

TRANSLATING IDEAS INTO CONCRETE BUSINESS PLANS

Delta Technology Pte Ltd's General Manager Chua Yong Hin leveraged his learnings from the SMU Enterprise Leadership for Transformation programme to refine his company's expansion plans.



Engineers by training, second-generation business owners Chua Yong Hin and his brother, Aik Hin were keen to enhance their knowledge of business in key areas such as finance, human resource management and digital transformation.

Their family business, Delta Technology Pte Ltd, designs, manufactures and installs a range of roller shutters, fire shutters and flood protection systems that are used in residential, commercial and industrial buildings. The company manufactures its products at its fully-owned factories in Singapore and Batam, Indonesia, as well as several partner factories in China, Taiwan and Japan. Singapore accounts for 98% of the firm's revenue, with the rest of Asia making up the remaining 2%.



Chua Yong Hin (centre), with his brother, Chua Aik Hin, and their colleague, Xu Shao Hua, attending a European Standard (EN BS 1634) fire certification laboratory test for Delta Technology Pte Ltd's insulated fire shutter, which the company developed in-house in Singapore

Introduced to the SMU Enterprise Leadership for Transformation (ELT) initiative by their relationship manager at United Overseas Bank (UOB), Yong Hin was convinced that the one-year programme would meet his learning needs. A subsidy provided by SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG) that covered part of the course fees was another pull factor.



“I am a trained engineer, and so is my brother,” said Yong Hin, who is Delta’s General Manager. “After attending the ELT module on finance, I picked up practical business tools to analyse numbers and understand our performance better. So instead of enrolling in a programme and studying a lot of theory I will not use, I was able to apply the useful learnings from the ELT very quickly to my business.”

An effective learning platform

The SMU ELT aims to help business leaders like Yong Hin strengthen their leadership skills and build critical business fundamentals and networks. It targets aspiring small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are at an early stage of their transformation journey and looking to move on to the next stage of growth.

The programme is conducted through a combination of six in-class modules taught by highly experienced industry practitioners, coaching for the Business Growth Plans (BGPs) by senior industry leaders, as well as networking and lifelong learning opportunities. Furthermore, the course content is enhanced with valuable input from SMEs surveyed by the UOB-SMU Asian Enterprise Institute, which runs the programme jointly with the SMU Academy. The curriculum also has a strong focus on ASEAN and offers case studies featuring SMEs in the region that are likely to be of interest to many SME leaders. SMU is proud to work with UOB to tailor the ELT programme for the industry and with the support of SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), which subsidises eligible enterprises for up to 90% funding of the course fees.

Few other decisions in life weigh as heavily as deciding on the right university to attend. Like choosing an office, it is all about “location, location, location” when it comes to selecting a programme too. Participants of the SMU ELT programme enjoy the convenience of attending classes at a city campus located in the central business district — an ideal venue for networking events, workshops and seminars.

Reinforcing business plans

Over the course of the ELT, participants get to actively work on a BGP that they can apply to their companies. For Delta, the programme helped refine its already-established ambitions to penetrate the Vietnamese market and automate its manufacturing processes.

“My brother and I already had a clear idea of how we wanted to expand, even before we attended the ELT,” said Yong Hin. “But the coaching and feedback given during our presentation helped to refine our BGP. We were made to quantify our plans in terms of ease of entry, market size and potential growth. Furthermore, the numbers reinforced our idea that entering Hong Kong and Vietnam was correct.”

Yong Hin also learnt about important business tools and fundamentals during the programme, which he described as “simple, realistic and straight to the point”. He



explained, “As we are steering actual operating companies, learning too many theories does not immediately benefit us. Rather, quick hands-on skills, general rule-of-thumb principles, and easy-to-use checks and references are what we truly require in our daily operations and long-term strategy formulation.”

Even before graduating from the ELT programme in 2022, Yong Hin was able to apply his newfound knowledge to improve some of his company’s processes. For instance, he revamped Delta’s management reporting to present a more accurate picture of how the firm was performing, which, in turn, would help the management team make more informed decisions. After attending the human resources module, he was also able to formulate a comprehensive employee policy that he believes will help attract talent in a tight labour market.

“In the past, a company’s human resource policy was fully dictated by the boss. After taking the module, however, we were able to come up with a clear employee policy. The feedback from the human capital expert was that we had a big jump in our human resource policies and how we managed our workforce,” he said.

Strengthening networks for the good of all

Beyond acquiring new knowledge and skills, Yong Hin believes that another key benefit of attending the ELT programme were the tremendous opportunities for networking. These allowed him to interact with a group of like-minded, next-generation business owners and learn from one another’s mistakes and successes.

“There were many friendships forged between the classmates. Although we come from different backgrounds and industries, we were able to share many insights and experiences on company management, market access and growth strategies. In one instance, several of us shared our companies’ respective human resource policies with one another to further strengthen our own policies,” revealed Yong Hin.

These friendships were cemented during the programme’s overseas immersion trip to Vietnam. The tour was a key highlight as Yong Hin and his classmates bonded over the week-long visit, learning about the market and networking with local companies. He said, “The trip reinforced my view that Vietnam was the right market to enter. I was able to meet many potential partners, including the second-generation owner of one of Vietnam’s largest main contractors. We hit it off, and I think we will be able to have more business relations in the future. Our classmates also spent every day together, so we became much closer as a result.”

Personal coaching as a strong benefit

Another key highlight of the ELT is the personal coaching that participants receive from industry veterans of their choosing. For his coach, Yong Hin had selected Mr Glenn Tan, an



executive with extensive multinational corporation experience in factory management. Yong Hin says, “I chose him because it is not easy to find someone who works in manufacturing and engineering, and has management responsibilities. He guided us on how to translate our ideas into concrete numbers.”

Yong Hin advises future participants of the ELT programme to enrol with an open mind and learn from the instructors and course-mates. As he explains, “Some of your classmates may be financial or management experts or have ideas that are just outright creative, so you will learn something from those around you. And if you are an expert in a particular area, you should also share your knowledge. In this way, everyone can cross-learn from one another and come out of the programme better informed.”

To know more about the SMU ELT programme, please visit our [website](#) or attend the next Information Session by indicating your interest [here](#).