Business Internships in Singapore

PARTCIPANT FEEDBACK

Planning Resources
Estimated expenses spreadsheet, pre departure guide, family members who have lived abroad, google, students from Singapore at the U of M, websites (“thesmartlocal”, and “lonelyplanet”).

Arrival/Orientation
Pickup service but you have to arrive in a specific two hour time window (hard with flight delays). Taxi is recommended to get to the apartment, although you can get an EZ link card to take the train. After arrival, there is an orientation that included an escorted city tour, training sessions, public transportation how-to..etc.

Visas
Done online through the Ministry of Manpower of Singapore website. Process is simple and straightforward. After arriving in Singapore, students went to the MoM and work permits arrived a week later. With the permits, international travel became more convenient and it was nice to have local identification.

Advising
There was one contact in the country and one contact at the school. They regularly connected with students to check in.

Language Learning
Almost everybody speaks English. No need to study the language.

Housing
GAV found the housing and handled all of the logistics. Rent was included in the total cost of the program. A little cramped but excellent amenities. Apartment was serviced so bedding and towels were replaced every two days. Included a swimming pool, tennis courts, gym, and pool table. Located at a shopping mall in the center of Singapore’s most famed shopping district. Apartments were set up with three bedrooms (each with two beds), two bathrooms, a kitchen, living room, dining room, and washing machine.

Meals
Lunch was usually out with coworkers. Fast food is more expensive but local food is cheaper. The Newton Hawker center is very overpriced compared to other nearly identical options. Groceries are more expensive than eating out. Each meal was around $3-6.

Transportation
Local MRT (their subway system) and bus systems. Around $3 everyday to go to work and back. Grab, which is essentially Singapore’s uber (although cheaper). Lots of taxis. Average commute time was 25 minutes although some approached an hour.
Cultural Adjustment
Not so much a cultural adjustment as an adjustment to life in a large city with a lot of people. Small language barrier. People are nice and helpful. Generally relaxed and fun environment. Very westernized and the main differences are in driving and meal time. Weekend trips to other Asian countries provided more of a culture shock.

Culture Recommendations
Talk to locals, and go to as many parts of the city as possible. Stand on the left side of escalators, walk on the right.

Recommended Activities
Cheap flights to the surrounding countries. Suggestions include: Malacca, Malaysia, Jakarta, Thailand, Indonesia, Bali, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Philippines. Recommended activities: Marina Bay Sands, Altitude Sky Bar, the Gardens by the Bay, Botanical Gardens, Clarke Quay, Sentosa Islands, Zouk Nightclub, Tree Top HSBC Hike, Singapore Zoo Night Safari, ION Orchard Shopping mall...etc.

Budgeting
Recommend spending less on leisure activities like night life and more on experiential activities but it depends on the person. Spent more than expected because although food was cheaper, everything else was more expensive. Singapore is a very cash based country so try to keep track of how much you’re spending on a spreadsheet.

Scholarships
LAC, CGI

Packing
Try not to over pack. Bring deodorant and cardigans (it can get cold in the office), t-shirts, shorts, an umbrella, swimsuit, water bottle...etc. Leave heavy clothing at home and sweaters are unnecessary. Generally dress a little more formal than the United States.

Program Fit
Someone who loves to try new things and is open to it. Confident, a good communicator, and ok with being in a very large city and finding and routine in the chaos. Very easy to fit into Singapore and almost anyone can have a good time as long as they make the most of it and do as much as possible. It is also very expensive which is important to put into consideration.

Advice
Singapore is modern and western but search to find areas that are not. Don’t go into the internship thinking that it will be like internships here in the US. Instead, see it as an opportunity to explore Singapore rather than further your career. If you are worried about safety, it is a very safe place to be. Make friends with the other interns as you can travel with them and it just makes the whole experience better.