

*After working as a summer intern in a company, you realized the importance of soft skills and you want the school to do more to equip students with these skills. Write an email to the head of the Career and Life Planning Committee of your school, sharing your reflection and suggesting what the school can do to raise the students' awareness of the importance of soft skills.*

Title: Suggestions regarding highlighting importance of soft skills to students

Dear Mr. Smith,

I would like to express my gratitude for nominating me to join the internship programme last summer. I have gained lots of valuable experiences, having a taste of working in society. The exposure lets me realize the vital importance of soft skills. I am writing to suggest ways to raise students' awareness of soft skills in the workplace. In the following, I would like to share my experience of the internship and highlight the importance of using soft skills in a company.

The advantages brought about by being a summer intern is far beyond my imagination. Not until I gave it a try did I realize the necessity of being a trainee. I was more than glad and honoured, receiving the invitation of working in a business and finance company as a summer intern. Working as a trainee, I have fostered my financial knowledge in depth, putting quantitative and qualitative skills into real life practice, adopting the thinking out of the box mind set, which is one of crucial skills in workplace with critical and logical thinking skills I learnt during my internship. I could respond to the customers' enquiries in no time at all, satisfying my clients' needs. I believe our students are lacking the opportunities to put these skills into practice, and that's why it is believed that summer internship is precious chance for students.

Equally crucial is interpersonal and communication skills in workplace communication. Before my training at my company, seldom did I have eye contact with people. I used to pay little attention to my tone and choice of language in daily conversations. The experience offered me a chance to step out of my comfort zone, allowing me to learn how to get along with my colleagues and interact more with people. I am more willing to offer a helping hand to others, not asking for a return of favour. I

am now being more considerate and care about others' feelings. I know how to speak in a more gentle and humble tone, at the same time putting myself into others' shoes. Another point to note is that communication between departments and committees should be highly valued. Representing my team, I learnt to express my opinions and worries in a more sincere attitude, which undoubtedly facilitates more efficient effective collaboration between departments. It is therefore beyond doubt that my schoolmates should be equipped with more soft skills, especially in interpersonal and communication aspects, to prepare them for a promising career path in workplace.

Not only did my experience equip me with the aforementioned skills and mindsets, it helped me adapt to the office working environment, which we, students, seldom get a chance to have a taste of. I have strengthened much of my organization skill after trying to multitask, catch up the tight schedule and avoid lagging behind the others. In the workplace, it is necessary to boost our working efficiency and not to hinder the work of other colleagues. We also need to learn to face stress in hectic working days to increase our competitiveness. I am sure my experience can enlighten my peers to take the initiative to join a summer internship programme to expand their horizons and get themselves prepared for their future career.

It is understandable that some of students may hesitate about joining the summer internship programme, not seeing the importance of acquiring soft skills. It is believed that the school could play an important role to encourage students to take part.

In order to raise students' awareness of the necessity of soft skills, it is suggested that the school could organize regular career talks or workshops in the assembly periods, so that all senior form students could seize the golden chance to learn about the importance of being a summer intern, gaining the exposure to the real workplace.

Another suggestion is that the school could increase quota of summer internship, by cooperating with companies via more frequent cooperation. It is not uncommon to see students being interested in particular industries eventually ended up having no offers due to limited spaces of internship. It is recommended that the school could increase the varieties of workplace industries, ranging from new

applied technologies to art and humanities, from those in the business sector to tourism, suiting the needs our students, so that they get the chance to be an intern.

It is sincerely hoped that my suggestion would be taken into serious account and implemented, so that students would equip themselves with vital soft skills in workplace, preparing them a more fruitful and promising career path in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Wong