

Seasoned SP intern is an avid SP ambassador

On first meeting Jay Kwek, one would not guess that he is a newcomer, given his familiarity with the business and work practices. The engineering undergraduate at the National University of Singapore has been through four internships with SP, spending a total of 18 months with the company. He has now embarked on his full-time career at SP since August 2020. We speak with the 25-year-old to find out why SP was always his first choice in gaining engineering experience.



Congrats on securing SP’s Nithiah Nandan scholarship in 2014! What are your obligations as an SP scholar?

Thanks for your well-wishes! The scholarship comes with a 3-year bond, but I didn’t have to do any internships before the bond kicked in. I chose to intern on my own accord. I believe in building my career at a young age and knowing that I’ll eventually be embarking on my career at SP, I decided on getting a headstart as an intern. I told myself that if I can learn as much as possible during my internships, I can accelerate my learning curve and value-add to the organisation when I eventually start work.

Wouldn’t you be missing out on all the fun?

A little, but the sacrifice is worth it. As an intern, I had to juggle both work and studies. My friends, and even my superior thought I was “crazy” but things eventually worked out. Having work commitments helped me set my priorities. For example, I used to party a lot, but not anymore. Some things must give and if anything, I was happy to save money by cutting down on late nights!

Did you work in the same department for all 4 internships?

SP offered me several job rotations. My first stint was with Electricity Operations' Distribution Network East. I went on-site with engineers and learnt how to handle switchgears and maintain electricity cables. It was really an eye-opening experience, witnessing how massive our network infrastructure is! Our underground networks alone span 11,500km and over 28,000km respectively. Being on the ground has helped me to visualise what I was learning in school then and the exposure even helped me attain an A grade for my power module!

I learnt about cable diversion works during my second internship. In my last two internships, I was less of an "engineer" and more of a "researcher" as I had the opportunity to work on renewable energy projects such as the Centralised Cooling System at Tengah. Working on Singapore's first smart eco-town is almost coming full circle for me since I specialised in clean energy engineering for my diploma. SP is contributing towards a low-carbon future and I'm proud to be part of this transformation.

Sounds like you had a lot of hands-on work for your first internship.

When I was an intern, I observed the senior engineers at work as proper qualifications are required for switching assignments. Safety is taken very seriously here at SP so I fully appreciate the need for these measures. SP believes in stretching the potential of all staff, interns included. We were also empowered to take ownership of our projects and innovate.

Which part of your internship was most rewarding to you?

I have gained a lot from the personal guidance from my supervisors and colleagues and the relationships I forged. They advised me on my final-year project and even passed me their school notes. I believe this has prepared me for my current working life and the responsibilities of a full-time salaryman!

I'm thankful to have had a fun and supportive boss who also has a life outside of work. Fun fact – he knew I was previously a certified personal trainer and asked if I wanted to train him in the gym (psst, we have our own gym on level 8)! So, the tables turned and guess who was the "boss" in the gym?

Would you encourage your juniors to considering multiple internships like you?

Certainly! With diverse job experiences and network, you can really grow and value-add even as an intern. Multiple internships allowed me to have good overview of various job functions ahead of joining the company full-time. The exposure and experiences gathered from different parts of SP's businesses laid a strong foundation for my career at SP.