

# **ADDRESS BY MS LOW KHAH GEK, CEO/ITE, AT THE WORK-LEARN TECHNICAL DIPLOMA SIGNING CEREMONY, ON FRI 2 NOV 2018 AT 4.00 PM, AT AUDITORIUM, TAY ENG SOON CONVENTION CENTRE**

Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Education

Mr Bob Tan, Chairman, ITE

Members of the ITE Board

Partners and Guests from Industry

ITE Colleagues and students

Ladies and Gentlemen

## **Introduction**

- 1 Welcome to the ITE Work-Learn Technical Diploma Signing Ceremony. 113 companies and industry partners are here today to indicate their commitment to take on Work-Learn Technical Diploma trainees. We thank you for your strong commitment to be a co-training partner with ITE and your firm endorsement of the value of our Work-Learn Technical Diplomas.
- 2 We are also very glad that Minister Ong has once again agreed to be our Guest-of-Honour to witness the WLTD Signing Ceremony.
- 3 Minister was with us last year when we launched the first four WLTDs:
  - Marine and Offshore Engineering
  - Mechanical and Electrical Services Supervision
  - Rehabilitation Care
  - Security Systems Engineering
- 4 Today, we are launching 10 more new WLTDs. They are:
  - Chemical Process Technology
  - Community Engagement & Development
  - Data Centre Infrastructure & Operation

- Hotel & Restaurant Management
- Lifestyle & Recreation Management
- Logistics & Supply Chain Management
- Microelectronics
- Patient Management & Services
- Port Automation Technology
- Vertical Transportation

5 These 14 WLTDs will offer ITE graduates skills upgrading options across a wide range of industry sectors. The unique feature of the WLTD is that it leverages ITE's hallmark 'learn-by-doing' approach. The learning is 70% on-the-job in the companies and 30% off-the-job on campus. The industry are ITE's training partners – we develop the curriculum together, we determine the skills and standards together, we also deliver the training together. This approach benefits both the industries and the ITE graduates. Industries are assured of having workers equipped with the relevant skills while ITE graduates have an upgrading pathway that suits their learning style as well as enable them to achieve a diploma and career progression.

### **Experiences of First Batch of WLTD Trainees**

6 For the first 4 WLTDs, we have more than 100 trainees training in 33 companies. Their experiences have been positive. Let me share the stories of two WLTD trainee:

- Nur Adriana Puteri. She graduated from a *Higher Nitec* in Security System Integration course and took up the WLTD in Security Systems Engineering. She was hired and had started working in O'Connor's Singapore Pte Ltd since April this year. Adriana said that she chose the WLTD pathway as it provided her with all the benefits of a full-time job (salary and work experience) as well as a chance to learn, upgrade and earn a diploma. Adriana has been deployed to different work areas at O'Connor's and is impressed with the exposure and learning opportunities provided.

O'Connor's is equally satisfied with the WLTD programme and with Adriana. O'Connor's has expressed confidence in the progress of its current 2 WLTD trainees

and is training them to take on team leadership roles at the end of their WLTD (in Oct 2020). This is excellent news. I am happy that both trainees and employer alike are benefitting from the WLTD programme.

- Another trainee, Ong Ye Wei, shared an equally good experience in his WLTD. Ye Wei is a graduate from the *Nitec* in Facility Technology course. He started work at Technique Air-Conditioning & Engineering Pte Ltd in April this year. Like Adriana, he took up the WLTD because he could gain work experience and achieve a diploma at the end of 2.5 years. Ye Wei has also been exposed to different work areas and has picked up different skills in the last six months. He credits his colleagues and supervisors for their friendliness and willingness to impart knowledge. Because of Ye Wei's good progress and work attitude, the company has entrusted him with the role of Safety Supervisor in one project.

Trainees like Ye Wei are in demand in the built industry. Like many construction companies, Technique Air-conditioning & Engineering finds it challenging attracting local talents. The WLTD programme helps to build up a pool of local talent to support the built industry. The companies have observed that ITE graduates' foundation in Engineering has enabled them to learn and pick up the necessary skills quickly. There are good career progression opportunities and the companies hope to groom them to take up higher jobs in this industry.

## **Longer Term Targets**

- 7 With the support of 113 companies as our co-trainers and partners for the 14 WLTDs, we expect to have an intake of 350 places. In the next few years, ITE will step up our efforts to engage and work with industry to develop more WLTDs. We recognise that the WLTD pathway will certainly enhance the skills-upgrading and career progression opportunities for ITE graduates as they will have another option beyond the full-time and part-time diploma programmes. ITE will thus expand the WLTD options and grow the number of WLTD places. Our target is that by 2022, we are able to provide WLTD

places for 7% of each cohort. And, if the demand and support stay strong, the WLTD places may even go up to 10%.

## **Conclusion**

8 I would like to express our appreciation to all our industry partners for working with ITE in this win-win skills-training journey towards developing a highly-skilled workforce for Singapore. I look forward to your continued support as we continue this exciting and rewarding journey together in the years ahead.

Thank you.