A real-life experience

The SMU’s EMBA programme is designed for Asian business leaders

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SINGAPORE Management University’s Executive MBA programme is specially designed for bright Asian leaders meticulously selected for their top, keeping in view the challenges of doing business in the fastest growing region in the world.

The 16-month programme, which is taught by a highly experienced international faculty, has generated real-life experiences for students between global destinations—China, India, the United States and Singapore.

The SMU EMBA programme is spread over nine weeks of intensive teaching; it was launched in 2011 and the term for the third cohort will begin in May 2013.

Besides spending six weeks at the Lee Kong Chian School of Business in SMU’s city campus, the students spend a week each at the Indian School of Business in Hyderabad, India; Ningbo University School of Business in China; and Singapore Management University in Singapore. EMBA members are mentored by SMU’s faculty.

"Students get the unique opportunity and experience of demonstrating themselves in the business, political, social and legal issues of four leading economies and the business culture of each country," says Professor Howard Thomas deWaal, chair of the Lee Kong Chian School of Business at SMU.

"The EMBA programme is a true reflection of the business school’s strong teaching and research," says EMBA’s general management programme director, Ms. Alia Abu Bakar. "The programme is designed so that students emerge with the capability to take on leadership roles in their organizations and to inspire their teams to grow and contribute significantly to their career, he adds. While there are many EMBA programmes available in the market, the SMU EMBA programme is unique in its approach to the way the students are groomed and mentored as business leaders across Asia, including those from China, India, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam. The SMU EMBA’s innovative curriculum focuses on leadership and vision, business acumen and capabilities, and the skills necessary for managing in agile, sustainable performance and resource development, all of which are highly relevant for doing business across Asia today. Besides industry visits in all four countries where the EMBA programme is taught, students get to hear from and network with up and coming leaders from Asia, who share on strategy, corporate culture and industry insights and gain first-hand insights into regional issues and trends and their impact on markets and society." Dr. Aidan Koppel, Nanyang Technological University, was invited to the SMU EMBA by the flexibility and unique structure of the programme. "I am also drawn to the programme’s unique value offering of an Asian-centric re-educa- tion programme with a global perspective of leadership," he adds. Aidan Koppel is President of the Singapore National Commission on UNESCO. "The focus on leadership and vision in an agile, sustainable performance and resource development, and the skills necessary for managing such a complex environment are all very relevant and essential to the management of today’s businesses, he said.

Besides the programme’s focus on leadership and vision, the programme also focuses on learning from innovators and trailblazers, many of whom are leaders in their respective fields, have successfully enriched the experience and allowed me to further grow as leader and manager from different perspectives," he adds.

"The programme gives me the broader background on the current issues facing global businesses and provides a platform for my views on various policies to be heard and recommended before being implemented into practice," he said.

"This is the first time I have participated in an EMBA programme networking, interesting and unique, especially in today’s culture. The seminars are interactive and not purely theoretical; both lectures and course participants drew from their own experiences to enrich the learning experience," he added.

His course mates were very experienced industry leaders holding key appointments in their companies and had a very diverse area of expertise. The key strength of the SMU EMBA, in Ms. Abu Bakar’s view is that it is well-designed. "It includes relevant and current topics delivered by experts and practitioners from across the Asia-Pacific region, and gives us the opportunity to work and interact with leaders from across the world," she said.

"The programme creates a diverse global perspective of management even as it retains a strongly Asian focus. With a faculty made up of experienced and renowned lecturers and multinational course mates, the programme is an excellent package for leaders in Asia who wish to be relevant to today’s market, especially the situation in Asia," says Ms. Abu Bakar.

"Through my participation in the programme, I have a better understanding of the challenges facing various industries, especially those in the Far East. I was also able to draw on the different strategies and business models from different countries, and to develop my own strategic formulation and decision-making."