

## **Workshop on Professional Writing - Essential Skills to become 'Ir'**

(12 March 2018)

By Ir F.C. CHAN

On the evening of 12 March 2018, the Young Members Committee (YMC) organized a workshop on the captioned topic at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Ir F.C. CHAN, past President of The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, was honourably invited to conduct the workshop. Ir Chan is experienced engineer and assessor in the field over the years.

Ir Chan first gave an introduction to the routes to HKIE Corporate Membership. Professional Assessment is an essential component. Interview and essay writing are the two major parts in the Professional Assessment process. In addition to technical competency, good writing and communication skills are essential skills of a Professional Engineer. This workshop focuses on the Essay Writing part. During assessment, candidate was given two hours to write the essay with a choice of two topics that related to general engineering knowledge and one's experience. The essay should be approximately 1600 words.

After the introduction to the essay writing assessment, Ir Chan explained the key to writing a good essay. It was simply 5 components. They are Knowledge of the Subject, Relevance of the Answer, Clarity of argument, Presentation and Grammar. For Knowledge of the Subject, avoid writing matters that you do not have 100% certainty. For Relevance of the Answer, one must address the topic with relevant answer, for example by giving some historical background or the impact in the engineering field that co-related with the topic. For Clarity of argument, Ir Chan suggested one to structure the essay by giving it heading and subheadings. For Presentation, Ir Chan stressed the importance of using short sentences instead of complex sentences. Simple wordings that are good enough for presenting your ideas. Lastly, for Grammar, Ir Chan reminded one to use active voice and direct speech. Be aware of the choice of words and singular versus plural.

In the last session of the workshop, attendees were given 30 minutes to write an essay for approximately 400 words on a given topic to practice the skills learnt in the workshop. After the workshop, Ir Chan will return the essay with marked comments to attendees for them to understand their current level and possible improvements. At the end, Ir Chan advised more reading and practices were the key to success!

This workshop was certainly rewarding to all attendees and candidates. On behalf of the YMC, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to Ir F.C. CHAN for his generous sharing and encouragement to young engineers.



Ir FC Chan had given a short essay exercise for participants to practise their writing skills.