



Internship Program Benefits Students and Small Businesses

A program in Malaysia is advancing the concept of on-the-job training with a bootcamp and ongoing assessments.

Helping Interns Apply and Develop Their Talents



"Being exposed to an SME environment is a challenge and an advantage at the same time."

Chiew Ming Tat (left)
Student, Faculty of Computer Science and
Information Technology, University of Malaya

A lack of preparation and monitoring often leads to disappointing internship programs that provide little benefit to the participating interns and companies. Fortunately, one internship program in Malaysia, the Cisco® Industrial Training Program (CiTP), seeks to ensure that small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) gain access to the talent they need while giving students an opportunity to hone their skills and gain valuable experience.

Currently in its pilot stage, the program is a collaboration between the Malaysian Cisco Networking Academy® team, the University of Malaya, and Malaysia's state-owned Multimedia Development Corporation (MDeC). Thirty-three IT students from the University of Malaya have completed internships with 19 SMEs, which are respected Cisco partners.

Regional Networking Academy manager Christina Anthony points out that this is not a simple internship program. "These interns will not be making coffee and doing the photocopying," she explains. First, the interns take part in an intensive 10-day boot camp to prepare them for work in a business environment. "We give the interns a heads-up about the realities of work life and how to make the most of the experience," says Mohammed Norzi Ibrahim, area academy manager for Malaysia.

Intensive Learning Program

The internship program is six-months long. After working with a company for two months, the interns participate in a workshop where they explain their role, identify challenges and opportunities, and explain how they are benefiting the host company. In the following two months, the interns focus on maximizing their experience, and in the final two months, they develop a business case to improve an aspect of the company, which counts toward their final grade.

One of the interns who participated in the pilot program, Chiew Ming Tat, 22, says, "I can now better understand the business and technical challenges and the solutions required to help these companies."

Future Plans

Feedback for this program, from businesses, university staff, and interns, has been so positive that MDeC plans to work with Cisco to introduce this opportunity to more students, SMEs, and universities. There are also plans to roll the program out in other countries, initially on a pilot basis. In the Philippines, the partners hope to involve 50 students and 25 firms, while in Thailand, 30 students and 15 companies have signed up to participate.

For More Information

To learn more about Cisco Networking Academy, please visit www.cisco.com/go/netacad.

To learn more about this internship program, please contact Mohammed Norzi Ibrahim at mohdibr@cisco.com or visit the CiTP website at www.ciscoitp.com.