

In the Eyes of Young Recruits



They are bright, capable and well educated; they are also articulate, alert and lively. What they lack in experience they make up for in enthusiasm. If they really put their mind to it, the world is theirs for the asking.

They are some of our young recruits, our “investments” in the future and the foundation of our human resources policy of grooming from the base. Filled with aspirations and keen to explore, young recruits are a vital source of energy who will add value to the organisation as they mature. They are also the building blocks for succession planning, which, in itself, is critical to the sustainable success of any organisation.

On the next two pages, four junior executives from various disciplines – Fiona Tse, Becky Chung, Amy Fung and Ernest Kong – share with us how the SFC appeals to them as an employer as well as their views on their current work and their future aspirations.

The young interviewees are unanimously upbeat about the SFC as an employer. When they came to the SFC, they were looking for work that they would enjoy and a structured environment for career development. And they are glad to note that the SFC has more than met their expectations.

Fiona, who has a Master’s of Law from the University of Oxford, speaks with a strong sense of mission. “I really would like to serve the wider community,” she says. An assistant manager of Policy, China and Investment Products, Fiona assists in relationship building with the Mainland and overseas regulatory authorities, regulatory developments and policy recommendation. She believes her job offers a good fit with her personal interest in global financial and economic law. “The prospect of having to ride with the dynamics of the market and to work in a multiple-stakeholder environment is really interesting,” she says.

“The work I get to do each day can be very different, and it’s very action-packed!”

– Fiona Tse

Becky, an executive trainee in Enforcement who also has law credentials, opted to be with a regulator as opposed to being regulated after a brief stint in compliance work with a securities



house. After just a few months at the SFC, she is happy to declare that her new job more than matches her expectations. "Being new and junior, I expected to be assigned all sorts of tedious, boring tasks," she says. "But it's turned out to be totally different." She gets to carry out inspections of intermediaries, participate in investigations and even in court cases.

"I get to participate in investigating cases, conduct site inspection at broker firms, go to court, interview people and many other things."

– Becky Chung

Amy, who has risen from the ranks of executive trainee to assistant manager in less than two years, took her familiarity with securities trading systems and operational flow as her selling point when she joined the SFC's Intermediaries Supervision Department. Coming from a securities systems vendor that she describes as "rather disorganised", she has been especially impressed by the operational structure of the SFC and has been quick to apply her knowledge of the securities market's operational flow to her current job.

"The increasing external expectation of the SFC has been a source of motivation to upkeep our standards and always strive for improvement."

– Amy Fung

"Regulators are a rather special category of organisations in the market, and it was this nature that appealed to me the most," says Ernest, a manager specialising in media relations in the External Relations Department. "My general interest in financial regulation issues was also a reason why I joined the SFC." For a former financial journalist, the SFC job was an "about-turn" that takes him from a "rather passive position of reporting fed information to an active role of managing what information to release". He describes this as "a very interesting and eye-opening experience" that gives him "a fuller picture of the market".

The four describe life at the SFC as hectic but fulfilling. Amy thinks that the combination of on-site and off-site inspection work has been giving her well-rounded training not commonly available in the commercial sector. Ernest, who started his new job on the same day that Lehman Brothers collapsed, has been kept "busier" than he wished. But he values the incredible

experience gained from managing during a crisis and is thankful for the checks and controls on work processes that keep him meticulous at all times. Fiona, whose days are often action-packed, says she has plenty of opportunities to learn. Becky finds internal training programmes very practical.

One common goal among the interviewees is their desire to contribute to a better market for participants and investors. Amy believed that the increasing external expectation of the SFC has been a source of motivation to always strive for improvement. "I really hope that our work will help make a difference to the market and that our hard work will be recognised," she says. Although work has been increasing partly due to the recent global financial turmoil, Fiona takes pride in contributing in the forefront of regulatory development.

Although work is hard, no one complains partly because of the "family feeling". Both Becky and Ernest appreciate how "friendly and helpful" their colleagues and supervisors are. Fiona recalls fondly the "excellent team atmosphere" at the divisional Christmas party. Ernest also expresses surprise that the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer actually take time to host regular sharing sessions with staff.

Despite the relatively short time they have spent with the SFC, they are quick to learn what it takes to succeed in the organisation. For key qualities, they highlight a can-do attitude, stamina, integrity, and sensitivity to changes in the social and political scenes. And despite their high academic achievements, they all agree that they still have a lot to learn. Fiona finds it a fulfilling experience to be working with "an amazing pool of talent". Becky agrees. "With all the smart, knowledgeable and highly-qualified colleagues around me, I'm very inspired to further my study, and I know I still have so much to learn here," she says.

"The culture of having regular sharing sessions with top management is something which I appreciate."

– Ernest Kong

In the eyes of these young people, the "foreseeable future" means a few years down the road. In that time span, their target is to move up the ladder in their various disciplines within the SFC – a pragmatic and very achievable goal.