



LAUNCH OF A SMART FACTORY JOURNEY AS FONG'S GEARS UP FOR INDUSTRY 4.0

Singapore, Tuesday, 16th July 2019

Fong's Engineering & Manufacturing Pte Ltd (Fong's) marked a milestone in its history today as the company launched its Smart Factory Journey, a first-of-its-kind among the SMEs in this industry. As part of Fong's Industry 4.0 (i4.0) transformation, the company digitalised and adopted i4.0 solutions to automate one of its manufacturing lines into a lights-out production line. This enables the company to run its production round-the-clock with minimal human intervention, increasing productivity by 30%. Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry, Dr Koh Poh Koon officiate the launch of Fong's Smart Factory Journey today.

Mr Jeremy Fong, Fong's Chief Executive Officer, acknowledged that the global trend towards i4.0 is here to stay. He said, Fong's jumped on the bandwagon by leveraging Industry 4.0 to transform our manufacturing lines. This is a necessary and critical move in order for us to maintain a leader in our field of expertise, be it in Singapore, or overseas. While this will be done in different stages, our vision is to transform the entire workplace into a full-fledged SMART Factory in 3 to 5 years. Our "Smart Factory Journey" is an on-going journey of transformation leveraging advances in modern technology."

The Smart Factory is accomplished through adopting advanced robotics and autonomous intelligent vehicle, a fully integrated system that comes with cross-company data integration and Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT). This forms a network of machines, devices, equipments and products in a multi-directional communication between networked objects, and big data analytics to facilitate real time decision making support and optimization.

The future state for Fong's is to operate with minimal human intervention – one of the pioneer Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Singapore to possess such capabilities.

Fong's worked closely with Enterprise Singapore on its overall expansion and digital transformation strategy. It received specific advice and support through Enterprise Singapore's global networks and assistance programmes, which helped the company build internal capabilities and connect with potential partners for new business opportunities in Fong's key target markets, such as USA. This strong foundation developed has enabled Fong's to further its digital transformation journey, and capture new growth.

Mr Ho Chi Bao, Enterprise Singapore's Director for Advanced Manufacturing, said, "Industry 4.0 is set to transform Singapore's manufacturing industry. Under the Precision Engineering ITM, the adoption of smart manufacturing technologies is one of the key pillars to ensure that Singapore manufacturers, large or small, can remain competitive even with rising costs and manpower challenges. Fong's is a good example of how a Precision Engineering SME continues to increase their capabilities through digitalisation and adopting i4.0 solutions. Enterprise Singapore will continue to partner Fong's and other SMEs and help them embark on their transformation journey."

To speed up the transfer of global capabilities to its employees, Fong's also tapped on Workforce Singapore's Capability Transfer Programme (CTP), and plans to bring in overseas specialists to train its employees locally, as well as to send selected employees for overseas training.

As a strong advocate of training and re-skilling its employees, Fong's ensured that its workers are given the right training as it moved towards i4.0. It contextualised the company's training roadmap to cater to employees' needs and in line with the new skill set required to keep up with the transition. This supports the concept of Worker 4.0, who is equipped with adaptive skills, technology skills and technical skills. The training roadmap covers comprehensive aspects, from mindset changing, to the analysis of training needs.

Fong's has been a close partner with NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) for many years working on recruitment, skills upgrading of workers and productivity improvements. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with the Metal Industries Workers' Union (MIWU) and e2i on 31 May 2019 to form a Company Training Committee (CTC) to look at skills upgrading to get workers ready for industry 4.0. One of the strategic initiatives in the smart factory transition was the support of e2i in the Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) training, which enabled Fong's to upskill workers in new technological skills as the production lines transform to i4.0.

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About Fong's Engineering & Manufacturing Pte Ltd

Founded in 1982, Fong's has since transformed from a precision machining company into a 100% medical Original Design for Manufacturing (ODM) equipment player and manufacturer for high-end medical devices such as endoscopy equipment (ureteroscopes and cystoscopes); power surgical tools; disposable pressure transducers; and adapters for robotic surgical systems. Visit <http://www.fongspl.com.sg> for more information.