

Nippon Koei Trip Report

by Jeremy Gavriel

On Tuesday, October 16th 2018, the 2nd year GSEP students were given the opportunity to visit Nippon Koei 日本工営株式会社, which is considered Japan's No. 1 International Engineering Consultant company. Accompanying us were Eden-sensei, Alvin-sensei, Azril-sensei, and Ogiuchi-san. We gathered in front of the Ookayama station at 15.10 pm, and then took the Meguro Line, transferred to the Hanzomon Line at Nagatacho, and finally stopped at Kudanshita, the nearest station to the company's Headquarters.

The event started around at 17.00 pm where we were kindly greeted and given a few presentations from the company's staff including the chief engineer, Hiroshi Tanaka, and other staffs that are Tokyo Tech graduates like Dr. Rubel Das, Mr. Takahashi Nakajima, and Mr. Keisuke Kusuhara. Basically, what they did was give us an introduction to the company and their research facilities, what kind of work they are involved in, and the various past projects they did. I was certainly astonished by the longevity of the company, not to mention their deep experience in handling various cases all around the world. From the Lach Huyen port construction project in Vietnam, the Bali beach conservation project in Indonesia, and their recently accomplished New Thaketa bridge project in Myanmar.

After that, at 17.30 pm we were given a brief tour around the company itself. We went to their history gallery, the actual Japanese style office/workplace filled with busy people and their laptops, which gave us a really thorough insight to the working environment and background. It turns out, Nippon Koei's success in this matter also accounts for their uniqueness in operating research facilities for case purposes as a consulting company, which most do not. Their own R&D center located in Tsukuba Science City, Ibaraki Prefecture, was built in 1992, exactly 26 years ago. However, this does not compare to the company's establishment in 1946, which makes Nippon Koei Japan's oldest independent consulting firm. Well, this was all thanks to the company's founder, Yutaka Kubota, who started this at the age of 56 years old with his expertise of Civil Engineering.

Finally, as dinner time approached, we ended the company tour with a party. Before we started off with the usual "Kanpai!", Mr. Hiroshi said a few interesting words that made me realized this company visit was much due to the friendly relationship between Tokyo Tech and Nippon Koei. Notwithstanding, many of the company staff are actually graduates of Tokyo Tech, especially the international staff. This actually reminded me how important having good connections are.

Overall, this company visit has certainly gave me not only a good perspective as to what a consulting company does, but also the working culture and system of a Japanese company. If given the opportunity to work in Japan, I believe my knowledge gained from this visit will assist me in making me future-decisions.

Last but not least, I would like to give my thanks to our partners and friends at Nippon Koei and the GSEP faculty for making this visit a success. Otsukaresama deshita!