

Making MBA a real success

SUSS' modular approach made mid-career study easier

ESTHER LOI

The decision to go back to school mid-career is usually daunting.

Apart from getting back into the mindset of studying, juggling work and school is also a concern.

For Mr Vijayan Suriaputhuran, the modular-based approach adopted by the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) was a major factor in his decision to pursue his Master of Business Administration (MBA) 16 years after graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Business Management from the University of Bradford in the United Kingdom.

Mr Vijayan, who completed his MBA last year, told The New Paper that in addition to SUSS' flexible learning system, he was impressed by the School of Business' emphasis on creating man-

agers of the future skilled in both "hardware" and "heartware".

"The lecturers were really great in imparting their knowledge and experience," said Mr Vijayan, 44.

Currently a senior manager at tele-commerce firm Teledirect, he heads a team of 80 employees and manages operations for a client in the aviation sector.

Said Mr Vijayan: "Many case studies – from the multitude of subjects covered during my MBA – were readily applicable to the real-world work environment."

Said Professor Lee Pui Mun, dean, School of Business, SUSS: "We deploy a lot of real-world business case studies in our classroom discussions.

"We make a constant effort to introduce industry speakers into our lessons where they share expertise and experience



with the students."

Study trips to visit relevant businesses and industries are organised for the students, and full-time students need to undertake a rigorous work attachment programme.

Prof Lee added that allowing students to learn independently will "help them embrace lifelong learning habits that are critical in the new economy,



where professionals will increasingly have to upgrade their knowledge and skills to keep pace with technological changes and new business practices brought forth by the digital economy".

Students are also encouraged to embrace social responsibility thinking and actions.

"Hopefully our graduates will always strive to shape business

(Above) SUSS School of Business students in Hong Kong for a study trip. (Far left) Mr Vijayan Suriaputhuran completed his MBA last year. (Left) Professor Lee Pui Mun, dean of School of Business at SUSS.

PHOTOS: SINGAPORE UNIVERSITY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

decisions that include positive social impacts," said Prof Lee.

Mr Vijayan, who has more than 18 years of experience in the contact centre industry, saw his mindset changed after completing his MBA.

"In the past, my focus had been on only the bottom line. But I have now learnt that it is critical for an organisation to embrace sustainability from a strategic perspective, in order to have continued success in the long term."

tnp@sph.com.sg