



A Better Match: Inter Great Employment Pte Ltd

Inter Great Employment Pte Ltd, incorporated in Singapore in 2013, is an accredited employment agency providing a one-stop service for recruitment, manpower and foreign domestic worker (FDW) needs. Having differentiated itself through industry awards – it scored a coveted place in the Best of the Best Awards 2017 (Baby & Kids Products/Services category) in Singapore by *Parents World* magazine, a lifestyle and parenting portal, and also received the Singapore 500

Enterprise Award 2018 – the agency had also reported stellar growth over the last three years, with placement volumes increasing about 60% in 2018, and 90% in 2019.

Today, Inter Great ranks among the top 10 agencies for FDW placements, operating out of three offices, namely, in Jubilee Square in Ang Mo Kio, Katong Shopping Centre in Katong, and Kovan the Heartland Mall in Upper Serangoon



Modern, bright shop interior for pleasant customer experience.

As Inter Great continually strives to live up to its principles to put its clients first and perseveres to “solve even the toughest manpower challenges” while serving “professionally, sincerely and honestly” – as laid out in its website – it is looking to raise its standing to a top three placing among FDW employment agencies in Singapore. With this goal in mind, the agency approached the UOB-SMU Asian Enterprise Institute (UOB-SMU AEI).



Inter Great Team, who always serve 'professionally, sincerely and honestly'.

A team of four student-consultants, supervised by an industry veteran as Project Advisor and a manager from the Institute, undertook the marketing research and strategies project under the UOB-SMU AEI's flagship SME Consulting Programme (SCP).

Consistency, sincerity and reliability

The student-consultants sought to understand the FDW sector in Singapore, and evaluated Inter Great's value propositions and shortfalls in relation to the industry and its competitors. Through primary research spanning online surveys, in-depth interviews and mystery shopper, and secondary research involving publicly available information, the consulting team cross-checked, reaffirmed and validated the data to ensure that the information they were working with was as robust as possible.

From the responses in the primary research, the student-consultants learnt that for the employer-FDW relationship to work, a right fit is crucial, especially a mutual understanding and acceptance of expectations. After all, the employer and family will have a stranger living under the same roof almost 24/7, and for the FDW, she will be facing a family she has probably never seen before and, if she is new to Singapore, an unfamiliar environment.



Training is one of the key focus areas to ensure the FDWs are competent, well-mannered and mentally prepared to adapt to respective employer's family.

From their analysis, the student-consultants determined that a good fit starts with finding the right agency and within it, a responsible and responsive FWD agent who delivers top-notch service. The team also ascertained that the majority of respondents placed a premium on two aspects of the hiring process – the quality of service and the range of FDW offerings provided by the agency.

The hiring process appeared to be a very agent-centric one. Although Inter Great had scored well for its service delivery compared to its close competitors, the consulting team advised more training for its agents so that they can further delight the customers. In

addition to providing a positive customer experience, happy customers were more likely to recommend the agency to their relatives and friends.

Millennials and Gen Z will soon be coming of age to start their own families, and businesses should get ready for this new demography. As digital natives, it is natural for the younger demography to turn to the online space for information, ratings and reviews in their purchase journey. If Inter Great wants to be a top three FDW agency, a strong online presence is essential.

A happy union

Using the insights gleaned, the student-consultants crafted a series of feasible recommendations for the agency. These were structured according to the seven customer touchpoints that were identified as being the most relevant to advance Inter Great's objectives. Keeping in mind that the agency would be busy with its day-to-day operations, the proposed activities were grouped into four phases based on their ease of implementation and level of disruption to the agency's business.

As customers have voiced a preference for personalised experiences, Phase 1 focused on improving the early stages of the customer journey. For example, the agency could devise a checklist for customers to guide them in their information-gathering process, and also offer a dedicated channel for customers to reach out to the agency if they have queries. To facilitate customers' search for a suitable FDW, the agency's online platforms, such as its website, should be made as user-friendly as possible: dynamic filters could be present to assist in shortlisting potential candidates; a virtual chat bot could "interact" with customers when they visit the website; and the system could steer customers towards completing the hiring process by gently prompting them forward at strategic intervals. Such "interactions" would also give the impression of proactiveness on the agency's part.



Inter Great Girls (IGGs) from Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines – at Inter Great, the FDWs are treated with respect and dignity, and their well-being is taken good care of.

While not quite a match made in heaven – which better describes weddings – a good match between employer and FDW is still a happy union, with positive spinoffs. For one, with the active follow-up by an agent, a successful match can increase the agency's scores on the MOM checklist and push the agency up its rankings; a happy employer would likely endorse the agency's services, thus increasing its business. Phase 1 not only centred on smoothing the customer journey, the student-consultants had recommended ways for Inter Great to screen the FDWs more thoroughly in order to make better employer-FDW matches.

The recommendations for Phases 2 to 4 were similarly detailed and practical, and directed at boosting the agency's market presence and customer ratings.

Elevating the value chain

The main objective of this project was to "uncover gaps and opportunities for our company to improve our service and hence, market position", said Chew Soon Chiah, General Manager at Inter Great. To this end, the student-consultants had provided "useful and realistic recommendations validated by primary and secondary research data", he affirmed.

Mr Chew found the research data "insightful and useful" and pronounced the analysis "thorough and comprehensive". The agency had wanted to "continue to lift the happiness and satisfaction level of the

whole value chain” and the project outcomes “offered a form of validation for our business plans”. He also appreciated the implementation roadmap as he could see at one glance what to do for the immediate as well as mid-to-longer terms.

The student-consultants were grateful for the opportunity to consult for a real-life company, where they could leverage their research abilities to provide workable solutions. Although Covid-19 posed some challenges – for instance, information gathering was disrupted due to workplace closures, and sample sizes were smaller than they would have liked – the situation pushed them to be “more innovative”. Their key takeaway was that the “direct interactions” with the client, customers and other parties involved “allowed us to see the value in our work”.

Project Advisor Paul Teo commended his charges for having done an “excellent job” despite the circuit-breaker restrictions. They used scientific methodologies to garner and analyse the data, and used it to design a set of practicable recommendations. The report gave the agency a “structured action plan with priorities to work on”; it can also be used as a “resource” for Inter Great in “developing its business plan, moving forward”.



The SCP Project Team (from left): Chew (General Manager at Inter Great), Paul (Project Advisor), Wendy, Megan, Clarence, Arun (Student Consultants).



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