one of the keys to success of this theme park.

**ITP Submission submitted to the Financial Secretary –
Re: To Revive the Successful SME Training Fund**

9th February 2009

Mr. John Tsang Chun-wah, JP
Financial Secretary
HKSAR Government
5/F, Central Government Offices, Main Wing
Lower Albert Road
Central
Hong Kong

[Email: fso@fso.gov.hk]

Dear Mr. Tsang,

Re: To Revive the Successful SME Training Fund

On behalf of the Institute of Training Professionals (ITP), Hong Kong's only independent body devoted to the promotion and enhancement of the awareness, recognition, and good practices of the training and development profession, I would like to state our wish for Hong Kong's good as follows, in the hope that you will take it into consideration in finalizing the Budget for the HKSAR for the coming year.

As Hong Kong is suffering, likely in greater magnitude as we go, from the economic turmoil along with other world economies, it is vital for government to take the lead, and introduce appropriate incentives, to maintain, and even better, to enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong enterprises. This will enable Hong Kong enterprises to be better able to compete with its business rivals. It will also ensure that Hong Kong will revive quicker than its competitors and amongst the firsts to stand up and walk out from the depression in the future.

However, it is almost a common practice for organizations to cut their staff training and development budgets whenever their business suffers. While the government is directly diverting resources and encouraging various sectors to create job opportunities for new graduates and others newly entering the job market, as well as those made redundant as a result of company closures and down-sizing, we wish to draw your kind attention towards the urgent need for stimulating businesses that remain operating to continue invest in their own people who drive their business further.

It is the view of our Institute that the SME Training Fund (STF) (introduced in Jan 2002 and ceased operation in July 2007) that aimed at encouraging SMEs to provide training relevant to their business operations to their employers and employees now needs to be revived. While the business outlook remains gloomy, without government incentive, it would be difficult to expect private enterprises, particularly SMEs, or even public service organizations and NGOs, to be proactive and willing to expend limited and dwindling

financial resources in staff training and development.

We understand that the cessation of the STF was due to the exhaustion of the SME funding originally designated for this purpose, and the belief that there are other funding schemes – Continuing Education Fund (CEF) and Skills Upgrading Scheme (SUS), and the Funding Scheme for Workplace English Training – that serve the same purpose (according to the written reply by the Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology, Mr. John Tsang, to a question raised by the Hon. Li Fung-ying dated April 27, 2005). However, your kind attention is drawn towards the fact that, first, these other schemes are not corporate based but individual based, and second, these schemes are confined to selected industries*. There is currently no fund that can cater for all industries and sectors, and no subsidy that will stimulate enterprises to take the initiative to organize in-house training and development tailor-suited to their specific needs. Only the STF provides such broad coverage and flexibility. The high speed of depletion of the STF and the tens of thousands of SMEs that have benefited from this scheme during its short life span are proofs of its popularity and effectiveness.

* --- The CEF is targeted at logistics, business services, financial services, tourism, and creative industries, and covers language, design and interpersonal and intrapersonal skills for the workplace as well. The SUS covers skill areas of 22 industries.

I apologize for this belated submission, but do wish that it will receive your kind attention and take the above into consideration in your final-touching of the almost release-ready budget for the new financial year.

Thank you and look forward to your favourable reply.

Yours sincerely,

Fred Kwan

Chairman

Institute of Training Professionals

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An All-round Training at the Maritime Service Training Institute

By Angela Lee, MITP

When you travel on the Tuen Mun Highway, have you ever noticed that there is a red ship sharply 'landed' at the river called

Tai Lam Chung? It is one of the icons of Maritime Services Training Institute of the Vocational Training Council.



On a cold Saturday morning of 10 January 2009, we, a team of 12 members was warmly welcomed by Mr. Tony Yeung, Manager and Master Mariner of the Institute. Tony has been working at this Institute since 2002. Under his supervision, the Institute has been undergoing different stages of renovation and reform. Tony believed that only when manned with experienced trainers, and equipped with well-designed training facilities at the current state-of-the-art technology, that the MSTI could offer training programmes of top quality. Except the nurse who delivers first-aid training, all the trainers have the experience of working on vessels.

As quoted by Tony, this Institute is one of the Hong Kong Government's authorized fire-fighting training schools in Hong Kong. Only at this Institute that trainees can learn how to fight against fire caused by natural gas. Because of the high standards, set at

international maritime levels, of the training programmes offered by the Institute, many government departments such as the Customs and Exercise Department, Special Duties Unit of the Hong Kong Police as well as many multinational corporations, often send their staff to attend MSTI's training courses. As reflected from feedbacks, trainees have improved significantly in their working attitude, for examples, with stricter discipline and greater patience when facing adversity.

In this morning, we were very lucky to have the chance watching a group of trainees in fire fighting training. Tony led us to visit the purposely-built steel houses used for fire fighting and rescue training and to explore the mysteries inside.



Apart from visiting the outdoor training facilities, Tony also showed us how to sail a vessel indoor! In fact, there were three Simulator Training Rooms equipped with sophisticated computing systems. In one of the simulator rooms, there was a large 3D curve-shaped screen. We were impressed that the images shown on the screen were

actual views taken in the waters of Hong Kong. So, with this set-up, trainees can learn the basic sailing techniques safely in various weather and water situations. Their performances can also be video-taped so as to allow their trainers to re-play the tapes during debriefing sessions.



Moving a bit further from the simulator room, Tony guided us to a 'mini-museum' which was still under renovation. Actually, it was a Show Room displaying various types of vessel models and some valuable documentaries. Those vessel models can be used for both exhibition and training purposes. This Show Room helps parents of the potential trainees appreciate what their children would learn from the Institute.

Finally, Tony brought us to a Radar Training Room up on the top floor of the building where we could have a panoramic view of the Castle Peak Bay water. The radar systems could detect nearby airborne

objects moving at high speed. Learning the radar systems is one of the mandatory modules offered to the students of High Diploma of Maritime Studies.

After the visit, I was very impressed by the effort Tony put in for delivering the knowledge and training of maritime services by investing and reforming both the hardware and software's of the institute. To save costs of maintenance of the facilities, he and his staff could even do the repair works themselves. As highlighted by Tony, he hoped to bring up persons with 'One Profession with Multiple Talents' (一專多才).

His Institute often co-operated with the Institute of Professional Education And Knowledge (PEAK) of the VTC Group to offer intensive adventure training programmes. The purpose of the MSTI is to train students

who could apply their knowledge and skills in many aspects and in various industries. At the end of the visit, we had a group photo taken at the main entrance of the institute.



(More related pictures of this visit can be found at the Photo Gallery of ITP's website.)

Spring hiking on 22 March 2009



The spring hiking was perhaps one of the larger gatherings of ITP in recent months, with thirty-nine members and guests taking

part. The group first assembled at Ma On Shan MTR Station early in the morning. After Chairman Fred Kwan's welcoming

speech and tour leader Tommy Choy's briefing, the group took taxis to Yung Shue O, the starting point of the walk. In order to better manage the group of this size, Tommy had appointed four assistants on spot, each given a walkie-talkie to facilitate communication throughout the journey.

The first hour of walking was easy. Along the coastline of Kei Ling Ha Hoi, there was a nicely paved footpath. With shallow water coastal features on one side and scattered village housing on the other, this scenic walk was quite relaxing. Members and guests exchanged conversations while enjoying the sea, mountain and village views on the way.

Walking up the rising slope to Se Shek Au was a bit tiring. Team Leader Tommy enlightened the group with a short lecture about the various characteristics of the trail. He invited all to search for a landmark stone that resembled the head of a snake. That explains why that location is called Se Shek, meaning the rock of a snake. Without Tommy's tantalizing indication, no one had found the snakehead stone, a monolithic rock sitting on the ground.

The part of the route from Se Shek Au to Lai Chi Chong was quite challenging. Without guidance, one could feel bewildered as where to move forward as the mountain trail was hidden in heavy bushes. Carefully searching the path and stepping gingerly downhill was quite an experience. With almost half an hour of near silence, the group managed to get through the hidden footpath that ended at

ITP LINK Editor: Sunny Chan

Lai Chi Chong. With great exhaustion, the group took a 20-minute rest at the only restaurant in the village. Icy homemade soya bean drink became everyone's best choice.

Enroute to Pak Sha O, everyone was surprised to find a few well-groomed western style gardens. The old village houses were seemingly well maintained, with air conditioners and modern utilities. Sources said that this village is now taken over by a number of foreigner families!

At around 3 p.m., the walk ended at the final destination, Hoi Ha. Tired and hungry, the group wasted no time to look for food. There were still a number of small local restaurants opened for business at that hour. The group split into small parties to take lunch at various restaurants there.

Though the original plan was to continue the tour to Sai Kung after lunch, yet after more than four hours of tiring walk, all members decided to take mini-buses back to the city to end the day's activity.

Thanks to Tommy for arranging and managing this hiking activity. Participants remarked they had fully enjoyed this one-day outing, with lots of scenic views and some exciting challenges, and requested Tommy to organize more in the future.

Recorded by Sam Ying

Note: More photos are available at the Photo Gallery of ITP website.

培訓專業學會

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