



**Report for InspireMe Talk:
From an Engineer to IT Profession, Career Progression from the
Most Basic to the Corporate World**

by Ir. Dr Lee Choo Yong and Dr Yeap Gik Hong



Ir. Dr Lee Choo Yong is currently the Deputy Chairman in Electronic Engineering Technical Division (eETD).

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On 06 December 2018, The Electronic Engineering Technical Division (eETD) has successfully organized an InspireMe Talk entitled "From an Engineer to IT Profession, Career Progression from the Most Basic to the Corporate World" by Mr. Lee See Nee (SN Lee) at KDU Penang University College. SN Lee is the Vice President of Asia Region IT and Global Application Support, Flextronics Technology. The talk was attended by 30 participants consisting of IEM members, academic staff and BEng (Hons) Electrical and Electronic Engineering students of KDU Penang. The talk was moderated by Ir. Dr. Lee Choo yong, Deputy Chairman of eETD.

SN Lee shared his passion in electrical and electronic engineering, how he built apparatus by using 7-segment display during high school years with the knowledge of Boolean Algebra. He also shared his experiences in pursuing Bachelor of Science with double major in Computer Science and Pure Mathematics as well as Bachelor of Engineering in Electrical Engineering with honours, both from University of Sydney, Australia. He has touched about how he overcame the struggles that he had during his study time with the limited equipment to do his assignments where the students only had half an hour a day to use the computer to do their assignment. He further commented that the students nowadays are very lucky with personal computer to do their assignments. SN Lee talked about his passion to become an engineer although he enrolled into computer science programme.

SN Lee started his career as Test Engineer with AT&T in Singapore upon returning from Australia in 1980's. He said he was lucky to get the job because there were many applicants but only one job. He has done single side band modulation involving analogue and digital designs during his final year project and AT&T was looking for someone with the knowledge in both analogue and digital to run the ISDN tester. Throughout his career, he deems that programing and engineering skills are equally important for electronic engineers, complimenting each other. The reason is because computer science and engineering are so intertwined that they cannot be separated and hence most of the universities park the School of Computer Science under the Faculty of Engineering. SN Lee then took up responsibility in a new emerging field in 1990's, information technology, which combines programing and engineering that improves efficiency of electronic manufacturing tremendously. SN Lee also shared about the important elements of smart manufacturing such as database, expert system, automation, internet of thing, AI etc. for the Industry 4.0 era.

SN Lee then talked about the opportunities and challenges for career in manufacturing. There are good opportunities for engineers in manufacturing, particularly in Penang, not limited to electronic engineers, but also mechanical engineers, material engineers and so on. The challenges that engineers in manufacturing need to deal with are as follow:

- Lower cost and increase efficiency
- Shorter time to market and product life cycle
- Total flexibility
- Quality expectations are higher
- Customer focused
- Continuous quality improvement

Towards the end of the talk, SN Lee shared about the industry expectations on the millennials and the salary scale that graduate engineers can expect when starting their career. Finally, SN Lee encouraged the audience to ask questions and advised young engineers to be innovative, agile, anticipating, and “street smart” before concluding his talk. Ir. Khoo Koon Tai, Vice Chairman of IEM Penang Branch and Dr. Yeap Gik Hong, Committee Member of eETD also the Head of School of Engineering, Computing and Built Environment at KDU Penang presented the certificate of appreciation and plaque respectively to SN Lee.



InspireMe Talk by Mr. Lee See Nee at i-Connect Smart Classroom, KDU Penang



Presentation of certificate of appreciation and plaque by Ir. Khoo Koon Tai and Dr. Yeap Gik Hong to speaker, SN Lee