



BRITISH AMERICAN  
TOBACCO

NEWS CLIPPING

Client : British American Tobacco  
Media : Focus Malaysia  
Section : TopClass – Pg 4-6  
Date : 25 October 2014  
Circulation : 20,000  
Headline : The working edge for serious GRAD

04 | TOPCLASS  
OCTOBER 2014

FEATURE



Master of Rev Up participants gain insight into working together as a team in a competitive environment

# The working edge for the serious GRAD

Early work experience provides valuable skills for fresh graduates to break into a competitive job market

| Text by JENILYN ALEXIA | jenilynalexia@hckmedia.com

**A**n internship or early work experience plays a vital role in one's resume. In many degree and certificate courses it is virtually a requirement, adding points to a student's final academic result. A period of internship grooms students for the real working world and the training they get will prove valuable when they attempt to land jobs in the future. TalentCorp, a government arm set up to grow globally competitive talent in support of the Economic Transformation Programme, recognises the importance of early work experience via its Structured Internship Programme (SIP).

The programme is a collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education to incentivise companies by giving them tax

deductions to provide internships to scholars from both local public and private institutions of higher learning.

There is a set criteria for which companies can apply to participate in this initiative, which helps with maintaining high-quality practical learning standards. These criteria include requiring a company to have been established for between three and five years, a minimum staff count of 50 or 100 depending on the nature of the business, and a three-year average annual revenue of RM21 mil as well as a minimum share capital of RM2.5 mil.

According to experts at the government arm, students with practical experience in their chosen field are preferred by employers and gain an extra edge when pursuing a full-time job after graduation. In fact, research has shown that students who take part in an internship or postgraduate trainee programme are three times more likely to secure a position in the employment market.

There are several multinational companies in Malaysia that provide training for gradu-

ates and have structured management trainee courses. One of them is international tobacco company British American Tobacco (BAT). The firm's intake differs every year depending on its needs but its main priority is to hire the best talents for programmes in which it has invested heavily.

BAT Malaysia human resources director Fiona Geddes says learning opportunities in the firm are designed to build a foundation of excellence, provide an understanding of the overall BAT business, and engage management trainees in the company's values and culture. "Management trainee programmes can help build a strong foundation in business knowledge from day 1, and there is commitment and responsibility at all levels of the organisation to ensure that management trainees are prepped for success.

"In BAT Malaysia, we can proudly say that many of our leaders, such as our current operations and marketing director, and our senior managers, are alumni of the BAT management trainee programme.



## Research has shown that students who take part in an internship or postgraduate trainee programme are three times more likely to secure a position in the employment market

"Graduates will find that joining a management trainee programme such as ours helps them to develop a more holistic understanding of the overall business, as well as its culture and values. They will find themselves on a fast track in developing key managerial and leadership skills, enhanced through high levels of responsibility and accountability. Management trainees in BAT Malaysia will also be able to groom their leadership capabilities as future leaders of the company," says Geddes.

The development scheme is not just beneficial for students, but many employers are using the programme as an essential platform for them to evaluate and source for talent. The management trainee programme plays an essential role in the development and strength of BAT Malaysia's talent pipeline through a consistent supply of first-class management talent from within the company.

Combining practical learning from various sources to shape the right foundation for talents to grow, there is a series of learning opportunities such as an orientation module, assignment of mentors, functional and leadership development, besides assignment opportunities to other markets that BAT operates in.

To ensure sustainable business growth, we need managers trained to a consistent global BAT standard of excellence, and who are capable of meeting future business challenges head on," Geddes notes.

Pepsico manufacturer and distributor Pemanis Sandilands Sdn Bhd also has its own platform for identifying successful individuals for its group. The company has been running its Master of Rev Up competition for five years where winners of the competition win lucrative prizes and more importantly, an internship with the company.

"There's no substitute for work experience, and this initiative is as close as it gets to give students a taste of what to expect when they leave college or university," says Pemanis Sandilands marketing and business development vice-president Hemalatha Regavan.

The Masters of Rev Up challenge requires students from universities or colleges to work in teams where they will be given three weeks to prepare a proposal to run events. The contest has witnessed the participation of almost 5,000 teams comprising 25,000 students and close to 500 have graduated from the programme.

"The Masters of Rev Up will continue to teach youngsters how to work together, boost their confidence and help them to pick up valuable skills to prepare them for their chosen careers," says Regavan.

Another market leader, SAS Malaysia, the world's largest privately held software company, offers IT graduates the opportunity to stand out from their peers before hitting the

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE >>



The training centre at SAS Malaysia

## Leading multi-national corporations with early-work programmes

### Shell Malaysia

**Industry:** Oil and Gas

**Available:** Internship programme  
One of the top multi-international oil and gas firms, Shell Malaysia has been operating in the country since 1891. The company is present in more than 70 countries worldwide and has 92,000 employees from all around the world. It offers a comprehensive array of products and services in both upstream and downstream businesses.

### Intel Malaysia

**Industry:** Semiconductors

**Available:** Internship programme  
American-based semiconductor computer chip maker, Intel currently has more than 100,000 employees from 63 countries. The company first set up its Penang offshore assembly plant in 1972. Touted for having an excellent working environment, employees at Intel Malaysia are provided with numerous benefits such as a recreation room, cafes with free food and beverages and employee discount programmes.

### DiGi.com Bhd

**Industry:** Telecommunications

**Available:** Internship  
Local mobile service provider DiGi is majority owned by Norway's Telenor Group. Listed on Forbes' World's Most Innovative Companies 2014, the company was the only Malaysian firm that made it into the Top 100. Staying in-line with its fun and innovative brand, DiGi believes in a challenging and rewarding work environment for its employees so they can outdo themselves.

### Petroleum Nasional Bhd (Petronas)

**Industry:** Oil and gas

**Available:** Industrial training programme, graduate employability enhancement scheme

The leading oil and gas company in Malaysia is ranked in Fortune 500's list of largest corporations in the world, and provides a solid platform for anyone looking for a career in oil and gas. Petronas has operations in more than 65 countries and is one of the top five oil and gas players in Asia.

### Dell Malaysia

**Industry:** Computer technology

**Available:** Internship and development programmes  
Dell is a privately owned American computer technology company and opened its first Malaysian assembly plant in Penang in 1995. The company was awarded the Employer of Choice Award 2011 by the Malaysian Institute of Human Resource Management.

### Nestlé Malaysia

**Industry:** Food and beverage

**Available:** Management trainee and internship programmes  
The company started in Malaysia in 1912 as the Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Company in Penang. Because of growth and expansion, in 1939 Nestlé shifted its office to Kuala Lumpur and later in 1962, the company set up its first factory in Petaling Jaya. Currently, Nestlé has more than 5,000 employees and markets more than 300 halal products in Malaysia.

### Maxis

**Industry:** Telecommunications

**Available:** Maxis Management Associate and internship programmes  
The company was awarded the Gold Award in the innovative category at the Malaysia Human Resource Award in 2010 for nurturing and supporting its Maxis Academy employees.

### IBM Malaysia

**Industry:** Computer technology and consulting

**Available:** Internship programme  
A wholly-owned offshore subsidiary of IBM World Trade Corp, IBM Malaysia connects to 390,000 colleagues daily with a growing group of clients, advocates, experts and peers internationally. With more than 90 years in the industry, the company has made its mark in 170 countries worldwide.

### CIMB

**Industry:** Banking and financial services

**Available:** Internship programme, CIMB Fusion, Skim Latihan 1Malaysia programme  
One of the leading universal banks in Asean, CIMB has a wide retail network of 1,080 branches across the region and 18 operations in Asia-Pacific countries. With a total of 40,000 staff, the bank was named Malaysia's Most Caring Employer by the Malaysian Ministry of Human Resource in 2011.

### Microsoft Malaysia

**Industry:** Computer software, electronics and services

**Available:** Internship programme  
Microsoft prides itself on "recognising the value that different life experiences and viewpoints bring to our business". The American multinational strives to create a work-life balance in the workplace while trying to optimise creativity and innovation through an enjoyable work culture.



**Right:**  
Students should get a taste of the working world after completing their studies

**Bottom:**  
In a city environment, employees need good work experience to move up in their careers

>> FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

job sites. It offers an 18-month graduate development programme for fresh graduates to kick start their careers as data scientists with training and hands-on experience on the field.

The year-and-a-half of training includes four weeks of technical training on analytics software apps, catered for business with big data. And there is also training in other work skills, such as presentation techniques to accelerate the participants' adaptation to the business world. Participants are placed during the tenure of the programme to work under supervision, either within SAS Malaysia or with one of its many clients.

**The internship or trainee programme is a significant time for a student to evaluate the company they are working for, and decide whether it is the right company and if they will be comfortable joining the firm as full-time staff**



By the 12th month of the programme, participants will receive SAS certification on either analytics, administration, data management or enterprise business intelligence. Finishers of the programme are awarded with the SAS Graduate Development Program Certificate, which, owing to SAS's global reputation, is internationally recognised.

Outstanding participants of this programme have yet another lucrative advantage: they will be put under consideration for placement in SAS's permanent workforce - hence giving them the opportunity to work in a leading global systems software company.

The internship or trainee programme is a signifi-

cant time for a student to evaluate the company they are working for, and decide whether it is the right company and if they will be comfortable joining the firm as full-time staff. It is the perfect way to be introduced to different businesses and will assist in deciding the kind of job one is interested in.

A graduate should always keep in mind the objective for joining an internship programme. Depending on the job scope, he should know what he wants to accomplish in the programme, whether it is to obtain new knowledge and skills, to expand professional networks or just to list the internship as applicable involvement in the industry. ■

