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AAS307 - Final Paper

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- Person interviewed: Nancy Payne
- Interviewee's title or position: Vice President of PeaceTech Lab
- Date, time and length of interview: On Nov 11, from noon to 1pm for about an hour
- Objective in conducting this interview: Understanding Nancy Payne's contribution to US-Asian Relations throughout her careers

Description of the pre-interview research:

Professor Christoff assigned our group to interview Nancy Payne and she briefly told us who Nancy Payne was. Then, we researched more about her on the Internet. We used Google for our main research to find out more about her such as biographical information, her career, PeaceTech Lab and etc. As we proceeded to research Nancy Payne, we couldn't find her detailed biographical information such as her youth life but we were able to find some general information about her. She is currently a vice president of Peacetech Lab, an organization that spun out of United States Institute of Peace to specialize in preventing violence and reducing conflicts around the world by using technology, media, and data. She received her B.A. in journalism from the University of Nebraska and M.A. from American University's School of International Service. She has some teaching experiences at John Hopkins University and Georgetown University. In addition, we found her career experiences. Nancy Payne started her career as a reporter in broadcast news and a photographer. She was managing director for communications at

the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and a senior partner/senior vice president at Fleishman Hillard International. She had some interesting experiences in East Asia, directing all aspects of FH-Hong Kong.

After we did some research on Nancy Payne, we sent an interview proposal letter to her. We started our letter by introducing ourselves, who we are and why we are contacting her. Then, we asked her if we can interview her on her career and how her career fits into the relations between women in Asia and the date of the interview for her convenience. She contacted us back with her availabilities. Our group members decided to conduct the interview on the Nov. 11 and replied her back with some of exemplary questions. After that we couldn't get a reply email from Ms. Payne to confirm the interview, so we asked Professor Christoff for help. Few days later, Ms. Payne reached out to confirm the interview. Before the interview, our group gathered and did more research on her to create some questions that we need to ask for the interview. We sent five of prepared questions to Nancy Payne beforehand, so that she could prepare for the interview and understand what the interview would be like. On the day of the interview, Professor Christoff helped us with setting up our laptop for the interview. Right before the interview, we reviewed our questions and rehearsed with the questions we had.

Interview Questions:

_____ For the interview questions, we wanted to focus on her experiences in East Asia and her career at Peacetech Lab. Therefore, we created questions mostly on Peacetech Lab and some of ongoing projects as well as her unique experiences while she was in Hong Kong and China. We created some ice-breaking questions for the beginning of our interview. The lists below are questions that we prepared for our interview;

1. Can you briefly tell us about yourself? (Biographical information mainly focusing on your early life)
2. How long have you worked for Fleishman Hillard International?
3. Can you briefly describe your role as VP at Peacetech Lab?
4. What are your reasons for choosing to work in PeaceTech? (Your goal, hope to achieve)
5. Can you explain some of the ongoing projects of PeaceTech Lab and
 - a. What do you expect get out of those projects?
 - b. Follow up question: Is the “Radio Drama” in South Sudan successful? Is PeaceTech Lab getting any positive feedback from the audience?
 - c. Follow up question: Other than countries in Middle East and Africa, are there any currently ongoing projects in any other Asian countries? (East Asia?)
6. We’d like to hear your opinion on current global issues such as Syrian refugee crisis, ISIS and nuclear deal with Iran.
 - a. Follow up question: What can PeaceTech Lab do for solving these issues?
7. Can you please briefly describe about your work experiences in East Asia?
 - a. (Which Country did you work in for which years and what kind of job was it there?)
8. What are some interesting differences that you found out between Asian countries and America? (based on linguistic or cultural differences between two countries)
9. While you stayed (or worked) in East Asia (Hong Kong), did you experience any gender discrimination/inequality problem?
10. Who is your personal role model? Do you have anyone who inspires you the most?

Did you get complete answers to your questions?

During our interview, Nancy Payne kindly answered all of our questions with detailed information. However, she seemed difficult to answer a question asking her personal opinions about current international conflicts. Since she has been interested in international issues and has been working for world peace, we asked her personal opinions on such issues. However, she hesitated to answer the questions at first. She began answering by saying that she is not an expert regarding such issues. Basically what she said was that there are more things need to be done to solve international conflicts. Even though it was pretty difficult for her to answer the question, she tried to give us a complete answer.

Was you interview structured, unstructured, or mixed?

Our interview was a mixed structure format. We asked her questions that are close-ended questions such as questions regarding biographical information and her career. For open-ended questions, we asked her personal thoughts/opinions regarding certain topics such as PeaceTech Lab, experiences in East Asia, and current ongoing project of PeaceTech Lab. When open-ended questions were asked, follow up questions were added after she answered depending on the topics.

What probing questions did you use?

Some of the interview questions we had were probing questions such as a question regarding consequence. For example, “What do you see as the consequences of the ongoing projects of the PeaceTech Lab?” We also used probing questions regarding reasons and evidences when we asked a follow-up question, “I’m curious as to the basis of what you have explained about current projects in South Sudan and Iraq. Other than

countries in Middle East and Africa, are there also any ongoing projects of PeaceTech Lab particularly in East Asian countries?”

Explain your team approach. That is, who did what?

Throughout the project, we worked as a team most of the time. We divided our work and contributed to the project. During the interview, each group member had specific roles. We worked together on researching on her background information including her previous careers and her current job in PeaceTech Lab. Whenever new information were found, we shared the links on the google docs, so that everyone could be notified. We all also worked together on writing an interview proposal email to Nancy Payne as well as creating questions before the interview. During the interview, while Junbum and Hosun mainly asked questions, Kyuri took brief notes (Kyuri also asked few questions though). After the interview, Kyuri organized the whole interview notes and rest of members edited the shared notes based on the recording file. On the next day of our interview, we worked together on sending a thank-you email to Nancy Payne.

Did the interviewee give you any documents or references to articles to read, or did she mention other people for you to talk to (or research)?

She did not give us any documents, references, or articles to read but she mainly explained to us with detailed examples and her experiences. Especially, when she explained about one of Peacetechnology Lab’s ongoing projects called ‘Sawa Shabab’, a radio drama. She really wanted to share its main theme song with us. After she explained about the topic of the theme song and how fun it is to listen, she tried to pull up the song on her computer but after few seconds, she was worried about taking too much time of our

interview. She just recommended us to listen to it later and started to talk about the second project of PeaceTech Lab.

Interview Notes/Write up

1. Introduction (background info):

- She was born and raised in Nebraska, America.
- She graduated from the University of Nebraska as Journalism major.
- Her grandparents mainly influenced her: Ms. Payne's grandparents travelled around the world during 1950's 60's 70's and always came back with good stories and pictures. She started to be interested in outside of America. She said "They set a tone of curiosity."

2. Previous Careers:

- After she graduated from college, she worked as a reporter for 5 years and her interest moved to public relation.
- She worked as a public consultant at NYC.
- After that, she went to grad school in Washington as an International Relation major.
- She focused on technology, telecommunication policy with interests in understanding political system and understanding other countries during her grad school years.
- She also worked in solving social issues such as starting a communication with youth to make a better choice on drug uses, alcohol and smoking.
- She wanted to understand social issues through digital media as well as through traditional journalism method.
- She took a job in an U.S Gov. for two and a half years. During that time, she learned what are the investment projects outside of the U.S. and projects on global development.

3. 2014 PeaceTech Lab

- PeaceTech Lab is a U.S institution which was established to achieve a peace through technology and media in 2014. Other than getting funds from people and other organizations, PeaceTech Lab believes that these three main critical tools can contribute to achieve peace in the world.
- Technology provides lots of opportunities to people who have problems and help them to come up with their own solutions.

4. Reasons for working in Peace Tech Lab

- She wants to do something which can influence on a broader issue of the world.

5. Challenges for her?

- Whenever she confronted challenges, she ask herself “who we really serve?” and come up with her answer “We serve people who are living in those countries in conflict.” She also said “we always try to have a clear view on who we are serving.”

6. Her role

- She confronted risk of violence when she visited unstable countries or regions.
- PeaceTech Lab provides some tools to local community to lower down the risk and try to provide a stable society.

7. Ongoing projects

- **Media:** Technology helps local production companies to provide communicative method. Ex) Radio drama in South Sudan whose title is “ Sawa Shabab” in Arabic aims to foster the understanding of democracy, gender equality and human rights especially to young adults.
- There are many problems in Sudan; tribalism, national identity and gender inequality.

- This radio drama teaches young adults gender issues, ethnic group issues and nationality issues in South Sudan.
- At the last part of the drama, they ask question to listeners. People can reply to this question and give feedback to it through social media and text messages.
- They just finished the second season and going to start the third season.
- Younger generation can learn how they can get through their problems.
- In every episode, they get 400~500 call in (great reaction).
- They conduct a research after every season and the result was that two thirds of the population said they know the show or have heard about it.
- Currently they stop doing it but PeaceTech Lab had also launched a project in Iraq. In Iraq they started a reality show and its target audience is young adults who are under 30.
- **Technology:** a project “Peace Tech exchange” researching on particular issues, conflicts and concepts. (Civil society-it means the NGOs working on social issues and engages in local society.) They also did workshops so that they could suggest projects and work on funding.
- **Data:** PeaceTech Lab built a data hub. There is no factual data in those countries in conflicts, such as Sudan and many countries in Middle East. With the data hub, people can make factual based decision.

8. Thoughts on global issues

- Data hub can be used to understand what is going on in that country; it gives tools in our hand.

9. Experience in East Asia after grad school

- She spent 4 years in East Asia such as Hong Kong, mainland China and Japan.

- She worked as a general manager (regional coordinator, all around the region).
- She helped Asian based companies who wanted to expand itself abroad, work globally and expand itself into multinational company.
- Her team helped those companies to get into an international market such as the case of headphone manufacture company in China.
- In Korea, those processes of internationalization had been going on a lot longer than companies in China such as Samsung, LG and other car companies like Hyundai and Kia.
- One of her colleagues was a Korean and she still works there. Nancy Payne worked with a lot of Korean companies.

10. Any cultural differences and linguistic barrier?

- She said “Yes, but Hong Kong is very easy, Hong Kong is a bilingual society. you just have to learn few ‘taxi Cantonese.’”
- She said most people in Hong Kong speak English, so she just picked 10 Cantonese words to use in taxi and that was enough for her to live in Hong Kong.
- She also worked in Shanghai and cultural differences were very profound in mainland China.
- It was easy to find cultural differences in day to day basis interaction in business settings such as “how do you give your business card to someone?”
- She asked us a question “How do you do it in Korea?” We explained to her how we do it in Korea- with hands.
- “It sounds really easy but Americans don’t do that.” Just remembering that and learning that how to do it in daily basis were the cultural differences that she felt while she was working in China.

- The biggest difference she felt was that Americans tend to be very transactional in a business setting. They just want to cut down to their agenda and cut to the chase what they want and decision is made. When they ask yes or no questions, they expect you to answer as yes or no.
- But in Asian pacific countries, it is very relationship-driven. You need to take the time to actually get to know someone before you expect them to make a big decision about you or your company. These were the major cultural differences she felt.
- She experienced cultural differences and discriminations in other cultures than in Asia
- She said she was very fortunate in many ways because her team, her working environment and even clients had a pretty equal mix of men and women.
- She couldn't pick any specific experiences that she felt getting discrimination of the fact that she is a woman by saying, "I'm pretty lucky I guess."
- "I saw it and i knew it that there are gender discrimination but i did not experienced it."

11. Role model / Anyone inspired her

- She went to Southern Iraq earlier this year.
- She met a guy who was a pharmacist in Iraq.
- He had interests in technology and realized that there is no place to go and make things.
- He found a "Makerspace," a big area where he could create computer, car and etc.
- With a kickstarter campaign, he and his team raised 20,000 dollars to start this project.
- They opened it up to local technology communities and two universities where there are science and engineering programs. They allowed engineers to come and make stuff and let people come in by letting them make whatever they can to advance their study.

- “That is inspiring, we just went there and we saw creatively, incredible sense of discovery, innovation and technology.” “People are trying to make stuff and getting excited about their future, make something little bit better for their world that they are living in.”
- “There are trash on the streets and this guy just did it with barely no money but with his intelligence, ingenuity, passion and desire.”
- “This kind of people that we talk to all the time... We are talking to those people every single day. They are being creative and come up with better way to live.”

Analysis

- What aspects of the interview did you find to be particularly meaningful?

Our interview with Nancy Payne was priceless. What is unique about our group is that all of our group members have East-Asian background. Because we were born and grew up in Korea, we all have been used to East Asian cultures that are heavily rooted in Confucianism. It was such a valuable experience for all of us to interview someone who isn't from Asian background but has cultural and working experiences in those regions. Therefore, we were able to compare our experiences from hers and find out some linkages and differences between East Asia and the US. Moreover, as she showed interests in East Asia, we could give her more insights on cultural differences that we felt.

The interview was very meaningful overall because we've learned so much from the interview. We learned not only about Nancy Payne's life and career but also the influences that she has around some conflict zones. During the course, we've learned about different roles and accomplishments of women throughout the history. The interview led us to talk to a woman who has actually impacts on the world's peace.

- What aspects were not useful? What more would you like to know? What other in-class presentations did you find particularly interesting?

Everything was useful but a question asking her personal thoughts of current international issues like ISIS and Syrian Refugee Crisis was irrelevant to the overall goal of our interview. Since we had noticed her interests in international issues and her involvement in the work field addressing international conflicts, we wanted to hear about her personal opinions/advices. However, she had a cautious attitude while answering the question. The problem is that we didn't recognize that the question would be a sensitive topic to Nancy Payne a bit, since she is one of the representatives of the US governmental organization, "PeaceTech Lab."

What we would like to know more is other ongoing projects of PeaceTech Lab using "Technology" and "Data" for promoting the world's peace. During the interview, she gave us an example of "Radio Drama" in South Sudan as one of the projects using "Media." However, when she explained about the other two tools, "Technology" and "Data," she didn't give us specific examples of any projects using them.

From the presentation about Dr. Latha Chandran, M. D., we found out an interesting point when our classmates introduced Dr. Latha's statement, "Being a woman in India never affected her being in a medical school." During the class, we learned about a male dominated medical school in America during 50's and 60's and we thought even nowadays being a woman in a medical field would still affect her. However, unlike our expectations, she mentioned that entering a medical field is really hard but once students get into a medical school, then they stand in the same line as everyone starts their long journey regardless of whether they are women or men. We thought that since all of three

students who presented are aiming to enter a medical school, everything Dr.Latha Chandran said must have influenced them significantly.