

Even now when I think of the 2001 Global Business Education Program I attended in Thailand, my heart begins to pound. It was an eye opening experience for me, learning that when a real life case meets a theory, we can see more clearly what is going on. Ever since then, it has been my primary goal to become a productive researcher and educator in the strategic management field. After earning my master's degree at the Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), a Korean version of HKUST, I worked at Korea Telecom (KT), specializing in corporate venturing, company strategy, and global alliance.

While working for KT, my inherent curiosity constantly motivated me to develop unique research ideas and conduct research. Eventually my curiosity saw the light and my research got published in *Long Range Planning*, which was the final work in a series of publications I had. I truly feel that this publication is the most significant achievement in my life because I simultaneously maintained a hectic work schedule without sacrificing the quality of either effort. This experience strengthened my belief that academic work is challenging, but ultimately very gratifying.

Over the past eight years, I have built a strong career in the dynamic mobile industry and gathered a diverse range of high-tech industry experience. Recently, I realized that my true passion is in research and it is now time for me to pursue an academic career that will allow me to turn my attention towards this field. For these reasons, I am determined to pursue a Ph.D. in a program that has strengths in the areas such as entrepreneurship and alliance.

During my graduate studies at KAIST, one research project in particular left me with a truly memorable experience. The project was a case study analysis of failures in the new services of the rapidly-changing telecommunications industry. The work led to the development of my master's thesis, "What Are the Factors Discriminating Between Success and Failure in New IT Services." However, it was challenging to find failure cases because they usually disappeared rapidly along with the personnel who were discharged from companies. In order to expand my thesis, I conducted an extensive search of the alumni network and finally discovered 100 relevant cases involving people who were in charge of new product divisions in 20 major telecommunications companies. These cases played a key role to the development of the case study.

After finishing my master's research, I was very interested in applying the theories that I had learned to real-world business situations. Therefore, I joined the mobile industry where a number of strategic dilemmas emerge from the tension between the exploration of new opportunities and the exploitation of old opportunities. I learned that this is primarily due to rapidly-changing technologies, uncertainty regarding government regulation, intense competition in the market, convergence between different players, and complicated customer needs. This observation motivated me to conduct further research in new product development, resulting in my article for *Long Range Planning*.

Currently, as a manager of the corporate venturing department at KT, I oversee new entrepreneurial companies that my company has invested in, subordinated, or merged with strategic, political, or financial purpose. I have learned several lessons. These companies' entrepreneurial activities seem to depend on the personal social network of the entrepreneur, board structure, governance structure, and a personal relationship with the CEO of the mother company. For example, alliances are common when the majority of board members are on the outside and the performance of the overseas market relies on the entrepreneur's global social network. In addition, when companies with an entrepreneurial culture are merged with a big company, that culture tends to rapidly disappear when the smaller company strives to

survive. I have also discovered that it is very difficult to accumulate entrepreneurial knowledge within a corporate ventures department because this dynamic environment leads to a common occurrence of organizational restructuring.

For example, while helping KT enter the foreign mobile service market in Malaysia, I had to select good domestic business partners. KT has over 10,000 domestic partnerships with small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) including content providers and network equipment providers. SMEs usually required KT to give a minimum guarantee when they entered the foreign market because it has a higher degree of uncertainty, unlike the domestic market. KT, mostly domestic-oriented, did not know how to handle or support SMEs to create a mutual benefit within this international business context.

These issues drew my attention to a number of issues and I intend to research them in my doctoral studies. Specifically, I plan to explore the following research areas:

- 1) What mechanism helps entrepreneurs of invested or subsidiary companies find more successful opportunities?
- 2) How do large companies spread merged company's entrepreneurial culture to their company to create successful new products?
- 3) What are the optimized organization structures and processes that a corporate venturing department can employ in order to gain success in a rapidly-changing environment?
- 4) How should a firm change alliance strategy with a domestic SME partners to enter an international market together, depending on their levels of experience in the global market?

I will answer these questions by analyzing data gathered by the GSM Association, of which KT is a board member. The GSM Association consists of over 800 companies spanning 219 countries and includes mobile operators, handset makers, software companies, equipment providers, Internet companies, and media and entertainment organizations.

Additionally, I have been working on a research project with Professor Seung-Hyun Lee at the University of Texas at Dallas to analyze the alliance strategies of online entrepreneurs, using a data set of three million observations (for which the data collection has already been completed). In addition, in order to focus on entrepreneurial research, I am collecting a data set from around 500 companies including KT and its partnership companies.

I believe that my previous research achievements and all my firsthand observations in the real business world make me a very competitive candidate for the Doctoral Program at the College of Business at Washington State University at Pullman. I would greatly appreciate the chance to actualize my full potential at your school, and I am confident that I will make a fine addition to your well-regarded doctoral program.

After I complete the Ph.D. program, combining my practical knowledge with the great training I will receive at your institution, I wish to research and teach at prestigious universities in the U.S. while producing a high volume and quality of research output.