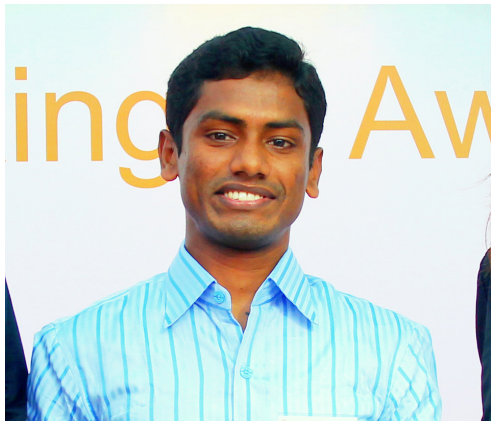


# Your success starts here

## Hinrich Global Trade Leader profile



“ I am a soldier who helps drive positive change in the industry to improve work environment.”

**Ramzan Miah**, Plant Engineer  
VF Asia Limited, Bangladesh

Hong Kong Polytechnic University  
MS in Manufacturing Systems Engineering '15

### About the Hinrich Global Trade Leader Development Program

Do you **aspire to succeed** through career growth and higher education? The *Hinrich Global Trade Leader Development Program* is a proven pathway to even-greater achievements:

#### Hinrich Global Trade Leader Program

##### Aspire



Achieve your full potential

##### Learn



Earn your master's degree

##### Grow



Accelerate your career growth

##### Lead



Realize your leadership ability

If you are ready to embark on a **powerful life-changing opportunity**, we invite you to join the *Hinrich Global Trade Leader Development Program!*

To help you understand the opportunity that this program offers to people like you, read this Global Trade Leader profile then contact us today at [careerdevelopment@hinrichfoundation.com](mailto:careerdevelopment@hinrichfoundation.com).

Every Hinrich Foundation scholar paves the way for others. They lead by empowering their teams, improving their environment and building happy communities.

#### Strong commitment to community

“Success for me is defined by what I do for the welfare of my family, community and society.”

For Ramzan Miah, success is defined by the effects of his actions on his family and community. His daily accomplishments – the projects that yield satisfactory outcomes – are small steps towards his pursuit of success.

His defining strengths are his permanent state of buoyant optimism, passion for his work, strong commitment to his environment and community, and a “never say die” spirit, which permeate his teams and help them deliver positive outcomes day after day.

“My name means the celebration of an event to eradicate hunger from the world or breaking of fast in the holy month of Ramadan,” says the passionate Hinrich Foundation scholar from Bangladesh. “The least I can do is to live up to my name.”

#### Making things better

When he was younger, Ramzan saw his father struggle to raise seven children in

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rural Bangladesh. Being the eldest son, shouldering responsibilities became as natural as breathing. "I resolved when I was very young to make things better for my family and my surroundings. This focus is now part and parcel of my personality."

Ramzan's association with the Hinrich Foundation began in his final year of study at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), where he was taking Industrial and production engineering. His mentor encouraged him to apply for the life-changing scholarship jointly offered by the Hinrich Foundation and VF Corp., a Fortune 250 company that owns globally recognized brands, including The North Face, Timberland, Nautica, Vans and Wrangler. The scholarship included a fully funded study at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Hong Kong PolyU) for a master's degree in manufacturing systems engineering, a program that the university implements jointly with the University of Warwick, United Kingdom.

For Ramzan, traveling away from home and family was paradoxical. On one hand was the sheer anticipation of exploring a new country and campus, and on the other, there was fear of the unknown. "Although it was my first time to travel by air, first time in a foreign country, the travel experience was awesome," Ramzan recollected.

He absorbed the sights and culture of Hong Kong and the orderliness of the country. A keen observer, his first



*Ramzan is the second of seven children.*

impressions of Hong Kong --- extreme tidiness and the highly organized transportation and other public systems --- left a lasting impact on him.

In his studies, Ramzan found a vast difference between Hong Kong PolyU and BUET. Whereas BUET provided foundation courses primarily focused on theories, the courses at Hong Kong PolyU were a combination of theories and actual industrial problem-solving. It was international exposure in every way; real-time learning, on-field case-studies, diverse peer groups, experienced faculty and an amalgamation of classroom and practical methodology.

"As a VF-HF scholar, I got opportunities to visit factories to see the day-to-day

application of theories we were learning and to understand how we could contribute with our knowledge," which to him, remains the best way to participate in education.

Upon graduation, Ramzan immediately joined VF Asia Ltd. as an engineer trainee. "It was a long haul from a rural area in Bangladesh to completing a master's degree in Hong Kong, but all I ever wanted

was to make things better for my family [and] the people of my country, and contribute to global peace."

### **Constant improvement of work culture**

"As an engineer, to be precise as a lean engineer, I am a soldier who helps drive positive change in the industry to improve work environment."

Manufacturing as a career option was almost pre-determined because of his family's background in fabric manufacturing. However, Ramzan has taken his skills to another level by excelling in the quality education he has received, which allows him comprehensive career opportunities in fields related to trade, communication and development in Asia.

As a plant engineer at VF Asia Ltd., his role is to implement a culture of continuous improvement in factories through the application of lean tools and techniques. "Lean thinking is about doing more with less. It is a never-ending effort to eliminate or reduce activities that consume resources without adding any value," he said.

Ramzan defines resources as money, materials, staff and assets. Lean techniques involve systematic process optimization to improve efficiency, technology implementation and training, organizing engineering intelligence or available resources to implement best practices. Sometimes automation is implemented where there is a need, but the most



*Ramzan Miah (left) receives the Hinrich Foundation - VF Corp. Global Trade Leader scholarship award from then VF Vice President and Managing Director Colin Browne (center) and Hinrich Foundation founder Merle Hinrich (right) during the scholar welcome event held Oct. 21, 2014, in Hong Kong.*



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## Hinrich Global Trade Leader profile



important step is to transition from traditional work culture to a continuous improvement culture.

### The 5S Philosophy

Passionate about constantly improving work cultures, Ramzan has been instrumental in implementing lean philosophy at one of VF Asia's vendor factories. The challenge was changing mindsets from traditional ways of thinking to lean thinking.

Lean production is a systematic method that minimizes waste of resources within a manufacturing system without compromising productivity. The way to minimize waste of resources is through process optimization. "Work environment improvement is part of process optimization. I try to implement the 5S methodology throughout the factory to create a clean, organized, efficient and safe working environment."

The 5S rule that Ramzan religiously follows is, "Sort – removing things we don't need; set in order – placing necessary things in their rightful place; shine – creating a cleaning habit not only to clean but inspect; standardize – creating standards so abnormalities are easily recognized; and finally sustain – clarity on how the system is intended to be operated with regular checklists and audits.



Ramzan, who serves as plant engineer for VF Asia Ltd, is currently working on a project at a footwear vendor of the company in Cambodia.

Sometimes I have had to remove unnecessary operations, reduce operators' motions, reduce inventory, even had to go as far as changing layouts of the factory to eliminate obstacles."

The benefits have been huge. "There is less waste of resources for the organization, which leads to enhanced productivity. And the happy workers find their environment easier to work in, more organized, standardized and safer to boot," according to Ramzan.

### Project excellence

"When I heard for the first time that I had received the prestigious scholarship," said an emotional Ramzan, "I was one of first three people from Bangladesh [to receive the scholarship] and it was a moment to rejoice." Since then there have been several victories along the road.

"VF Asia gives 3 Star Awards every year in the category of project excellence, [with] one award each for associate, team and project categories. The moment when I heard the news that my project in the Vans shoes factory in Cambodia had received a Star Award for excellence remains a happy and victorious moment for me," he recalled.

A committed family man, Ramzan also counts the happy smiles of his loved ones as winning moments to be cherished.

### Synchronous time and effort

"A great team has clarity of its goals and thorough understanding of each



Ramzan stands with Allama Mosaddek (fourth from the left) and Dipti Hassan (second from the right), fellow recipients of the Hinrich Foundation – VF Corp. Global Trade Leader Scholarship. They are accompanied by Hinrich Foundation Program Director Alex Boome (leftmost), Colin Browne and Merle Hinrich.

member's roles and responsibilities. Most importantly, members enjoy working together!"

Ramzan feels that a good team is clear about its goals, its roles and responsibilities, has self-accountability and enjoys exciting group dynamics.



Ramzan holds the crest of Star Awards, which he received from VF Asia in 2016 for a project.

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He has great memories of working with the team that comprised VF management and factory personnel to improve productivity of the model line in the vendor factory. "Due to great teamwork, we achieved 20 percent improvement in overall productivity of the process." VF Asia recognized the achievements of the project with a Star Award in 2016.

### Creating understanding amidst diverse cultures

Intensely devout, Ramzan is most thankful to his God for giving him the talent and ability to achieve success. He also feels gratitude for his family who have always stood by him. Their belief has given him immense mental peace.

He is extremely grateful to the Hinrich Foundation and VF Asia for giving him the opportunity to pursue his master's degree in a renowned university and thereby develop his knowledge and skills in an international environment.



One of Ramzan's memorable experiences as a Hinrich Foundation scholar is visiting the Modern Terminals in Hong Kong in 2015.



Ramzan volunteers at the October 2014 Global Sources Fashion Accessories show in Hong Kong with other Hinrich Foundation scholars.

"The scholarship gave me the opportunity to take part in a variety of excellent programs organized by the Hinrich Foundation and VF Asia which are designed toward honing my skills as a global trade leader. Finally, the scholarship provided an opportunity to interact with diverse cultures and nationalities, and I think mutual interaction and understanding brings about global peace and prosperity."

### Striking the right balance between trade, peace and prosperity

Ramzan sees a positive relationship between trade, peace and prosperity. "I strongly believe that sustainable global trade can be a key player for the world to achieve peace and prosperity. That is what

drives me to contribute more and more to the work I am doing."

He is deeply passionate about improving work environments in his current role with VF Asia. At the same time, he wants to keep upgrading his skills so that he can easily embrace higher leadership roles. As motivating teams through changes comes easy to him, he would like to see himself mentoring employees in the future.

### Work hard and smart

"Continue working hard as well as working smart and never quit on the way to success," is Ramzan's advice to future Hinrich Foundation scholars. He feels that it is important for scholars to perceive themselves as global citizens and develop themselves in ways that will allow them to contribute to their communities and lead meaningful lives.



Hinrich Foundation team members and scholars get together during the Global Trade Leaders MBA Scholarship and VF Career Fairs held in Vietnam in March 2016.

## Read more stories of inspiration from our Hinrich Global Trade Leaders

<https://hinrichfoundation.com/our-trade-education-programs/global-trade-leader-program/alumni-success-stories/>



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"It's important to find the passion to be engaged in the smallest of unnamed, tedious jobs. It may sometimes become frustrating to achieve little things, but in their completion lays the key to achieving bigger things."

#### Khiem Vu

Chinese University of Hong Kong -  
MBA '16  
Hong Kong Baptist University -  
MA International Journalism studies '07



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"Excel even in the small things because the quality of your work reflects who you are. If you can't be trusted with the small stuff, how can you expect to be trusted with the big stuff?"

#### Carmela Delos Santos

De La Salle University  
BA Communication Arts '00