

## **My Life Experience for Two Weeks in Vietnam**

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### **Introduction**

In the Vietnam Internship Program (VIP), a total of seven graduate students, five from construction management and two from structural divisions, stayed in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) from December 29, 2019 to January 11 2020. Each student stayed in both the Chan Phuong Engineering (CPE) and the Authentic Collaboration leads up to Sustainable Construction (ACSC) companies for one week each. This document describes the program objectives, expectations from both the author and the hosts, work experiences, cultural experiences and suggestions resulted from this internship of the author.

### **Program Objectives**

Please do not change the Introduction section above. Use 11pt Time New Roman font through out the rest of this document first to describe what you wished to achieve before going to HCMC. Simply use CPE and ACSC to identify the companies to save space. Likewise, use HCMC through out the rest of the document.

In the beginning, this VIP to me fulfill my attempt to live in the foreign country for a period, in fact, I have had applied for the international exchange in October. It's a very previous opportunity for me to previously living in abroad for a short sequence. At the same time realize what distinctive of civil engineering was different with others country as a reference for scheduling of future career. Last but not least, the most important to me is to experience the local culture, from it to speculate out how to make a feedback to Engineer of both country.

### **Personal and Host's Expectations**

What did you think that you could contribute to the two companies and the companies could offer you. What are the expectations you think the co-works in CPE and ACSC have on you.

When the office send the information of the two company we ready to visit, by browsing their Web site, I found that these two company looked quite similar to the consultant company in Taiwan. Therefore, I think that I can help the company by the experience of structure design and analysis in the past I join another internship in Taiwan. As for something that I hope the company can bring to me, I expected that by coming to foreign country to work for while time, I could clarify that I was suitable for working abroad in civil engineering or not, including salary, environment, etc. Indeed, going abroad for work even staying in the South-East Asia country exist in my life selection. After all, where there is demand, our government have promoted policy that encourage people to develop in the South-side country.

### **Work Experiences**

This internship cover two weeks we have been through in the two different company. First week we're in CPE, and the second week is in ACSC. In first company, our work we do can divide into two part, office and construction site visit. In the office, in the beginning I proposed the demand about participating in the division of structure design. But the chairman tell me that "the whole construction cycle is not just only structure design", which means that I could take the chance to comprehend how the whole project cycle work during the VIP and I want to show my appreciation to the boss about elevating my vision to the overall level. Therefore, the days in the CPE office were more focusing on what project manager (PM) do, and after finished the lesson, as illustrated in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, the chairman give us a question about how to improve the foundation of the construction. In fact, the answer to this problem can answered from many aspects, but I thought that the reason why the boss send this question to us, he hope that we could think in the logic of the PM. By doing so, learning is far more important than the answer to the question. The rest of the day in CPE we went to visit the construction sites under the management of the CPE and Kajima, as shown in Fig. 3 and Fig. 4. First site is a paint factory called AkzoNobel, which is invested by Thailand, after visiting the construction site we know about how efficiency they are in a project from design to handover. It surprised

to me that it takes them more than a year to build a factory on average. Comparing to Taiwan it need to take almost two years. In Vietnam, their project procedure briefly into design-build (DB), relative to the design-bid-build (DBB) in Taiwan. It spend much time on find the tender. Second site is a steel factory called SMC, which invested by Japan. It's the first time that I saw the site using the fingerprint scanner to identify the ID of the workers, even in Taiwan I never saw such strict security management, not mentioned about the any requirement at there only for pursuing the safety and the efficiency. At there, it's worth our learning to their tidy environment. Also we visit the steel-factory-exclusive facility, deep pit, shown in Fig. 5 and Fig. 6, it's my first time to heard about it and to know how to build.

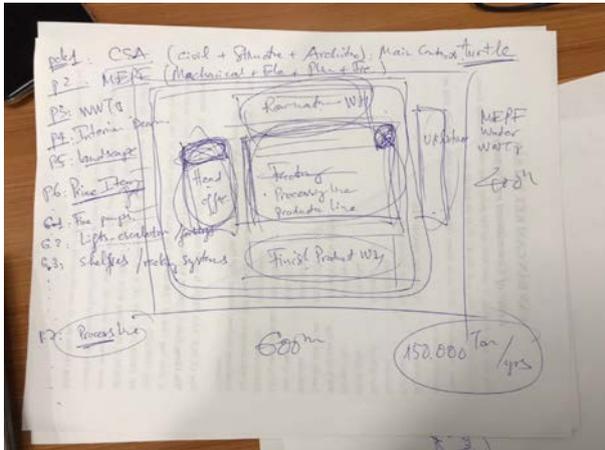


Fig. 1 The teaching lesson from the chairman



Fig. 2 The class process



Fig. 3 The site of AkzoNobel



Fig. 4 The site of SMC



Fig. 5 Deep pit



Fig. 6 The deep pit on site of SMC

Second week in ACSC also separate into two part, one is construction site visiting, the other one is building model information (BIM). We totally visit three construction sites managed by ACSC, which respectively called M2 Global, Tho Phat and Scitax, also applied with BIM. In ACSC, their project can unite all by the

BIM center in this company. In the first three days of this week, we respectively visit the site mentioned above. M2 Global is a project of the pharmacy factory invested by a Taiwan enterprise. In this project, we learned some different construction methods from Taiwan, as shown in Fig. 7 and Fig. 8.

The purpose of Nevo Technology is that by using the plastic box implant into the pouring formwork reduce the usage amount of the cement. Lighten the weight of the concrete plate and not consume the stiffness of the structure too much simultaneously. The other method impressed me was Striving Method from Japan technique. By some exclusive tools to locate the position of the tile precisely, simultaneously prevent the amount of the adhesive smearing on floor from uneven level. Despite spending 30% more, but weighs the pros and cons, the benefit of this way definitely exceeded the traditional ones. Therefore, the clients are also glad to apply this method. Second site we visit the Tho Phat factory, which operated by a local Vietnam food company, as shown in Fig. 9. Though it is almost completed, but reading the shop drawing and some illustration from the construction site manager. We still can observe how perfect construction they are in following the BIM model. In construction site of Saitex, it is a textile and cloth factory from India investment, as shown in Fig. 10. It's a green building also. From the illustration of the director of the BIM center, the total consumption energy also can obtain from the BIM model, using this way to achieve the regulations of the green buildings. Above three projects of ACSC, we mentioned that they all applied in BIM model. After the visiting of the site, the chairman arrange us go back to the office of the BIM center, the center leader aim to the BIM to make an overall presentation about what function their model actually have and how to use the BIM to integrate all the subcontractor like MEP, Structure, Architecture even the operation and maintenance(O&M) after completed.(Fig. 11 to 13) We also watch a visualization of the resort project which finished by 4 people in two weeks, revealing how powerful the ability of this department is. The leader also talked about the number of the BIM center in ACSC, to my surprised that the scale reach up to 45 people in a 280-people-company. In Taiwan, it is absolute not pouring so much blood into the BIM. That is what I seen in ACSC, and admiring their way to carry out a project. Before the end of the internship, we make a presentation of the experience to the VIP. The table (Table. 1) below illustrated the comparison between Taiwan and Vietnam presents our observation from these two country. I think that maybe this way to Vietnam, the most important thing is not to learn how professional skill, to observed what different between this two country and speculate the reason behind it.



Fig. 7 Nevo Technology



Fig. 8 Striving Method



Fig. 9 View of the Tho Phat factory



Fig. 10 The site of Saitex



Fig. 11 The presentation of the BIM

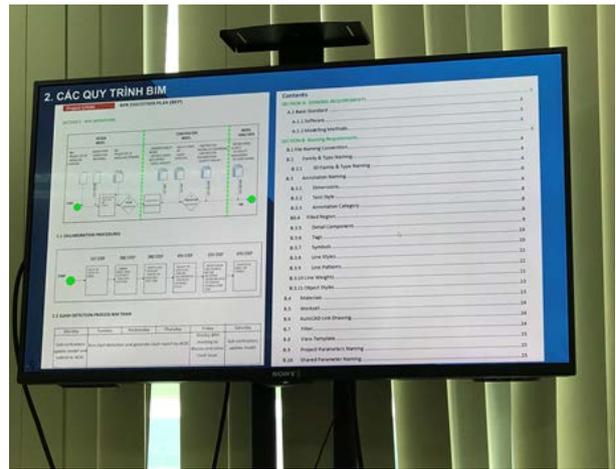


Fig. 12 The content of the slide



Fig. 13 Q&A

Comparison		
Taiwan	Vietnam	
Design Bid Build	Contract Type	Design Build
Client Requirement	BIM	Contractors Provide
Seismic Design	Structural	Static Analysis
2+ years	Duration	Within 2 years
Third Party	Supervision	Third Party / self

Table. 1 The comparison of project between Taiwan and Vietnam

### Cultural Experiences

Though two weeks are not too long, but these enough for experiencing the local culture. Until now I still can't forget how chaotic the traffic was, and how the commodity price so cheap that was freaking to me. Actually I was very fascinated by the architectural style combination with some old French building at the same time possessing some modern high rise building. (Fig. 13&Fig. 14)



Fig. 13 Traffic jam



Fig. 14 UBND Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh

At there, on average, you see one or two car accidents a day. Even the ambulance often get stuck in the traffic jams. I think traffic is now HCMC need to put the most effort into to improve the current traffic situation. The improvement of transportation can correspondingly solve many other problems. Like reducing car accident, the time of going to work, the medical quality mentioned above.

Fortunately, we have gone through the New Year during the VIP. It's a first time I lived this holiday abroad. So that I celebrated with our member of Group1 at the Phạm Ngũ Lão (Foreign Street). When the final countdown is about to start, the sky began to fill with glitter and the spilled beer that was launched by tourists, and the passionate people start to cheer for the coming 2020 years. A little accident happened during the process. The fireworks set by the nightclub nearby us did not extinguish after the countdown is already over, it even burned the lateral signboard and almost lead to fire disaster. In the process of being extinguished, the masses command the employee of the club to remove where still have catching fire. When all the flame was removed, the crowd acclaim and say Happy New Year to each other. This is the moment that impressed me the most at this night. (Fig. 15 to Fig. 18)



Fig. 15 Phạm Ngũ Lão (Foreign Street)



Fig. 16 The accident night club



Fig. 17 The group photo



Fig. 18 The group photo with Prof. Zhu

These two weeks we also visit many tourist attractions, like Cu chi Tunnel, Mê Kông river delta, Saigon river and some spots in the HCMC. Despite relaxing the mind, we also learn about the local culture from above site, like war, communist party, food, custom, etc. What makes them turn into nowadays Vietnam. It is interested to me to observe about the scene mentioned above. (Fig. 19 to Fig. 24)



Fig. 19 Cu Chi Tunnel



Fig. 20 Coffee shop



Fig. 21 Mê Kông river delta



Fig. 22 Notre-Dame Cathedral Basilica of Saigon



Fig. 23 Bru Điện Trung Tâm Sài Gòn



Fig. 24 Sài Gòn River

To me, HCMC is a city contained enthusiasm, crowded but also some danger, actually is a place suitable for relaxing, but for long stay a little bit inadequate.

### Suggestoins

This trip means important to me a lot, not only for relaxing our pressure cause by academic research, but also give me the chance to think about my future career. But it still have some disadvantage need to improve in the future. First, I think the local university need to plan more specifically with two cooperate company in advanced. Both in language and case study before visiting, one is that there is less people in the construction site have the ability to speak English, and the other one I thought that maybe company can provide the information of the site we gonna visit to let us do the case study first. I thought that more reliance on communication and planning between each agencies.



Fig. 25 Meeting for the first time at CPE



Fig. 26 Meeting at ACSC



Fig. 27 Dinner with Professor from HCMUT



Fig. 28 Final presentation