

CPA Australia
Plan Your Own Enterprise Competition 2009

Trip to Shanghai
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We departed from Perth just after midnight and arrived in Shanghai at around 11:30am after transiting in Hong Kong. Upon our arrival, we met with Helen who took us to a coach to take us to the hotel. The initial journey was mesmerizing. Even before leaving the airport, we could see the architectural feats in infrastructure and the sheer number of people living in the city. On our way to the Jin Jiang Hotel, we managed to get a glimpse of the World Expo site as well as the exteriors of the Australian and Chinese Pavilions. After a quick freshen up, we took the subway to Nanjing Road, a seemingly endless shopping street stretching over 6km. It was there where we had our first meal in Shanghai, which was delicious. After walking the journey with some brief stops to admire the scenery, we reached the famous Shanghai Bund. It had started to become cold but the view from the settlement strip was amazing. We could see the Huangpu River, Pearl Tower, the World Financial Centre and the enormous Shanghai skyline. At the same time, we were able to soak in the classical architecture of the Bund and witness the renovation of the famous Peace Hotel. It is truly remarkable how large the Shanghai city centre is! Before returning to the hotel, we did some browsing back in Nanjing Road before the weather forced us to desperately search for a taxi. For dinner, we indulged in a local Shanghai restaurant with some exotic food choices before exploring the local area around our hotel.



Wednesday 7 April 2010

Today, our first stop was the 'Shanghai No. 4 Secondary School' located in Xujiahui, a business centre in Shanghai. Upon our arrival, we were greeted by Dong Chunmei, the Project Manager of the Xuhui Education Bureau and other school officials. The school had a

large neon board stating “Welcome the Australian Delegation” and was written in Chinese. The school is highly regarded amongst the population and is considered a “king school” or an elite school in terms of academic performance. After a quick glance at the exterior of the school, we were taken to the board room where school officials gave us a presentation on the school, its curriculum and activities. Surprisingly, some of the co-curricular programs



were similar with Australian options and the school had multimedia labs and a data projector in every classroom! Afterwards, we proceeded to a Chinese Art History lesson where we spoke about the business plan and about Australia before watching the school’s top teacher carry out the lesson. At the change of lessons, we went to the board room and ate a typical teacher’s lunch. At the school, every

student is provided with a set, healthy lunch everyday which is eaten during class. A few students who had joined us for lunch were invited for a one-on-one discussion where we compared life in Australia and China and our respective education systems.

After leaving the school, we proceeded to take a subway down to Xin Tian Di and the French Concession Area where we met Evelyn who guided us around and showed us some of the highlights. The area is popular amongst foreigners for cafes and shopping as it boasts unique architecture and a sense of home. We also visited the museum where the first meeting of the Communist Party of China (CPC) was held. This is the current political party in power.

After returning to the hotel for a short while, we departed for our visit to a Chinese home and enjoy a typical Chinese family meal. It turns out we were going to Evelyn’s parent’s home, who is the wife of our tour guide, Charles Lee. The journey to the home from the city centre took around an hour and it is located on the border between the inner and middle rings of the Shanghai. The complex seemed like a miniature city in itself with hundreds of townhouses next to each other in rows. Upon our arrival, we were greeted by Evelyn and her parents and we were offered tea and some snacks. Charles took us on a tour of the three-storey townhouse before showing us around the complex. There was certainly strong evidence that the people cared a lot about the presentation of their homes with fish ponds, greenery and lots of plants as well as playgrounds and exercise areas. Afterwards, we had dinner where Evelyn’s mother had prepared homemade dumplings, lotus flower and chicken amongst the other dishes. After lengthy discussions and the sharing of stories, Evelyn showed us typical eye exercises that all students do at school.

Thursday 8 April 2010

We started the day looking for a place to eat breakfast and found ourselves in the park where the locals perform their morning tai-chi exercises. There were Expo 2010 volunteers cleaning up the streets and we ended up eating at a local fast food chain, Uncle Fastfood.

We then met Helen who took us to the World Financial Centre by the subway. The building was enormously high and clearly was taller than any other building in the city centre. We visited the 94th, 97th and 100th floors of the World Financial Centre, taking photos and admiring the view from such an amazing height. It was interesting to walk on the glass sky-walk and see the ground so far beneath us!

We then caught the subway to CapitaLand Raffles Place where we met Chen and Lin, two teenage students in Charles's English class at his University. We ate a large bowl of noodle soup and discussed life in Australia and China and their aspirations to explore the world, particularly America and Europe as they were also geography students. Chen and Lin then took us to the nearby Shanghai Urban Planning Authority where we saw the site plans for Expo 2010 and the future of Shanghai in physical 3D models. The Shanghai City model was enormous and stretched across the entire room, with an upcoming tower taller than the World Financial Centre already planned!

Afterwards, we walked to the Shanghai Museum where countless historical relics and cultural items are on display. Chinese history is very rich and extensive, stretching thousands of years and a small sample of this quickly filled the four-floor museum, which was heavily guarded and under constant patrol.

Friday 9 April 2010

Our first visit for today was to Austrade where we met Luisa Rust, Trade Commissioner at the Australian Consulate General Commercial Section (Austrade). She explained a lot on how the Chinese economy is growing, particularly in Shanghai as well as the necessary steps and precautions when doing business with China. We discussed the Runaway Tracking Business Plan and how



exportation of the product to the Chinese market could be feasible. After some quick photos, we walked down Nanjing Road West to the local Donut King restaurant where we met Irina Mach of AustCham Shanghai. Having never heard of AustCham before, it was fascinating to hear about the services they provide to Australian businesses and individuals who are members in Shanghai to make them feel more comfortable and assist them where possible. We also discussed how the Sydney-based Donut King was one of the many franchises which have invested in the Chinese economy.

After lunch, we returned to the same building as the Australian Consulate General/Austrade and went to visit CPA Australia's Shanghai office, where we met Ella Gu, General Manager. Unfortunately, Lawrence Lau, President of the CPA Australia Shanghai Committee was unable to be present as his daughter had an accident earlier that day. However, we were

able to have a telephone conference where we discussed the financial, business operations and marketing aspects of the Runaway Tracking Business Plan. Mr. Lau seemed to think that the idea could be easily applied in the Chinese market, considering his friend had lost a pet



not long ago! We also discussed CPA Australia and how it is progressing within the Chinese and Shanghai market for chartered accountants. Both Mr Lau and Ms. Gu seemed to be very intelligent and business-minded people and it was wonderful to have a discussion with such passionate and experienced members of the business community.

That evening, we battled the cold on the river cruise of the Huangpu River, the same one we visited on our first day. After managing to find the dock (the taxi driver had dropped us at the wrong spot!), we saw hundreds of tour buses parked in the overcrowded parking area. There were literally thousands of people scrambling to get on different boats. When we were finally on the boat, we admired the Shanghai skyline at night and the Bund, both of which dominated the scene. It was amazing to be able to see both the Bund and the city at the same time, a great contrast of the old and new in Shanghai.

Saturday 10 April 2010

On our last full day in Shanghai, we visited the Yu Garden where we saw lots of traditional architecture and wonderful scenery. We were guided by both Charles and Lin who were showing us around and identifying the key attractions at this enormously large site. My parents decided to try on the traditional Chinese costumes of the Emperor and the Empress which was great for a photo shoot! After taking lots of photos, we did some browsing in the shops while Lin went to get a table at the famous dumpling restaurant, Nanxiang Mantou Dian – where hundreds of people queue up and the waiting time was at least 30 minutes for a table. Although we had squeezed 7 people at a table designed for 4, the dumplings were delicious and they were something you would not want to miss! We then looked around the shopping area once more and visited the tea expo being run before returning back to our hotel and having a bit of free time.

Conclusion

The trip to Shanghai was an amazing experience and allowed me to experience the culture and heritage of the Chinese people. Shanghai is really a developing city that continually changes overnight. In preparation for Shanghai Expo 2010, the city has undergone a transformation which will surely make it noticed on a world stage. The trip has helped me see that the Chinese economy is really growing substantially and that they continue to progress in all areas, particularly in education. For the future, the trip will certainly be

beneficial in both my secondary and tertiary education, but also throughout my career, wherever that may lie. It has also helped me learn more Mandarin and reinforced the knowledge that the language is widespread and will expand its grasp on our society, both in Australia and abroad.

Some of the experiences we gained from the trip are irreplaceable and are not usually part of a usual holiday itinerary, such as visiting a local school or a typical Chinese family home and I am enormously grateful to Charles Lee, his family and students as well as Helen who all took the time out of their busy lives to look after us and take us around Shanghai.

The Plan Your Own Enterprise Competition has been an amazing experience in itself, from writing the business plan in my Perth school, travelling to Brisbane for the national judging and travelling to Shanghai. It has been a wonderful journey and one that I am sure will never forget.

However, the competition and this trip would not have been possible without the efforts, contributions and generosity of so many people. I would like to thank **CPA Australia**, **Christine Reid**, **Raelene Stock** and the staff of **Business Educators Australasia** and **Catherine McOmish** and the staff and management of **NGT Travel**, all of whom have poured countless hours to make this trip as enjoyable as it was. Thank you to the organisers, sponsors and anyone involved in the competition for creating such an amazing and wonderful opportunity for me and future participants. I encourage and strongly recommend this competition to students who are interested in business as it is a real milestone to create a business plan! It has been an honour to be presented with the chance to make such a difference to my life and take part in such an amazing competition.

Darren Wee
2009 Winner
CPA Plan Your Own Enterprise Competition

