

Speech by Er. Chong Kee Sen, President, The Institution of Engineers, Singapore, at the Graduation Ceremony of the Young Engineers Leadership Programme (YEL Programme) on Monday, 19 October 2015 at (NTUC Centre)

Our Guest-of-Honour, Minister Chan Chun Sing, Secretary-General, NTUC,

Representatives from our partner, NTUC:

Members of Central Committee, Ms Mary Liew

Assistant Secretary-General, Mr Zainal Sapari

Director U Associate and Future Leaders Programme, Mr Vivek Kumar

Members of IES and NTUC,

All the young engineers amongst us today,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

1. I am happy and excited to be here today to witness the graduation of the inaugural batch of engineers from the Young Engineers Leadership Programme, or the YEL Programme. I would like to thank all of you for joining us to celebrate this momentous occasion with the YEL Programme graduates.
2. On behalf of The Institution of Engineers, Singapore (IES), I would like to express my appreciation to NTUC for partnering us on this programme and to Minister Chan for gracing today's ceremony as the Guest-of-Honour.
3. This year, being Singapore's Golden Jubilee, has been a year of celebrations of our nation's achievements. Engineering has been a major pillar supporting our growth and development in the last 50 years. As our nation moves beyond its 50th year, we need a new generation of competent and passionate engineers to build on the foundation laid by our pioneer engineers for a sustainable future.

4. Engineers have made significant contributions through both engineering and management roles across many industries and in both the public and private sectors. A good example is Er. Tan Gee Paw, the Chairman of PUB whom Minister Khaw Boon Wan recently called “the man who made water engineering sexy. He played a leading role to diversify the country’s water sources and oversaw the development of NEWater. He is indeed one of the many engineering role models who could inspire the young to make a positive impact to society.
5. As the national society of engineers for Singapore, IES’ core mission is to advance and promote the science, arts, and profession of engineering. This entails nurturing future engineering leaders to make a difference in Singapore’s progress towards SG100.
6. Apart from enthusing our younger generation into engineering, we also need to engage them by providing them with opportunities to develop their leadership potential. In the beginning phase of their career of any young engineers, they are often placed in projects requiring specific engineering skills. IES therefore initiated the YEL Programme last year with the aim of helping young engineers reflect on bigger perspectives of the role of an engineer.
7. We wanted to create a platform to groom young engineers into next-generation leaders, through equipping and exposure. We wanted to equip them with a powerful combination of advanced technology management knowledge and strategic leadership skills and expose them to the insights and thinking of policy makers, C-level executives and industry leaders over a one-year training period.
8. Today, IES is very excited to see the first fruits of the YEL Programme. Close to 200 bright young engineers from over 20 industry sectors will be graduating and they are from various industries ranging from electronics and biomedical to aerospace and chemical.

9. I am also pleased to share with you that we have received extremely positive feedback from this inaugural batch of graduands. In fact, according to the employability survey developed with e2i, over 90% of the participants have rated the programme positively, suggesting that it has given an importance boost to their confidence in their individual employability. The majority of them shared that they valued the opportunity to have conversations with C-suite executives. We are encouraged by this feedback, as it ascertains the relevance of the YEL Programme to the aspirations of young engineers and its value in building them to become future leaders of Singapore.
10. At this juncture, I would like to congratulate all the YEL Programme graduates on achieving a significant milestone in your lives today. Although you have come to the end of the course, IES and NTUC are committed to be your partner in your future career progressions. We encourage you to continue to leverage on IES as a platform to engage with other engineers in the community, exchange ideas with them and advance your knowledge as an engineering professional.
11. The positive results achieved for the YEL Programme so far is a great start. Leveraging on this momentum, we have already started YEL Programme 2 based on the feedback received from the first batch of trainees. For example, we have reduced the class size from 200 to 100 students to facilitate greater interactions with the lecturers for upcoming intakes.
12. IES is also developing a holistic engineer career progression master plan with NTUC. The master plan will look comprehensively at helping engineers at different stages of their careers, raise standards in the engineering field and groom a strong pipeline of engineering leaders.
13. Besides helping young engineers through the YEL Programme, the master plan will also focus on equipping mid-level engineers with the skills needed to take on senior roles. The Advanced Engineering Leadership Programme will be developed based on discussions with industry players so that it will be highly

relevant to their needs. A focus group has already been formed to develop this programme.

14. Before I end, I would like to thank all the industry partners, experienced engineers and employers who have extended strong support towards the YEL Programme. Thank you for your time, effort and for striving towards a common goal with IES.

15. IES aims to continue to work with NTUC and all our partners to strengthen the employability of engineers and create future engineering leaders for the continued progress of Singapore.

16. Thank you and have a great day ahead!