

# Shaping up her career beautifully

A master's course in communication management at SMU equips Ms Isabelle Lim with deeper knowledge of the industry

AUDREY NG

JUGGLING a full-time directorial role and a postgraduate course was not easy, but Ms Isabelle Lim not only managed her time excellently, she also topped her cohort.

Last July, she graduated with a Master of Science in Communication Management from the Singapore Management University (SMU).

Ms Lim, 34, had been working for a decade in the hotel, and beauty and luxury industries before deciding to pursue a part-time postgraduate course in January 2015.

She felt that the breadth and depth of knowledge and insights she could get from the professors and industry practitioners would be invaluable for her communications career.

Previously a communications director of a hotel, she joined L'Oreal Singapore as director of corporate communications in March this year, overseeing group initiatives across 23 brands.

She decided to do her master's at SMU as she had done her undergraduate studies there and believed in the institution's vision and pedagogy.

Says Ms Lim: "I felt it was important to build perspectives across both real-life business experience and academic rigour, and further develop insights and expertise from a good network of professors and multiple industry practitioners."



Ms Lim felt that her course challenged and enabled her to grow as an individual and a team player. PHOTO: ISABELLE LIM

## Extremely disciplined

Embarking on her course, Ms Lim knew she would have to be extremely disciplined.

On top of attending weekly lessons on Friday evenings and a full day on Saturdays, she had to work on projects and assignments, manage major projects at work, plus attend numerous workshops and events, some even on the weekends.

To finish assignments on time, she had to make do with less sleep.

"I did not want to forsake the quality of my learning experience or my work, so I managed my time by being very disciplined about punctuality to ensure that I was not late for discussions, meetings or submissions both at work and school," she says.

The strict standards she imposed on herself were worth it as she consistently scored As, on top of achieving major coups at work for big projects, charity initiatives and double-digit growth for launches.

## Beyond academic learning

As a communications professional, modules such as digital marketing, international law and change management equipped her with relevant knowledge and useful perspectives.

The professional relationships she established with industry practitioners from different companies through the course were invaluable too.

She especially cherishes the lifelong friendships she made.

Says Ms Lim: "There is so much value in pursuing a good postgraduate course from a top university."

"Beyond the excellence the school puts into the structure and detail of every aspect of the programme, you really challenge and grow yourself as an individual and a team player."

"I highly recommend it, if only to push yourself to be more disciplined, patient, flexible, and do more things outside your comfort zone such as public speaking."

