

# SMF Profile Interview

**Name:** Melody Cheng  
**Age:** 23  
**Occupation:** Commercial Executive  
**Graduate in Bachelor of Science (Maritime Studies), Nanyang Technological University.**  
**Employer:** M3 Marine Pte Ltd

Meet Melody Cheng. At 23, she speaks with an air of wordliness. Her current scope of work as a Commercial Executive is not limited to her daily responsibilities during office hours but also the after-work commitment to cultivate her clients. This, to the young lady, is one of the many aspects of her job and an industry that she has termed 'sexy'.

But what prompted her to pursue Maritime Studies after her 'A levels'? To this, Melody said, "I love the sea and enjoy sea sports. I also think it's an interesting industry where there are not many girls." Melody, whose father was an ex-sailor, feels that her degree programme at NTU, which was sponsored by Singapore Maritime Foundation, has established a strong foundation for her to advance in her current job.

As part of the four-year degree programme, Melody travelled to BI Norwegian School of Management in Oslo, Norway to complete one semester. Melody deems that the five months in Oslo has made her a more mature individual. She shared, "I've learnt to live independently and different ways of communicating with people from diverse nationalities." During her free days, she also seized the opportunity to travel around the neighbouring countries including Sweden and Finland. Of all the different people she met, Melody found the Scandinavians to be the friendliest folks. Melody is grateful to the SMF sponsorship as it has provided her the great exposure to study in a foreign land and gain maritime knowledge from lecturers who were from reputable organizations.

Melody is currently working for M3 Marine Pte Ltd as a Commercial Executive. A typical day for her includes keeping herself constantly updated of the status of new and current vessels and providing consultancy advice to her clients. She explained, "My company offers services on offshore consultancy. We also provide consultancy to banks advising them on investment and market evaluations."

When asked about her work environment at M3 Marine, Melody said, "My boss is British and so are some of the senior brokers. His approach is very direct and I think that should be the way. I would say shipping people are very open. They are very willing to share information and knowledge with young entrants into the industry like myself."

"At the initial stage, I used to get really emotional after getting reprimanded by my boss when there are hiccups at work, but I've learnt to see the positive side of things, the positive motives of my employer and that he only wants the best for me."

Part of the excitement in her job comes from her post-work networking sessions with her clients. She added, "We need to take our own initiative to engage our clients and entertain them. It is through these casual networking sessions where we get to know our clients better and establish rapport with them." She enjoys the entertainment aspect and sees it as part and parcel of her work. In fact, Melody is thankful that her job is neither desk-bound nor restricted to office hours.

To students and undergraduates who may be considering possible careers in the maritime industry, Melody has this to say, "Shipping is very international. I would advise students to back themselves up with a degree to ensure a good head start in their first job. The commercial side of the maritime industry is very dynamic and exciting. There are plenty of challenges and great career prospects in this industry, if you are willing to work hard."



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