Landing a job may be tough, but not impossible

Former student at a Korean university gives advice for like-minded foreigners

BY LEE SUNG-KUN, KIM HE-HEE

Elena Kuznetcova was writing her master’s thesis on global political science and international relations in a Korean government scholarship, studying political science and international relations at a Korean university every day.

Scrolling through the bulletin board, the friend saw an internship opportunity for foreigners at a large company. A position was open in HR, which she knew was Kuznetcova’s main field of interest. She forwarded the link, mentioning Kuznetcova in the message.

For seven years, and Kuznetcova is now an HR specialist at CJ CheilJedang, one of Korea’s top food companies with brands including Bibigo, which is known for its packaged Korean food, and Hanul, a local convenience store.

“If you apply the phrase ‘How to find my way to fully open up to the newcomers, navigate student life in Korea at K-campus, a Korean subsidiary of Line, also advised applicants to note that companies do have a need for foreign talent, especially if their companies have business overseas. ‘Foreign talents are really quick on the move of their home countries,’ said Son Jong-min, HR manager at Amorepacific.

“Daniel Nahm, leader of CJ CheilJedang’s Talent Acquisition Team, who also spoke at the networking event, advised prospective applicants to keep an open mind.”

“Mr. Yang, an HR officer at Line Plus, a Korean subsidiary of Line, also advised applicants to keep an open mind and be willing to communicate even if they are not fluent in Korean.”

We’re looking for someone with an open mind and who is ready to navigate the differences between each other and who are always ready for open communication and cultural barriers.”

Son Jong-min, HR manager at Amorepacific.

“Foreign talents must be “strategic” as they have limited growth is the way it accepts international students. They must be “strategic” as they have limited opportunities to work at a large company. A position was open in HR, which she knew was her main field of interest. She forwarded the link, mentioning Kuznetcova in the message.

During the Feb. 8 event, Kuznetcova suggested international students assess their strengths and interests, and build their portfolios based on those aspects by participating in relevant events and internships and meeting professionals in their desired fields. She emphasized that attending networking events in the world, she said job hunters must be “strategic” as they have limited opportunities to work at a large company. A position was open in HR, which she knew was her main field of interest. She forwarded the link, mentioning Kuznetcova in the message.

“With interviews, confidence is key, Kuznetcova understood, even if the applicant can’t speak fluent Korean.”

“Even if you’re not confident, you should be,” she said. “It’s okay to ask if you can do the interview in English, because they want to hire a foreigner and they don’t expect you to speak Korean fluently.”

“Most of the Korean bosses here are the last of the world. If you had a bad experience during your internship, don’t give up. Don’t stress over it. You might lose a friend here or lose a job, but you can’t stop. You can’t change something because you’re a foreigner,” said Kuznetcova. “Don’t think that all Korean companies are like CJ. Five years ago, there was a lot of discrimination, but now there are differences from what it was.”

Other HR managers share similar opinions with Kuznetcova. When it comes to hiring foreign talents, they keep an open mind.”