TAN HUI LING

LINKEDIN



INTERVIEW DONE BY ISABELL CHEW PEI LING

Presently, Hui Ling is contributing to Nestle as a supply chain management trainee. She has a double major in Business and Social Work, and brings a set of diverse perspectives to a wide array of industries, including Healthcare, FMCG, Government, and Education. Her unwavering commitment to practical experience and skill development shines through her impressive journey, featuring nine internships that have finely tuned her project management, leadership, and communication abilities.

WHAT IS THE JOB SCOPE OF A PERSON WORKING IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN INDUSTRY?

In my role in the supply chain industry, I had a variety of responsibilities during my management trainee program at an FMCG brand. In my first rotation, which lasted for 3.5 months, I was responsible for handling exports of goods and managing shipping documents and presentations for intermarket supply. In my second rotation, I worked in logistics, where I coordinated with the warehouse to ensure deliveries were made to respective outlets and managed inbound shipments from the factory.

HOW DID YOU SECURE YOUR FIRST INTERNSHIP?

When it comes to securing internships, I found my first internship in a startup by actively networking and reaching out to potential employers. In the startup environment, I had the opportunity to take on various roles such as business development, marketing, and writing blog articles. This experience gave me exposure

GIVEN THE RISE IN AUTOMATION, WHAT ARE SOME POSSIBLE CHALLENGES YOU THINK FUTURE SUPPLY CHAIN PROFESSIONALS WILL FACE IN THE NEXT 5-10 YEARS?

Looking ahead in the supply chain industry, one major challenge for future professionals is the increasing automation. Automated systems like ASRS (Automated Storage and Retrieval Systems) in warehouses can streamline processes but may reduce the need for manual labor, potentially leading to job phasing out in certain areas.

TECHNOLOGIES LIKE IOT, AR, AND CLOUD TECHNOLOGIES HAVE ADDED TO THE COMPLEXITY OF THE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT. WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE HARD SKILLS THAT UNDERGRADUATES MIGHT NEED TO HAVE?

To prepare for a career in supply chain management, undergraduates should cultivate a willingness to learn, an inquisitive mindset, resilience, and analytical skills. Additionally, gaining

proficiency in tools like Tableau, Power BI, and Excel can be beneficial, as practical applications of supply chain concepts may differ from what is taught in school.

HOW DO YOU THINK WE CAN PREPARE OURSELVES TO SECURE A JOB IN THIS INDUSTRY?

I would recommend staying updated with industry trends and leaders, considering roles like demand and supply planner, attending relevant courses to acquire skills, seeking mentorship from experienced professionals, and honing interview skills and confidence.

WITH COVID-19 DISRUPTING THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN AND SINGAPORE BEING PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO DISRUPTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS, HOW WILL THIS AFFECT A CAREER IN THIS FIELD?

The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted global supply chains, and Singapore, due to its vulnerability to international network disruptions, faced challenges. However, the supply chain industry is gradually adapting to the new normal, and despite ongoing challenges, it remains resilient.

WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU WISH YOU KNEW WHEN YOU WERE AN UNDERGRADUATE?

Reflecting on my undergraduate experience, I wish I had known the importance of following my passion and interests. Pursuing a second major in social work allowed me to bring a multidisciplinary perspective to my studies and develop valuable social skills like empathy. I advise undergraduates to explore their interests early, actively seek internships and networking opportunities, and focus on building a portfolio while enjoying their university years. Staying updated with industry trends and continuously building relevant skills will set them up for success in the supply chain industry, even in the face of challenges like those brought by the Covid-19 pandemic.