



CHONG PEK HOONG
NATSTEEL SCHOLAR

DESIGNATION:
General Manager, NatSteel Recycling

STUDIED:
BEng in Mechanical Engineering, NUS

STUDYING:
Master of Business Administration, NUS

“Steeling” the Spotlight

At NSH, simply being awarded a scholarship is not the extent of your achievements. Instead, scholars are given opportunities to propel themselves to success. By Nabilah Husna A. Rahman

When NatSteel Scholar Chong Pek Hoong joined NatSteel Holdings (NSH) as a fresh graduate nine years ago, he had straightforward aspirations.

“My aspirations before joining NatSteel were to be a good engineer, and learn about the business,” he says. “Of course, I was hoping that I would be able to handle management responsibilities and

have an opportunity to be a business leader in the organisation.”

Over the years, his good performance coupled with the organisation’s meritocratic culture saw him rise through the ranks from Engineer to Vice President, and eventually to his current designation – General Manager of NatSteel Recycling, one of NSH’s subsidiaries.

THE LUXURY OF DIVERSITY

NSH, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Steel, is fast on its way to becoming Asia Pacific's leading steel provider. With ten subsidiaries located both in Singapore and abroad, the organisation gives its scholars superlative opportunities for career progression and personal and professional growth.

"Over the years, I've been given different assignments. Typically, my personal mission is to leave a positive difference in each assignment that I'm given," says Pek Hoong, who has gained much exposure through his involvement in different job functions within the organisation.

After graduating with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, Pek Hoong joined NSH as an Engineer in the steel plant and subsequently also took on a project management role.

"I was involved in operating the plant for higher productivity and higher efficiency. Over the years, I've been involved in technology transfer," he elaborates.

"We've brought a lot of technological know-how from Germany and Japan to our operations here and have built it up as a very efficient plant."

Today, the 34-year-old manages the business, commercial, and financial aspects of NatSteel Recycling, which is the largest metal recycler in Singapore, processing more than 0.5 million tonnes of scrap metal into high quality, radiation-free construction steel annually.

"I see my job as General Manager as leading a group of team members towards achieving our vision," Pek Hoong enthuses. "NatSteel talks about being the global benchmark for value creation and corporate citizenship. So in addition to being a profitable company, we also aim to be a responsible one in achieving our goals."

AN INCLUSIVE CULTURE

The valuable experience Pek Hoong has gained throughout his career at NSH is not limited to technical engineering and operational work. With its focus on employee development, NSH has also enabled him to upgrade his leadership and management skills. The organisation believes that when given the right



opportunities, employees can contribute to the business – and even the industry – on a much bigger scale.

"Over the years, I have had the opportunity to take part in some overseas training. I'm currently doing an Executive MBA Programme, facilitated by the National University of Singapore," says Pek Hoong, with regard to the regional training programme held in China, India, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam. "The multi-country approach gives us exposure to the whole business environment, and we have a lot of interaction with participants from various countries in the Asia Pacific."

"Because the company has a very supportive environment, good ideas get translated into reality," he adds. "The improvements we've made in the NatSteel team made a difference to the employees, and also the company, in terms of achieving both its financial and non-financial goals."

For Pek Hoong, seeing his ideas as well as those of his colleagues translate into real and impactful results gives him great job satisfaction.

"People with ideas to bring improvement to the organisation are

provided with a lot of encouragement and support," he says. "We should aspire to make improvements to our lives every day – not to make our lives less stressful, but to make it better, be it environmentally or operationally."

FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS

Certainly, NSH's inclusive and accepting culture discourages the typecasting of unique individuals. "We appreciate diversity in personality and talent. We believe that different types of talents can also make good business leaders," shares Pek Hoong.

He advises that potential scholars must be sure that the engineering industry is the right one for them. "We're not just picking people with the best academic results. We're choosing people with the best leadership potential to be future business leaders."

"Go for what you really want and what you do best, and always believe in continuous learning and improvement. One should never expect that we have no room for improvement," he concludes. ✦