

Graduating students urged to stay positive

askST@NLB podcast speakers discuss concerns over job market, offer advice

Cheryl Tan

Graduating students looking for full-time jobs in the post-Covid-19 job market are likely to face significant challenges.

Job postings have fallen by around 15 per cent year on year since April and hiring growth rates have declined since February.

Unemployment is expected to reach 5 per cent or more.

“But all is not doom and gloom,” said *The Straits Times* senior education correspondent Sandra Davie.

Efforts are currently under way to help fresh graduates.

Up to 21,000 SGUnited Traineeship programmes for Institute of Technical Education, polytechnic and university graduates will be co-funded by the Government. So far, over 1,000 companies have committed to offering 11,000 traineeships.

As part of the second episode of the askST@NLB podcast series, Ms Davie and Professor Ho Teck Hua, National University of Singapore senior deputy president and provost, addressed the concerns shared by many disheartened students.

They reminded graduating students that they are only at the begin-

ning of their working lives and that it is possible for them to get good jobs when the market recovers, as long as they plan out their career journey correctly. “If you are deciding on a traineeship, internship or a master’s degree – go for one that will help build your skills set and resume,” said Ms Davie.

Prof Ho ended the session by offering some advice. He said: “You are only at the beginning of your career. Take a long-term perspective – ask yourself: Where do I want to be five years from now?”

“Second, choose your next opportunity so that it will bring you closer to landing your ideal job. Third, continue to make yourself more marketable by acquiring new skills and (pursuing) more job opportunities. Fourth, develop your personal brand – it’s critical to let people know who you are, and what you’re good at.

“Finally, be hopeful and work very, very hard. Try, and then try again.”

The 19-minute podcast, part of a collaboration between ST and the National Library Board (NLB), was released yesterday and is available for free on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, ST Facebook



Efforts are under way to help fresh graduates. These include up to 21,000 SGUnited Traineeship programmes for Institute of Technical Education, polytechnic and university graduates that will be co-funded by the Government. ST FILE PHOTO

page, radio station Money FM 89.3 and at str.sg/JPJU.

The talks were previously held at the Central Public Library in Victoria Street, but the sessions have now become a podcast series recorded remotely in the light of

Covid-19 safe distancing measures.

The third episode, slated for June 19, will feature ST’s manpower correspondent Joanna Seow, Singapore Human Resources Institute president Low Peck Kem and Singapore National Employers Federa-

tion executive director Sim Gim Guan.

It is titled *Work In A Time Of Covid-19*. The episode will examine new ideas about working in offices, the significance of the workplace and the sustainability of the work-

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PROFESSOR HO TECK HUA, NUS senior deputy president and provost.

force now that businesses are gradually resuming activities.

Readers can send in questions for the speakers by 6pm on June 14 at str.sg/jdge.

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