



CATS

## RECRUIT

BUY IT • SELL IT • FIND IT

Executive Appointments: toll free 1800-289-8822 • Classified Jobs: 1800-289-9988 • www.st701.com



Work it!

## Off to a good start

Excel Marco Industrial Systems gives its employees a career boost with an internal promotion scheme that provides ample career advancement opportunities

## • PAGE R2

**Ideas for life:** Panasonic has vacancies for engineering diploma and degree holders in design & development, quality assurance, engineering/manufacturing, research & development and information technology departments.

## • PAGE R4

**New heights:** Join Chartered Semiconductor Manufacturing, which needs people in various departments, such as fab operations, technology, design services and customer engineering.

## • PAGE R9

**Do your research:** Young, dynamic and talented individuals are invited to join Mediatek Singapore. Positions are available for senior/RF IC design engineers, layout engineers, senior/physical design engineers, among others.

• **60 pages in two parts**

• **More career opportunities in engineering from pages R1 to R9.**



PHOTO: JAMIE KOH

Mr Ong (right) says a positive attitude can take an employee very far, and Mr Xia has impressed his employers with his dedicated approach to the job.

By MARY LIM

WHEN Mr Xia Bofeng began his Student Internship Programme at Excel Marco Industrial Systems in 2003, landing a permanent job with the company was furthest from his mind.

Incorporated in Singapore in 2000, Excel Marco provides a wide range of safety and critical control solutions to clients in the oil and gas and petrochemical process automation industries.

Its engineering services range from programming and logic translation to full systems integration for its major engineering integration facilities in China, the Middle East and Brazil.

The company was impressed by Mr Xia, then a third-year student in the Temasek Polytechnic's Diploma of Mechatronics course. It subsequently offered him an assistant engineer's position, which he accepted. In January, three years after joining Excel Marco, Mr Xia was promoted to engineer.

"I chose to study mechatronics because I was interested in automation. However, my stint with Excel Marco allowed me to not only pick up a lot of useful technical knowledge, but also understand the entire engineering workflow.

"When I became an official employee with the company, I was given many opportunities to be involved with and see through various projects. It helped expand my abilities," says the 26-year-old, who was born in Shandong, China.

Mr Xia is among 15 Temasek Polytechnic graduates who were eventually hired by Excel Marco after their Internship Programmes. The school sends six students to the company for internship every year.

Says Mr David Ong, managing director of Excel Marco: "Having the students here for their internships gives us a chance to assess their performance and decide if we should hire them eventually. Moreover, as the company expands, I feel it is important to establish a culture, and injecting new blood will make that easier."

### Careers in Engineering



Meanwhile, with engineers comprising 70 per cent of Excel Marco's 45-member staff, Mr Ong clearly understands the importance of opening up opportunities for career advancement within the company. He found the answer in internal promotion.

"As an organisation grows, it requires more staff to fill up different roles in the structure. To provide employees with more opportunities for career advancement, the management's first priority is to pick the candidate from within the existing pool of staff.

"Only when we cannot find the right one do we hire someone from outside the company," he says.

While the practice is designed to motivate the staff, it has been tricky trying to manage their expectations too.

He adds: "Internal promotion places merit and performance above everything else. It is not determined by length of service.

"Sometimes, I encounter employees who felt they should be promoted because their 'time is due', especially when others who joined the company at the same time had already risen up the ranks. So I encourage them to put in more effort and wait for the next round."

For Mr Ong, the right candidate has to have a positive attitude. Mr Xia impressed the management with not only his conscientious approach to his regular duties but also his willingness to take on ad-hoc assignments, such as conducting training workshops.

Says Mr Ong: "Our attitudes influence our actions. When you have a positive attitude, you will believe that there is always a solution to a situation and therefore will not shy away from additional responsibilities."

This is a quality that Mr Xia believes will come in handy, should he realise his dream of becoming an entrepreneur — just like Mr Ong.

"I've been given so many opportunities to learn so many different things. Besides specific job-related knowledge, I also picked up leadership and management skills. So, yes, Excel Marco is indeed a good start for me," he says.