Praises from boss of international trading firm

Interchem COO praises SMU’s unique programme

The chief operating officer of chemicals trader Interchem, Roberto Dahlgren, is full of praise about the setting up of the SMU’s International Trading Track.

He believes that no other university anywhere offers such a curriculum, and he thinks it’s great that SMU and IE Singapore have stepped in to fill an obvious gap in the system.

Unlike banking or law, the profession of trading is not one that is immediately obvious to most people. “No young man or woman wakes up one morning to say to themselves in a mirror: when I grow up I want to be a trader!” Mr Dahlgren quips.

“Being a trader is not a discipline as such,” he says, describing it instead as “a gathering of tools, qualities, knowledge and backgrounds added to experience gathered in the field”.

SMU and IE Singapore with the help of industry sponsors have been able to create a curriculum that lets students acquire a set of tools and knowledge that should be at the heart of every person who aspires to be a trader, he says.

Seminars by trading industry leaders give students the opportunity to learn about the world of trading through the experience of seasoned professionals in the field.

Internships meanwhile give practical insights into the industry, while offering the possibility of securing a job with the company.

Mr Dahlgren sees the whole process as one of walking undergraduates through the maze of learning, apprenticeship and possible employment in a structured and yet practical way.

This will also allow them to identify the personal traits or qualities they need to further hone in preparation for a career in trading, he says.

“I like to think of this curriculum process in the same manner as when you think of young residents in a hospital emergency room: that is where you shape the character, experience, skills and dedication of your future doctors,” he suggests.