VTC Students’ Summer Internship Experience in China

Presenters

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Presentation Overview

1. Introduction
2. Summer Internship Programme (SIP)
3. Programme Effectiveness
4. Success Factors for SIP
5. What’s NEXT
1. Introduction

Vocational Training Council (VTC)

- 30 years of history
- Established in 1982.
- VTC is the largest vocational education, training and professional development group in Hong Kong.
- Trains 240,000 students each year
- We provide a full range of pre-employment and in-service programmes with internationally recognised qualifications.
1. Introduction

VTC Member Institutions

Main Brand

Member Institution:
- Service Brand
- Higher Education (Degree Programs)
- Tertiary Institution
- College / Training Centre
Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (IVE) offers courses covering an array of disciplines and at levels to higher diploma, nurturing talents valued by industries.

• 9 Campuses in HK Island, Kowloon & New Territories
• Equipped with full-range of professional facilities for different Disciplines
• Target participants of SIP
1. Introduction
Student Development Office (SDO)

• Provide the Structured Whole Person Development (SWPD) Programme and 6 major Student Development Services through Student Development Offices in IVEs
1. Introduction

SDO is the coordinator of Summer Internship Programme (SIP)

• Involved in the design, planning, implementation and the evaluation since 2004
• Responsible for recruitment and selection, pre-trip trainings for SIP participants
• Most of the staff are in social work or counseling background.
• Staff will stay in destination throughout SIP to provide supports
2. Summer Internship Programme (SIP)

What is SIP?

Wofoo Leaders’ Network Summer Internship Programme 2013 (WLNSIP)

Details: Work and life exposure in China, enrich learning experiences and strengthen learning skills

Venue: Guangzhou and Beijing

Duration: Guangzhou – 27 June to 26 July 2013
Beijing – 8 July to 6 August 2013

Eligibility: Full-time students of Higher Diploma or above,
aged 18 or above, proficiency in Chinese reading and writing,
fair command of Putonghua

Fees: Guangzhou – HK$6,730* Beijing – HK$10,485*

Subsidy: Eligible participants can apply for grants from Wofoo Social Enterprises and Pilot Mainland Experience Scheme
of up to 50% of the programme fee!

Enrollment: Please enrol at SDO on or before
25 February 2013

Seats are limited. Act now!

*Extra HK$1,000 for deposit
2. Summer Internship Programme

I. Background

• Rapid economic growth in China in past decades
• Increasing job opportunities since CEPA
• Practical learning opportunities to work/live in China
• Exploration of career path
II. Objectives

1. To apply knowledge learned in an actual working environment
2. To acquire practical skills and/or general workplace experience
3. To appreciate for the right kind of work attitude and professional ethics;
4. To strengthen their generic skills such as problem solving skills, co-operation, interpersonal and communication skills; and
5. To broaden their exposures and horizons to the Mainland and obtain a better understanding on the related career path and development in nowadays China
2. Summer Internship Programme

III. Characteristics of SIP

1. Stress on both work and life experience in Mainland China
2. On-site supervision and regular coaching are provided to participants
3. Comprehensive pre-trip training are delivered to participants for preparation
4. SDOs from IVEs formed working group to work for the SIP
3. Programme Effectiveness

Evaluation method

• Evaluation questionnaires are issued to participants to fill in before and after the programme (pre-post evaluation)

• 10-point scale, self-assessment questionnaire, participants rated their expectation (pre) and actual learning (post) on 12 items of work/social developmental qualities
Comparison of Developmental Skills Level Master by Participants Pre/Post SIP 2012

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<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Level of Skills (Before)</th>
<th>Level of Skills (After)</th>
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<td>1. Economic culture</td>
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Unable to master
3. Programme Effectiveness: Participant Satisfaction

Satisfaction towards SIP (Beijing)

- Highly satisfied: 5%
- Satisfied: 94%
- Fair: 1%

Satisfaction towards SIP (Guangzhou)

- Highly satisfied: 6%
- Satisfied: 82%
- Fair: 12%
3. Programme Effectiveness

Highlights of findings

• Student found SIP most benefit in increasing their adaptability at work (↑2.07)

• The attachment opportunity in Mainland China enriched student’s understanding of China’s local economic culture and industry knowledge

• Student found themselves have more improvement in work skills, rather than other developmental skills (such as communication, team work etc)
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3. Programme Effectiveness: Successful Story

• David and Connie, Higher Diploma in Fashion Design and Product Development in VTC

• Participants in SIP Beijing

• Arranged to work for Ma Defan, a famous director and film costume designer, assisting in costume design, advertising, films and TV production.
3. Programme Effectiveness: Successful Story

• Both of them learned to be conscientious with details of design profession in Mainland China
• Get to know Chinese culture better in person
• “Learnt different embroidery patterns and fabric colors represent different status and eras of wearers”—industry knowledge
• More confident in meeting future challenges
• Being invited to join the company after graduation
4. Success Factors for SIP

I. Adjustment of Cultural Differences

II. Networking

III. Student Management
I. Adjustment of Cultural Difference

Work culture and daily life adjustment
Adjustment of Cultural Difference

- Differences identifies in work culture:
  1. Pace and style of work - more freehand and slower pace
2. Awareness in copy right/ intellectual property - uncommon to be aware of using licensed software

3. Closer relationship between employers and employees relationship because of living in dormitory and sharing similar habits in province
Adjustment of Cultural Difference

Differences in daily life

1. Dinning habits - sometimes greasy and less attention to hygiene
2. Local transportation pattern - more complicated than Hong Kong, highly crowded and long travelling time; traffic jam is common phenomenon
Adjustment of Cultural Difference

3. Use of language
Normally speak in Putonghua, use simplified Chinese characters, as well as particular Chinese input method

4. Medical system/treatment
Different medical consultation process, negative news reports from media affect student’s intention to seek medical advice from doctors in Mainland China
Adjustment of Cultural Difference

Strategy: Adequate training and briefing for SIP participants

• To adjust participants’ expectation
• Comprehensive briefing on the cultural difference between Hong Kong and Mainland
• Invite past SIP participants to share their experience
Adjustment of Cultural Difference

Strategy: Company visits before SIP and job matching

• Develop mutual understanding about the requirement of SIP participants and their capacity to work on different tasks

• Clarify expectations, screen the most suitable companies to co-operate

• Revisit the companies after SIP launched, to review companies’ arrangement, and follow up if needed.
Adjustment of Cultural Difference

Strategy: Arrange Hong Kong staff and domestic student helper to stay with participants

- The domestic student helper is familiar with Beijing/Guangzhou, which help to handle some minor daily living issues
- Regular meetings were held with SIP participants to explore and support their needs
- Grouping arrangement: ‘Buddy System’ are built and they will group in pairs to work
II. Networking

a. Criteria
b. Partnership
c. Company visit
d. Sustainable support
Networking — Criteria

- In SIP, VTC invite service provider to assist on networking with mainland parties.
- Criteria/ for selecting suitable service provider:

1. Past experiences in providing mainland attachment programmes for tertiary institutions.
2. Arrangement of transportation and lodgings
   – Quality of the accommodation

3. Arrangement of attachment positions
   – Diversity
   – Coordinators in Beijing and Guangzhou
   – Sustainable Support
Networking —Criteria

4. Arrangement of learning tours in SIP
   – Representative
   – Eye-opening and enhancing students’ skills
   – Closely related to the livelihoods and heritage

5. Overall coordination before and during the SIP
Networking — Partnership

- VTC and service provider work in “partnership” rather than “contractor”

1. Regular meetings with SIP working group
2. Liaise with potential company, attend the company visits with SDOs
3. Discussion on transportation, lodgings, learning tours, domestic student helper recruitment and selection
4. Attend the central training and kick off ceremony to catch up details of SIP

5. Gain understanding about student background/ major subjects before matching attachments
Networking— Company Visit

➢ To visit companies which are offering attachment positions before the job matching

1. SDOs joined company visits (arranged by service provider) before the program

2. Channel the expectations about the internship, provide SIP background information to the company
Networking—Company Visit

3. Better understand the job nature, working environment of the company
4. Share the academic standard and talents of SIP participants
5. Make an initial job matching list after the company visit
Networking— Sustainable Support

- Provide prompt, sustainable, appropriate support to participants during SIP

1. Domestic coordinator will match up the student with internship and make adjustment if necessary

2. Regular meeting between service provider/ domestic coordinator/ SDO to monitor the student progress
3. To keep track of progress/condition of student in attachment units

4. To manage the unexpected or unanticipated issue during SIP
III. Student management

1. Managing student expectations
2. Discipline issue at out port
3. Handling of emotion and incident issue
4. Managing learning experience
Student Management- Managing Student Expectations

- Most participants have misunderstanding on SIP, as well as their learning/experience in internship in China
- Manage student expectation at the recruitment stage, also throughout the programme
Strategy: Selection of participants

- Participants are required to fill in an application form, contains
  
  1) Personal information
  2) Guardian contacts
  3) Health declaration
  4) Short essay (100-200 words) topic on view of future career
  5) *Choices of workplace/industries*
  
  Enclose: 2 *recommendation letter from academic tutors*, latest academic transcripts, updates CV in simplified Chinese
Student Management- Managing Student Expectations

- Student normally required to attend an interview conducted in campus:
  - Group interview
    - Topics: Working life in Mainland China, Expectation of SIP, Possible difficulties that would encounter if they joined SIP
    - Test language proficiency in communicating in Putonghua
  - May follow up with **Individual interview** to further clarify on individual students’ industry choices, misunderstanding about the trip/internship
Student Management - Managing Student Expectations

- Student are briefed with SIP details, selection process, job matching arrangement during the interview

- Participants are selected based on:
  - Interview performance 40%
  - Recommendation letters 20%
  - Application form 20%
  - Academic performance 20%
Student Management - Managing Student Expectations

- Pre-trip trainings/briefings are most important in managing student expectation to SIP, and participants are required to attend all sessions.

✓ Campus Training Workshop (2 sessions)
  • Focus on team building with participants in same campus, experience sharing from past participants

✓ Central Training (2 Full-day training)
  • Participants from 9 IVE campuses join together, with information seminars, stimulatory track point challenges, logistic and attachment arrangements.

✓ Kick off Ceremony
Student Management- Discipline
Issue during SIP

➢ Strategy: Rules are set up, recorded in student handbook for SIP, also explained in the pre-trip trainings/briefings.

• Example of rules:
  – In case of sick leave, student should notify the company and SDO on-site staff; he/she should hand in medical certificate as evidence
  – Student should go back to hostel before 11pm (Sun-Thu), or 12am (Fri and Sat), he/she is not allowed to stay overnight out of hostel (unless special permission)
Student Management - Discipline Issue during SIP

- On-site SDO is responsible to handle discipline issue, SDO may issue “Warning Letter” if participants violate the rules after warnings
- Serious violation of rules can lead to immediate termination of SIP
- Weekly meetings are conducted with group leaders, domestic student helper to remind participants on discipline issue; group leaders were also responsible to report to SDO if they found any misbehavior
Student Management - Discipline Issue during SIP

Outstanding Student Award

SIP participants with good performance in SIP including internship, conduct, interpersonal communication, assignments, and with no warning record can be nominated.
Student Management- Handling Emotions and Ad hoc Issue

Strategy: Arrangement of stationing staff

- SIP stationing staff are trained professionals in SDO, they are experienced in handling student emotion/ad hoc issue

- Use of email/skype/mobile to keep update with HK SDOs, HK SDOs may help to notify student’s guardian in case any emergency issues

- Domestic helper would help to provide local information/guidelines to handle any incident, e.g. seeing doctor, reporting to police
Student Management- Handling Emotions and Ad hoc issue

• Use of daily log for stationing staff to record any student incident (including sick leave) and update campus staff in Hong Kong
• Campus staff in Hong Kong may also provide feedback on handling the incident
Strategy: Learning activities/ reflection exercise

- Comprehensive activities arranged for participants:
  - Welcome Dinner (1\textsuperscript{st} day)
  - Debriefing meeting after work (at 1\textsuperscript{st} or 2\textsuperscript{nd} week)
  - 2 sightseeing tours (1\textsuperscript{st} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} weekend)
  - Closing Dinner (before end of SIP)
  - Closing and Sharing Ceremony (After SIP completed and arranged in Hong Kong)
Student Management- Managing Learning Experience

• Assignments and reports are designed to stimulate student to reflect their learning experience systemically:
  1) Learning contract and Goal setting (Before departure)
  2) Company report (After 1st week of SIP)
  3) Reflection exercise (Mid term of SIP)
  4) Weekly Working Hours Record
  5) Placement Review report (not less than 1500 words) (Last day of SIP)
5. What’s NEXT

• Build up our own company network in China
• Expend SIP destination to other major cities in China, e.g. Shanghai, Tsingtao
• Explore more financial resources to subsidize students to join SIP (since the price of RMB currency is raising, the SIP cost also raising)
Thank You

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