

When CWGC meets JA

What is JA?

Junior Achievement (JA) Hong Kong is a non-profit organization dedicated to inspiring and preparing young people to succeed in the global economy. In the partnership with the business and education communities, JA encourages young people to understand the world of work and your role in the global economy.

Y : Mrs Yim R : Roger J : Jeff

In what way did you know the JA programme?

Y: I found it on the Internet. Later, I got further information from some of my friends who engage in the financial industry. It was my perspective that the programme shall let our student contribute to the society. During the process, students worked with several volunteers from the field. You know, the volunteers have been very kind and have been striking a chord with the apprentice.

R: The corporation that I am working in used to promote the programme. It encourages our staff to enroll in it. What's more, the President of Fedex (Asia Pacific Region) sponsored the programme and is the Chairman of JAHK Board of Directors. Well I better say not only the JA programme, but also miscellaneous events related to finance and commerce.

J: The HSBC is the main sponsor of the Company Programme. It promotes the Programme internally within HSBC, and our management team encouraged us to join.

How long have you been taking part in the programme?

Y: It is the first time for CWGC to take part. Here I'd like to show my greatest gratitude towards our school and the Citibank for their enormous backup.

R: This is my first time to take part in the JA. Truth be told, I took it up voluntarily. Actually I always dedicate my leisure in voluntary works. Ever since was I graduated

from the university, however, I couldn't spare much time to it anymore. Both my job and family had habitually taken up most of my time. The JA voluntary work, to be frank, is such a long-term commitment-- it lasts for 18 weeks at 2 hours per week. So you must complete all these--otherwise my partner and Mrs Yim would probably be flung into jeopardy.

J: It's my third time...Or I'd better say, it's my third year to participate. I volunteered for a Band One school in Tai Po during my participation in the first year. The second school that I went to was a Band Three college in Sha Tin. I chose this school as I wanted to bring the programme to a batch of the non-Band One students. CWGC is the third school that I came along with, and as usual, it was my decision to pick this school. The main reason is that CWGC is just so close to my



home. Besides, some of my friends were graduated from this school, as well as my sister! She was graduated in 1999.

What motivates you to join?

Y: I always wish to introduce some schemes for our students, in order to meet the needs of the brand new senior form syllabus, and to benefit the participants. When sharing the purposes of the introduction of JA, some of the old but memorial episodes of mine are also recollected. Being a teacher had been by ambition since I was a kid. However, the fire fizzled after taking sort of unfit subjects later. This is not until the days in university, when I took part in a scientific exchange tour, which brought me



from England to Hong Kong University of Science & Technology. That was a scorching summer. While hanging around the dorm, I saw a couple of builder squatted down at the entrance of a restaurant nearby, having their lunch boxes. A question conjured up in my mind: 'Why don't they take their lunch inside the restaurant?' And my friend answered: 'Coz the workers esteem themselves to be dingy and tacky. They must be unwelcome once if they eat inside. So they'd rather eat under such a molten sun. They hate being the eyesore of the others.' Come on! This got on my nerves. What the students had learnt were really in vain. All the educated should know that every level of labour does contribute to the society--even the restaurant they were sitting in was built by the builders! This once again fueled my ambition to be a teacher, what's more, to instill ethical morality to the green leaders.

R: I am all along participating in voluntary activities. The Fedex Corporation is always promoting the JA internally within the company. In fact the idea of enrolling emerged as early as last year..

J: After the first two years of participation, I withdrew. I made a comeback after a year. See, I chose your school to volunteer for!

What are your very first impressions of our students?

R: At the beginning, I was barely expecting from them as I had not come along with students for a long time. The impressive learning motivation of the CWGC students is ingrained in my mind. You know, the local students used to feed people with a shy, passive

image. To account for the splendid attitude of the CWGC participants, it is probably because they joined voluntarily and the school didn't label the programme "compulsory". Furthermore, I found the CWGC students very responsible.

J: The CWGC participants had been very energetic and responsive throughout the programme. In the past, the students of the 2 schools that I worked with were comparatively dull in the first lesson.

Was there any obstacle that the students confronted with? And what were the inadequate they have?



Y: Everything was come along very well. What was out of our expectation is the fanaticism of students. There were as many as 48 applicants out of the total 59 Form 6 students. Besides, the volunteers showed their exquisite leaderships during the group work. They shouldered members' hardships and listened to their needs in pleasure. Well, I think communication among members had been a depressing but inevitable issue. For sure there would be disputes among them--they have different personalities and growing backgrounds. Their discontent finally soared and creates a chasm between cells during the Christmas. They expressed their considerations with leaders on phone until midnight. The leaders spared extra time to deliberate with them outside





too. While the programme was afoot, Roger's wife was in labour. We visited her in the hospital, and somehow rounded off with discussing the JA matters. The anecdote makes me feel really sorry! Despite of the crucial situation of the family, Roger gave us his greatest reassuring support!

R: The way they communicate. They seldom arrived at an agreement by fact-to-face discussion. Very often, when student A notify or update B the JA matters, there is a tendency for he/she to habitually assume B got the message, while B never give a response, no matter having the message received or not. Thus, I do think it is essential for them to learn to be self-motivated and active when it comes to communication. Apart from this, the Form 6 students shoulder a number of positions in different extra-curricular activities simultaneously and are typically busy. Saturday was set to be our general meeting day, however, this may have collided with other activities of participants. I do understand that Saturday was set to be our general meeting day, however, this may have collided with other activities of participants. I do understand that youngsters are generally weak on time management. But the truth is, once students leave schools and started working everyone must prioritize their works and have their time well-managed. It is my belief that our students could do a better job in the JA. And this proves that prioritizing jobs is undoubtedly monumental.

J: Roger and I kept waking up very early, arriving at the school on time. In return, we expect students to show up on time too, and they did during the early stage of the programme. However, attendance is on a deteriorating trend after the trade fair. Communication was

another pressing problem. At the beginning, I and Roger had not noticed the latent antagonism among students due to lacking of communication. It is the responsibilities of the management team to report us the problem, in order to make sure that the remaining participants are happy with the programme. At the end of the day, I do understand that it is perfectly normal to have persistent communication problem—as students are coming from 2 classes, and therefore would do things in a very different way. Argument is thus unavoidable.

So, what do you appreciate the students most?



Y: They showed their maturity and cared about the general situation. In fact, problem had existed before the trade fair, but, they borne every problem and frustration without exposing the rumor. The late reflection meeting brought them a positive implication on realizing the problem without intensifying it. They learnt to speak nicer and elicit positive attitude in order to avoid misunderstandings. These are all precious lessons and experience on communication skills. On the other hand, I realize different participant is at home in different specialties. Some got infectious enthusiasm; some got perseverance, while some got absolute responsibility. On the other hand, I realize different participant is at home in different specialties. Some got infectious enthusiasm; some got perseverance, while some got absolute responsibility.

R: What remain vivid in my mind is, they made the clothes day and night. I see the overwhelming task on them. I was appreciated by their responsibility so much. We all know the greatest objective of the JA is to learn from experience, gain confidence and to be active on learning. So no matter the business is finally a success or failure, their inadequate could be ameliorated.

J: I wholeheartedly appreciate their sense of responsibility. They worked on the production of the clothes day and night, and sacrificed their time for the trade fair.

Are you satisfied with their performances?

Y: Sure! I enjoyed a lot as well!

R: The trade fair held in December at the HSBC headquarter had been a great challenge to them, I know. I saw them selling the products so hard, shouting and yelling so much that their voices have finally become hoarse. I appreciated their effort indeed. This also demonstrated how responsible the adolescence today is. By the way, an article from one of the JA Business Advisor has been published in Hong Kong Economic Journal on 5th May. I can't be more consensuses with his statement claiming that the creativity of the local secondary school student is not inferior to the university students'.

J: Quite satisfied. I have an impression that students nowadays would stand firm with their ideas, and seldom reach a compromise. Nevertheless, the CWGC students are different, and are not troublesome. Also, teachers of the other 2 schools which I had worked with had made the programme compulsory, which take up 25% of their academic results. Conversely, students here have committed themselves to the programme due to their self-motivation. There was no record of penalty. I found much effectiveness on this over the compulsive ones. I was so satisfied with their performances before the trade fair. However, it seemed that the fanaticism faded after the event. The meeting attendance eventually dropped beneath 80%. Luckily, the situation improved later. I highly appreciated the presentations skills that the team has exhibited at the final stage of the programme.

What have the students learnt and gained in the work?

Y: they can widen their horizons through learning from the professional spirit of the volunteers, or appreciating the talent and performances of other



schools, etc. In other words, we do succeed in achieving the objectives.

R: The JA can cultivate the leaderships of students, which simultaneously brings lessons to the rest as well. These experiences would turn into the grounds for the future university lives and career. They learnt, for example, skills on interpersonal cooperation and communication.

J: Interpersonal communication is invaluable in the future. In the coming days, your colleagues are usually not your buddy or good friend, or they might even be somebody you hate. So what we must learn is, to overcome all these and take the job seriously.

Will the JA programme go on to be held in the coming year?

Y: Yes, if our school approve.

R: I think so.

J: Maybe, because it is really a huge commitment. If we don't have to wake up that early and start the activity a bit later, there will be an apparent likelihood of participation.

