

HSL Constructor Pte Ltd

SMART SOLUTIONS, PASSIONATE PEOPLE

Besides innovation and excellence, HSL Constructor prides itself for nurturing a strong team of leaders who are dedicated to giving back to society and the environment.

| by shi tianyun |



For most people, the big boss is like a legend, an elusive being employees only hear of but never actually meet. But in HSL Constructor, the Managing Director (MD) makes an appearance every day, interacting with all staff on the ground. “The open culture here is different from a multinational company (MNC). Our MD takes care of every one working here. He actually knows what my strengths and weaknesses are!” Civil Engineer Hema Sundaram says with great respect.

In fact, this willingness to include employees in the work process is what attracted Hema to join the civil engineering company. Previously an engineer with an MNC before embarking on her Master’s degree in civil engineering, she felt the big difference between her old workplace and HSL Constructor from day one. “I can voice out my opinions and make a difference – my thoughts matter here. For instance, if I have an idea that reduces manpower hours, our MD will be open to listening to it and if it’s feasible, suggest implementing it.” In fact, all newcomers are given tasks from the beginning; the challenge for them is to come up with their own solutions. In this way, creativity is fostered and staff are aware of how much the management values their ideas.

For Project Manager Daniel Ong, he came to know about HSL Constructor through one of his university’s career fairs. The company introduced its business and the then-Environmental Engineering student was greatly impressed by how the company was constantly relooking and reworking its processes, and undertaking sustainable projects to reduce their carbon footprint.

INSPIRING LEADERSHIP

As a regional leader in the marine civil engineering sector, HSL Constructor strives to create leaders in each and every employee. “Right from the start, you work as a ‘manager’ and are trained to be part of the decision-making process,” Hema says. In fact, she was part of the first ever Engineering Procurement Construction project that HSL undertook. “This was a huge challenge for myself and the company! There was no previous experience to tap onto so all the decisions were made there and then. All our inputs for this project set the precedence for future ones. We came up with our own solutions from scratch with the management’s support.”

The company also has a Graduate Leadership Programme (GLP) that Daniel was placed under when he joined as a Management Executive. Soon after, he was managing small projects on his own and exposed to different areas of the business, like being involved in tenders and putting in bids. He tells us, “Apart from training your technical skills, being part of the GLP gave me a view of what is happening throughout the company – be it in finance or business development – where many functions are interrelated. This holistic training helped me as I advanced into a management position – I am able to have a macro view of operations and even the external environment.

In fact, I was involved in a design and branding exercise in 2010, working with a consultancy firm on embedding strategic design thinking into our business, changing our logo, revamping our website and writing up various marketing materials. This gave me the opportunity to



Daniel Ong Fu Sheng

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be exposed to corporate branding and marketing, something completely different from being on-site!”

Daniel also brings up how the company grooms them to be leaders through empowerment. He recalls how a situation that was not even covered by the contingency plan occurred during a construction project, “To be honest, I was under immense pressure then. But the directors put so much faith in me that I managed to think out of the box to make a breakthrough and we overcame this challenge.

By empowering you to make your own decisions from the start, no matter how small, you develop the confidence and become comfortable with the decision-making process.”

CARING FOR THE PEOPLE AND PLANET

The bottom line is not the only thing that HSL Constructor is concerned with; the MD founded the company with the belief that a company that’s just interested in making a profit, is not a good company. “There are communities we come into contact with in the course of our work and our MD believes that when the time comes, we should give back to society,” Daniel explains. However these irregular efforts did not have a focus until a few years ago. In order to embrace sustainability on the social, environmental and economical fronts, the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) committee was set up in HSL Constructor with the task to come up with and carry out concentrated initiatives.

As the committee chairman, Daniel has led his colleagues to poor villages in Cambodia and

Vietnam to provide better hygiene and water solutions. Back in Singapore, the CSR committee helps out regularly with flag day, visiting old folks homes and providing free lunches to the needy. He says, “Even though we can’t reach everyone, we try our best to bring happiness to those we interact with.”

Hema is also a member of the CSR committee and her passion is in environmental conservation. She shares, “I try to create awareness about the environment, how to save energy and the 3R (Recycle, Reuse and Reduce) Principle amongst the staff by sending out quizzes to them each month.” She has also recently been invited to be a member of the Environment and Energy Committee where she is able to contribute immensely in energy savings by setting up a structured Energy Management System for the company.

The company is the perfect place for individuals with a social conscience who want to make an impact on those around them. Daniel adds, “HSL Constructor has been making a conscious effort to provide the platform for employees to do good and as a result, we are exposed to different things and widen our perspective of the world.

If you have strong analytical skills and also, are open to changes, independent and willing to take responsibility, we welcome you to join us here.” He affirms. “Ultimately, be it in the civil engineering or CSR arm of the company, you will be able to make a positive difference in HSL Constructor and society at large.” ▶



Hema Sundaram

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