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Headline: IE Singapore gives local firms a talent boost

# IE Singapore gives local firms a talent boost

It counsels companies on manpower strategies and partners them to prepare PMEs for international careers

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**Singapore**  
INTERNATIONAL Enterprise (IE) Singapore has said it is preparing Singaporeans and companies to capture overseas opportunities, even as they come up against manpower challenges.

Angeline Chan, group director of IE's Capability Development Group, told reporters on Wednesday that there are growth opportunities in urban solutions, digital and consumer related products and services in Asia.

However, she said, Singapore companies are hamstrung by the lack of talent with the experience and skill sets to operate across borders and cultures. There is also a shortage of

individuals willing to go for mid- to long-term overseas assignments and a lack of the right leadership.

IE says it is tackling this problem by targeting different groups of talent.

For example, it is encouraging more tertiary students to take up overseas opportunities through the Young Talent programme (YTP), which exposes them to the markets and trains them on relevant skill sets at an early age.

IE said the number of students who have gone on overseas attachments has risen in the last two years – from 500 in 2013 to 900 in last year.

In 2013, IE went into an agreement with three local universities, namely, Singapore

Management University, National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University, as well as the five polytechnics, to co-fund up to 60 per cent of the students' living expenses.

This year, IE intends to bring on board the students of the Institutes of Technical Education and SIM University, and work with them to enlarge the network of participating companies.

Apart from students, professionals, managers and executives (PMEs) are also benefiting from the plan to build global talent, said Justin Goh, IE Singapore's divisional director of Global Manpower Division.

"PMEs are currently bogged down by the local roles they are undertaking. They are doing a lot of operational roles in Singapore itself."

IE will therefore help them identify the ways in which they can play a bigger role and help their companies take wing in the region or the world, he added.

IE said it counsels companies on manpower strategies and partners them to prepare PMEs for international careers through market attachments and customised overseas immersion programmes; this also entails funding the companies to send their employees on such programmes.

The agency is also working with the Singapore Business Federation and Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI) on overseas market workshops designed to help PMEs understand local market conditions and networks.

To deepen leaders' internationalisation

competencies, IE is providing individuals with study awards valued at \$55,000, to encourage them to take up any of its 17 supported international leadership programmes, such as the Stanford-NUS Executive Programme in International Management.

IE expects to give out 170 awards between 2015 and 2016.

Two thousand Singaporean students and 525 middle and senior executives have so far benefited from the various programmes; IE will target 5,000 young talents and 2,500 executives over the next five years.

IE's plan to internationalise more students and companies comes under SkillsFuture, the national movement to enable Singaporeans to develop to their fullest potential throughout life, regardless of age or level of education.

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