

CHIA SOON HIN WILLIAM

Independent Director, Ley Choon Group Holdings Ltd
Managing Director, Xie Capital Pte Ltd
Managing Director, Mitsuba Japanese Restaurant Pte Ltd
Retired Executive Director, United Overseas Bank Ltd



“It’s often costly to learn from one’s own experience. Learn from the experiences of others “

Vast experience in Banking and Finance

A banking veteran with over 35 years of experience in branch service, operations management, and retail and commercial banking gained from three local banks (Overseas Union Bank Ltd, DBS Bank Ltd and United Overseas Bank Ltd), one foreign bank (Malayan Banking Bhd) and one foreign finance company (Standard Chartered Finance Ltd). He chose to retire from UOB in October 2014 after 19 years of exemplary service in order to seek new challenges.

Current Appointments



William was appointed Independent Director to the Board of Ley Choon Group, an established one-stop underground utilities infrastructure construction and road works provider, in Sep 2015. He is concurrently chairman of the Board’s Remuneration Committee, and member of the Audit Committee and Nominating Committee.



谢资私人有限公司
XIE CAPITAL PTE LTD

William incorporated Xie Capital Pte Ltd as the vehicle to carry on business as training consultants specializing in banking and finance, as well as providing business advisory services to SMEs. Currently, he conducts the following programs for UOB under a service agreement:

- Legal Aspects of Banker-Customer Relationship
- Basic/Advanced Credit
- Basic/Advanced Trade Finance
- Financial Analysis

He has also conducted training for other financial institutions.



William incorporated Mitsuba Japanese Restaurant Pte Ltd to operate a Japanese restaurant at The Central catering to office workers, business people and group/corporate events. The restaurant offers a wide selection of ala-carte and ala-carte buffet menus, as well as omakase to the more discerning diners. Its signature Thick-Cut Sashimi is well known.

Many Roles in UOB

William joined UOB in January 1996 as Regional Manager, Jurong Regional Centre that was the forerunner of UOB's Group Commercial Banking's Business Development Group today. In August 2008, he took the challenge in heading a new industry group that specialized in managing a portfolio of major corporate accounts from the following industries:

- Income-producing real estate (property developers and hotels included)
- Motor trade (from distributors, agents, pre-owned car dealers to credit companies and taxi operators)
- Commodity traders
- Healthcare (hospitals, medical specialists)
- Money changers and remittance agents

In April 2014, after he made known his firm decision to retire, the bank specially created a position for him as Executive Director in charge of Credit Assurance (Singapore) and Training and Development (Singapore and Regional) within

Group Commercial Banking. Concurrently, he represented the views of Group Wholesale Banking in the bank's working group responsible for Channels Strategy in Singapore.

During his career with UOB, on top of his core responsibilities, William took on numerous assignments to improve service processes within the bank. His first project was to plan and execute the closure of a highly profitable mid-sized bank branch and transfer its customer base to a smallish branch nearby. Despite reservations from various quarters, this 'bold' project was completed without the loss of a single depositor or drop in service efficiency. Following the success of this project, the bank has since carried out several similar projects with equal success. In the following year, he rolled out the Customer Service Executive (CSE) Scheme. Some 65 polytechnic graduates were recruited and trained in both branch service operations and sales of bank products and services. At the time, these CSEs provided a welcome relief to an acute shortage of bank tellers, and while serving customers they were able to identify sales opportunities and close/refer deals. As part of this Scheme, William piloted the bank's first full suite of self-service banking machines at City Hall MRT Station where CSEs were on hand to open accounts, accept deposits and carry out sales transactions. The lesson learnt paved the way for the bank to experiment with various branch setups in the years to come.

To counter the stiff competition and homogeneity of banking products and services in the narrow space of the Small and Medium-size Enterprise (SME) market, William in November 2007 introduced two first for SME customers – the UOB Commercial Banking Hubs and the UOB Empire World MasterCard® for Business Card – to fill the needs of SMEs. Four hubs were set up at strategic locations across the island to provide full spectrum of trade services and a convenient venue for customers to meet with their relationship/business managers. Given their success, UOB has since increased the number of hubs to six. The UOB Empire Card was the first premium business card on the World MasterCard for Business platform to be launched outside the United States and targeted at high-spending business owners and directors of SMEs who travel frequently for business. Besides offering travel-related benefits and other rewards and privileges, this Card serves as a VIP card for access to exclusive banking services and privileges at the hubs. Card members also get to enjoy priority services at UOB branches island-wide.

In the last three years prior to his retirement, William had been championing various service improvement initiatives within the bank. Learning from the success of the Trade Desk in the hubs, a Uni-Trade Section was set up in Head Office to provide e2e express trade services at minimal costs to a select group of premium trade customers. Processing time was halved. There was significant improvement in customer satisfaction and that translated to a significant increase in overall trade revenue for the bank. This initiative, which won the Top Prize in the bank's 2011 Improvement In Action (Cross Sector Category), has since been introduced to countries in the region. It has also led to several e2e projects to streamline processes and free up time for relationship/business managers to conduct more sales, not just loans but also investment, treasury and

Bancassurance products. In this connection, almost all of commercial banking relationship/business managers have been certified to sell specified Credit Market Financial Advisory Services.

A strong believer of customer advocacy, he imbued in his team members the philosophy that customers are the reason for their continued employment and good rewards. Despite the high mobility of relationship managers in the banking industry, his team hardly had any attrition. For the Excellent Service Award (EXSA) 2013 jointly organized by the Association of Banks in Singapore (ABS) and Spring Singapore to recognize individuals in the banking industry who have delivered quality services, half of William's team were award winners; one was among the three finalists to represent the bank at the industry-level competition.

Service to the Banking Industry

William was frequently called upon to take on roles outside the bank. From 2000 to 2001, under the auspice of ABS, he chaired the Operations and Legal Working Committee responsible for rolling out the world's first nationwide electronic cheque clearing system in Singapore. New cheque technology was adopted, cheque size standardized, and time-sensitive physical delivery of cheques eliminated. This S\$50 million national project, which involved all 100 member banks of the Singapore Clearing House Association, significantly cut down processing time, thus increasing the efficiency of the whole finance sector.

He was also a member of the executive committee of the Hire Purchase Finance and Leasing Association of Singapore (term 2013-14).

In 2009, he represented ABS in the APEC Financial Institutions Summit in HK.

A Competent Trainer

William is known "as a prolific and accomplished trainer"¹. Between 1988 and 1996, he taught part-time at the Institute of Banking and Finance Singapore (IBF) to prepare students for examinations leading to the Certificate and Diploma in Banking and Finance. In UOB, he conducted regular workshops on Legal Aspects of Banker-Customer Relationship, Basic Credit Training, Basic Trade Finance and other adhoc topics. In August 2010, he was recognized as an Expert Trainer². In 2013, William was appointed Adjunct by the Singapore Management University to teach Service Processes at the Lee Kong Chian School of Business.

¹ His retirement citation at a UOB town hall event on 5 September 2014 at Park Royal @ Pickering.

² An 'expert trainer' is one who has conducted more than 100 training hours and received trainees' evaluation score of not lower than 9 on a scale of 1 – 10.

Community Service

Between 1980 and 1995, William was an active grass-root leader in the Geylang Serai Constituency. He last held the honorary position of Secretary of the Geylang Serai Citizens' Consultative Committee.

He has been an active member of the Church of Our Lady Queen of Peace since 1996. He chaired the Church Renovation Committee in 2014-15 to a successful conclusion. At various times, he also headed important Church ministries. He has just been elected to the Parish Pastoral Council.

Professional Accreditation and Membership

In November 2014, William was conferred IBF Fellow at the inaugural launch of this certification by the Institute of Banking and Finance, Singapore.

He is also:

- Chartered Secretary and Associate of the Governance Institute of Australia.
- Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing UK
- Associate of the Chartered Institute of Bankers UK.
- Member of the London Institute of Banking & Finance.
- Member of the Singapore Institute of Directors.