

news education

SIM gave Mr Chang Xiao Ran, now a partner technology manager at Google, flexibility to study and work at the same time

He's got IT made

SMITA TIWARY

Despite being eligible for a local university, Mr Chang Xiao Ran chose to enrol in a Singapore Institute of Management's (SIM) Global Education (GE) programme, signing up for a part-time degree in information technology (IT).

Mr Chang, who received his diploma in information technology in 2009 from Singapore Polytechnic, said: "With SIM GE, I was able to get credit exemptions that took a year off the three-year degree programme."

"I also wanted to work while studying for my degree, and SIM gave me the flexibility to do so."

And that was what he did.

While he was still in SIM, he worked at insurance company Aon, where he ensured the smooth running of the in-house IT system.

Mr Chang, 28, said: "My diploma built a strong foundation, which helped me secure employment easily later on."

When his department shut down, he renewed his search for a job and ended up as a consultant at technology company IBM, after a classmate in SIM told him about the opening.

Despite having to juggle school and work, Mr Chang said they complemented each other.

UNDERSTAND

"I was able to understand lectures better with my industry perspective, and the innovative aspects I learnt in school helped me contribute fresh ideas at the workplace," he said.

Mr Chang eventually became one of seven who graduated with a distinction from the University of Wollongong with a Bachelor of Information Technology (Computing) in 2012.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF CHANG XIAO RAN

The degree is developed and awarded by the University of Wollongong and taught locally in SIM.

He continued working at IBM and was promoted to a senior consultant two years later.

After that, Mr Chang was headhunted to join Google in January last year.

Mr Chang is now a partner technology manager at Google

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— Mr Chang Xiao Ran (left) on juggling school and work

Asia Pacific. He helps clients overcome scaling and operational challenges with technology.

Mr Chang, who came to Singapore from China in 2006, is happy with his educational choices.

He said: "Had I enrolled in a different school, I would have probably taken a different route and ended up somewhere else."

Mr Chang, who developed his interest in technology very early on, emphasised how important it was to be passionate about one's area of study.

Said Mr Chang: "The school and course must be suitable."

"If you have the passion, you will study better and enjoy what you are doing too."

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