

Daping is my first project in Project Mingde. Intuitively, I thought that Project Mingde was a platform for us to train our technical skills learnt from university. It is true and in addition to that, we did understand more practical engineering knowledge from this trip. Nonetheless, apart from engineering technique, we also learnt quite a few non-engineering skills which will be of paramount importance to our engineering career in the future.

First, negotiation skill. A construction project involves a lot of interaction between client, contractors and designers. Hence, a sound negotiation can help reach a consensus. For example, in this Daping trip, we had to negotiate with the Principal of the primary school regarding the necessities of the facilities to be built. We also cooperated with the designers from Shanghai to discuss the feasibility of the construction. These negotiation chances have trained our interpersonal communication skills.

Moreover, planning skill. A good planning can increase the efficiency of construction. Planning actually implies resources allocation, including space, time, labor, etc. In this trip, we found out that while space for dormitory was limited, some space was wasted due to inefficient usage in the school, such as the storage room. This implies that rearrangement of current facilities is more important than building new things on top of that. This can largely reduce the cost of construction while ensure the effectiveness of facilities. Hence, a good planning beforehand will make maximum use of resources which will be more cost-effective.

This Daping trip has let me understand more about the real practice of engineering. Though these things could still be learnt from class, personal experience is definitely more impressive and long-lasting to us.