

魏杰的 MBA 长征路

Vijay's Long MBA Trek

文/朱琼敏 By June Zhu

3个月前，魏杰（Vijay Nadipineni）搬到了上海市中心的一栋酒店公寓。从他18楼的阳台看上去，这座城市最知名的地标之一——新天地近在咫尺；眺望远方，错落有致的楼宇间一座高架桥正奋力彰显着自己的存在，如玩具般大小的汽车在上面排成一溜，缓慢地爬行，它们的车头灯光刺破了这座不眠之城的夜幕。这般的喧嚣竟不曾抵达魏杰的阳台，下面的熙熙攘攘幻化成了一幕美丽的默剧。“我喜欢这个地方。”他说。

当时，他还是学生，依然是中欧2014届MBA学生会主席。今年4月毕业后，他开始担任东渡国际集团物业管理总监。每天清晨六点半，当这座城市的许多人还在酣睡时，魏杰已经开始练习瑜伽与冥想。除了这样的身心训练，魏杰更醉心于古代印度哲学著作。书中

阐释的哲学理念——“世上本无好坏，事物皆有两面”深刻地影响了她处理人际关系的方式，也影响了他在探索世界时对待困难与机遇的态度。

📍 远离家乡

魏杰在印度出生长大，整个青少年时代，他都浸淫在这个国家的文化中。18岁那年取得了酒店管理学士学位之后，他曾在印度最大的连锁酒店工作过一阵子。但是，作为一个对未知充满探索精神的小男孩，他渴望去异域大展身手。“那时候我家乡的许多人不是去美国就是去英国，但我想去一个没那么多人去的地方。”当时，刚好有熟人在坦桑尼亚，于是19岁的魏杰决心启程前往非洲。

“在非洲时，最好的一点是我没有

什么可以失去的，而且肩上也并没有太多责任。”然而，这个骄傲的年轻人也并非无忧无虑，当时他最大的恐惧是怕自己有一天会一事无成、无功返乡。在非洲的前5个月，他换了4份工作，最终守得云开见月明——在一家酒店找到了一份餐厅经理的工作，一待便是3年，这也标志着他长达13年餐厅管理事业的开端。在非洲的那几年，他从一个腼腆的小男生成长为一个可以得心应手照顾客人的人，并逐渐形成了自己的管理风格。“非洲的自然美景和人们的慷慨大方都给我留下了深刻印象，我开始理解生活的本质其实与财富无关，重要的是我们追求幸福的自然本能。”

📍 英国：迟来之梦

那时，他的目标是在3年后读

Three months ago, Vijay Nadipineni moved into a service apartment nestled in the heart of bustling Shanghai. Not far away from his 18th floor balcony is one of the city's most well-known landmarks, Xintiandi. In the distance, an overpass that battles sleek buildings for attention transports cars, like toys, in a slow-moving line. Their headlights pierce the darkness in a city that never seems to sleep. The din doesn't reach Vijay's balcony, transforming the hustle and bustle below into a beautiful but silent show. "I like this place," he says.

Then, he was still a student, still President of CEIBS MBA 2014 Student Committee. He graduated in April and he's now Director of Property Management at DongDu International Leisure. So these days, at 6:30 in the morning when many people are still asleep, Vijay is up doing yoga and meditating. This attention to his physical and spiritual health has been combined with reading a book on ancient Indian philosophy. The book has had a profound effect on him, leaving him with the certainty that "there's no good or evil; everything has two sides." This has shaped the way he tackles interpersonal relationships and his perspective of the difficulties and opportunities encountered during his adventures around the world.

A long way from home

Born and raised in India, Vijay immersed himself in the country's culture during his teenage years. Then,

at 18, after earning a bachelor's degree in hospitality management, he worked briefly with one of the biggest hotel chains in India. However, as a young boy with a passion for the unknown, he hungered for an adventure in a foreign land. "Most people where I'm from either went to the US or the UK, but I wanted to go to someplace not many people had been," he says. It happened that he knew someone in Tanzania and, when he was 19, Vijay embarked on a journey to Africa.

"The best part of being in Africa was that I had nothing to lose, and I didn't have a lot of responsibilities," he explains. But the proud young man wasn't totally carefree. His biggest fear was of going back home as a loser. In his first five months in Africa, he had four different jobs. Then his luck changed. He landed a job in a hotel and this turned into a three-year stint as restaurant manager. It was also the beginning of his 13-year career managing restaurants. He grew up during those years, from a boy who shied away from making eye contact with strangers to a man who could effortlessly engage his customers. He also developed his own style of management. "The beauty of nature as well as the generosity of the people in Africa impressed me and I started to understand that life was not about wealth, but about our natural instinct to pursue happiness," he says.

Building a delayed dream in the UK

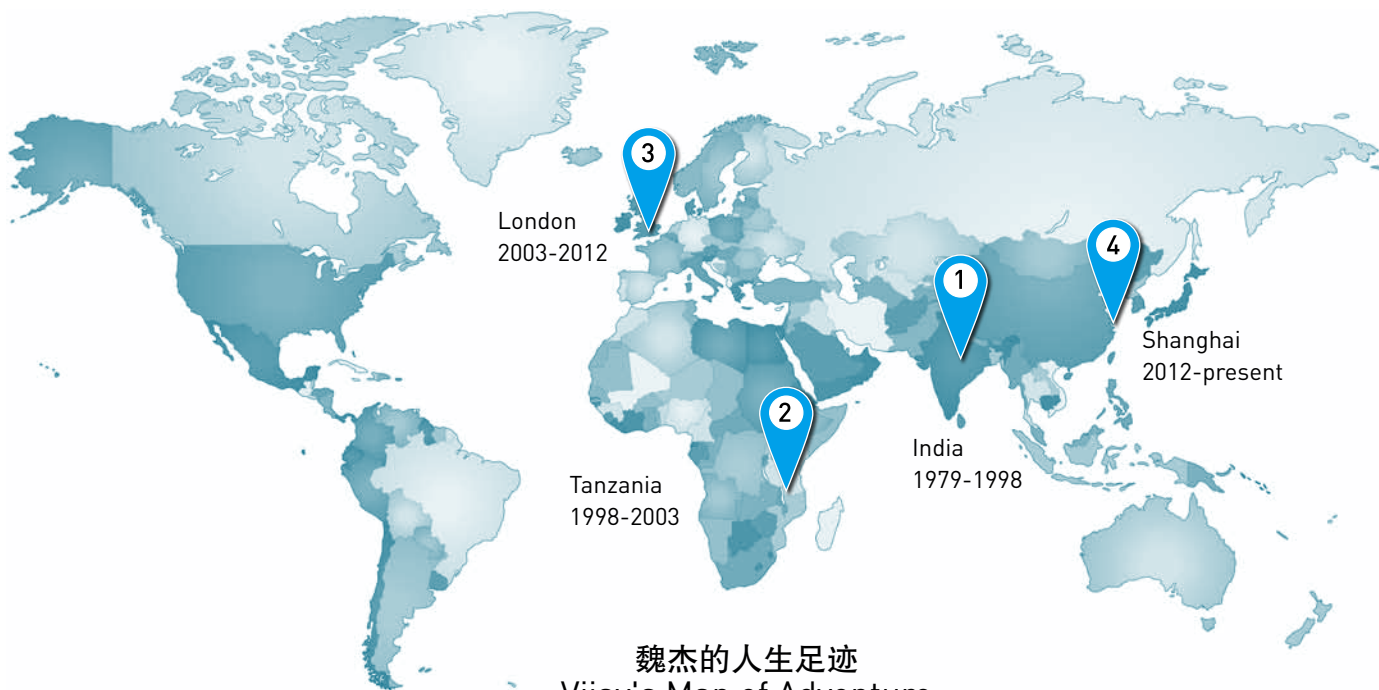
His goal had always been to do an MBA after working for three years. In

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fact it took him 13 years to fulfil his dream. After five years in Africa Vijay flew to the UK, eager to begin studying. It was only then that he realized he didn't have enough experience to get into the top universities. He had to change his plan. He did a postgraduate diploma at Greenwich School of Management, then later worked as a restaurant manager in Bolton. After completing a mandatory five-year stint as a restaurant manager as stipulated under the terms of his immigration status, he became a permanent resident and was free to do any job he liked. But while waiting for his residency papers he joined his former boss to open a modest specialty restaurant. They called it Flavours. "At the beginning, it ran brilliantly. As the partner and manager, I had more opportunity to make my own mark on business, and within the first eight months we successfully recovered our investment," he remembers. But, it didn't last long.



MBA，事实上，他花了整整 13 年才实现了自己的梦想。在非洲待了 5 年后，魏杰来到了英国，期待开始学习。但他很快意识到现有的经历并不足以保证他进入顶尖大学，因此他不得不改变计划。在格林威治大学管理学院取得硕士学位后，他在博尔顿重操旧业，开始担任一家餐厅的经理。由于英国的移民管制，魏杰连续做 5 年的餐厅经理，才将自己变为常住居民，取得了选择工作的自由。在等待身份转换的期间，他和前上司创办了一家风味餐厅，取名 Flavours（味道）。“一开始，餐厅运营状况非常好。作为合伙人兼经理，我在生意上有自己的话语权，在最初的 8 个月我们就成功收回了成本。”但好景不长，2008 年的金融危机让餐厅生意遭受沉重打击，魏杰与他的合伙人不得不缩减成本、惨淡经营。“当时压力比较大，我们的营业额一落千丈。”但从另一方面看，他也借机学到了许多，“我的合伙人比我年长，

比我有阅历，从他身上我学到一些策略，比如，如何节约成本，如何改变计划继续前行，让损失最小化。”

在拯救餐厅的过程中，读 MBA 的念头再次浮现在魏杰的脑海。但是，他觉得自己的简历还不够有说服力，“我必须在一家顶尖的跨国公司找到一份工作。”第一封录取函来自于 Queensway 集团——肯德基的一家主要的特许经营商。于是，他离开了 Flavours，开始新的征程。从管理一家风味餐厅到进入快餐行业，变化巨大。虽然这意味着收入减少、管理范围缩小，但也是个学习良机。6 个月的工作之后，事实证明他当初的选择是正确的。在魏杰的领导下，连续 3 年亏损的肯德基餐厅获得新生，开始重新盈利。鉴于他的出色表现，魏杰被转至另一家营业状况不错的肯德基分店。尽管这家店获利不菲，但问题也显而易见——连续 33 次检查中，它都没能符合公司的运营规范。“本地员工很难合作。

他们就是不遵守规则。最初的 3 个月简直就是地狱！”回忆当初，魏杰仍然心有余悸。他不得不学着变严厉，并留心保障自己的人身安全——因为一些愤怒的员工时常会报复他，比如放光他车胎的气或刮花他的车。“有时候，我开车去餐厅，却没有勇气直接进去；于是我就绕着它开一圈，再进去。”纵然有接踵而来的压力与挑战，魏杰依然成功带领餐厅连续 3 次达标，而他也因优异的表现被公司授予“冠军俱乐部奖”。

这是 2011 年 11 月，他来英国的第 8 个年头。

📍 下一站：中欧 MBA

在大大小小的公司中，魏杰当过创业者，也当过员工，这都让他获益匪浅。之后他继续奋战，考过了 GMAT 并开始申请 MBA 项目。作为一个远离祖国数十年的印度人，他希望能借机回

The recession of 2008 took its toll on the business, and Vijay and his partner had to trim costs. “It was stressful, our revenue dropped sharply,” he explains. But it was also an opportunity to learn. “My investor was much older and more experienced than I was, and I learnt business strategies such as cost saving and how to move on with minimum loss.”

Struggling to keep the business afloat, he remembered his original idea of doing an MBA. But he still felt that his CV wasn't impressive enough. “I needed to find a job in a top multinational, a well-known company,” he says. The first offer came from Queensway Hospitality, a lead franchisee for KFC, and he left Flavours. This was a huge change from managing specialty restaurants to the fast food industry. Even though it meant he would have to take a pay cut and that he would be managing a much smaller operation, he knew he could learn a lot. Within six months of taking the job, he knew he had made the right decision. With Vijay at the helm, the KFC restaurant that had been racking up losses for three consecutive years finally turned a profit. He had simply applied the cost-management skills he had learnt from running Flavours. He was soon rewarded with a transfer to a high-revenue-generating KFC franchise. However, even though it was profitable, the new location had its own problems – for 33 consecutive times it had failed to meet the company's operational standards. “The local staff were not easy to work with. They just didn't follow standards. The first three

months were hell!” recalls Vijay. He had to learn how to be tough, and how to keep safe even when irate employees slashed his tyres or scratched his car. “Sometimes I drove to the restaurant and didn't have the courage to get in; so I drove around it, and then went in,” he says. Despite the stress and constant challenges, Vijay led the restaurant to meet operational standards three consecutive times, and received the “Champions Club Award” for his overall accomplishments.

This was in November 2011, eight years after he had first arrived in the UK.

Next stop: MBA

He had gained a lot of experience as an entrepreneur, as well as an employee at both small and large organisations. Next he conquered the GMAT and began applying to MBA programmes. As an Indian who had lived abroad for more than a decade, he wished he could go back to his homeland, and his first choice then was the best business school in the country – India School of Business (ISB). He failed the recruitment interview the first year, and the next year he drove to London to attend MBA fairs, hoping to talk to ISB recruiters. However, this time he was fascinated by a business school located in China – CEIBS.

“CEIBS was among the top 20, and it's located in China; everyone wanted to go to China. I had the feeling that my strength is international exposure, and China would definitely add to that. Though there were negative media comments about the country, I had met and liked Chinese people over the

人物档案

年龄: 35

教育经历:

1995 – 2008 酒店管理学士，酒店行政 / 酒店管理方向

2003 – 2003 格林威治大学管理学院管理研究硕士，综合性商务行政及管理方向

2012 – 2014 中欧国际工商学院 MBA

最喜爱的食物: 任何家常菜

爱好: 阅读、冥想、健身

最崇拜的人: 父亲——他在 50 多岁时完成了 MBA 学习，接着又攻读博士学位，目前正在研究法律

最喜爱的景点: 从外滩看浦东风景

座右铭: 活到老，学到老

Fast Facts

Age: 35

Education:

Bachelor in Hospitality Management, Hospitality Administration/Management 1995 – 2008

PG Diploma in Management Studies, Business Administration and Management, General, Greenwich School of Management 2003 – 2003

China Europe International Business School 2012 – 2014

Favourite food: Anything home-made

Hobbies: Reading, meditation, fitness

The person he most admires:

His father who did his MBA in his 50s, then a PhD, and is now in law school.

Favourite scenic site: The view of Pudong from the Bund

Motto: Live and learn



国，他的第一选择自然是全印最好的商学院——印度商学院。第一年他败北了，第二年他选择前往伦敦商学院参加 MBA 巡展，希望能与印度商学院招生人员面谈。然而，他却被同样出席巡展的一所中国商学院深深吸引了，那就是中欧国际工商学院。

“中欧是全球排名前 20 位的商学院，而且它就位于中国——人人都想去中国。我觉得我的长处在于国际化的经历，而中国必将为我锦上添花。当时有一些关于这个国家的负面舆论，但我在读硕士时曾接触过一些中国人，与希望留在英国发展的印度人不同，中国人都选择了回国，因为那里的机会比英国还多。”魏杰说。其实，早在坦桑尼亚时，非洲的中国投资者就让他印象深刻。“在我离开坦桑尼亚前，我听说中国公司正在附近的城镇投资。那大概是 13 年之前，中国人在非洲的投资才刚刚开始。但几年后我重访坦桑尼亚，我发现中国公司的投资已日渐取代欧洲和南非的公司。”种种因素让他最终决定来中欧追寻自己耽搁已久的梦想。

2012 年，魏杰和来自不同国家的 200 多名同学共同踏上了中欧 MBA 征程。凭借多年磨砺而成的人际交往能力，他被推选为 2014 届 MBA 学生会主席。“在正式开学前，我参加了预备课程，期间认识了大约 80% 的同学，取得了他们的尊重与信任。”在两年任期上，魏杰致力于提升班级和学院的自豪感。如今他依然在为增强来自不同文化及行业的学生之间的凝聚力而不懈努力着。就在 4 月毕业之前，魏杰提出了“校友联络群”计划——尽管同学们在毕业后各奔东西了，但至少会有 10 位校友负责团结整个班级。他们会在成员间利用社交媒体和邮件等进行交流互动，目的是让生活在同一地区的成员们能每三个月聚一次。魏杰认为“校友联络群”是一个很好的平台，将有助于 MBA 校友交流商业机会并回报母校。

回顾他的中欧时光，魏杰的记忆中充满了欣喜与感恩。“芮博澜教授、许斌教授和倪科斯教授等都让我印象深刻，单坐在他们的课堂里就让人觉得如沐春风。”他说。中国同学也让他惊喜连连，“他们的处事技巧让我眼界大开。在我来中欧之前，我总是觉得自己是最聪明的人，但事实是大多数中欧学生都要比我聪明。”在中欧，他还第一次学习了舞蹈，“之前我从来没有跳过舞，也许是因为重回了学生生活，也许是因为在这里结交的朋友，我得以在人生中第一次起舞。”他笑着说道。

课堂之外，魏杰还关注企业社会责任，参加了由中欧校友发起的杉树计划，并负责指导三位大学新生。新生们都来自上海以外的地区，他们会在每三个月见一次面。“我喜欢将自己在世界各地的经历中所学习到的东西传递给他人。”如今，他在工作中也扮演着同样的角色，“员工们觉得和我说话比较自在，有些人会来找我聊天并征求建议。”

然而，作为一个在中国公司工作的印度人，魏杰依然有许多需要学习的地方，但他现在已经准备好面对任何问题。“在我眼里，世上并没有挑战——只有机遇，它们是同一枚硬币的两面。我要做的就是翻转硬币，只看正面。”在工作中，他还将发挥自己在跨文化交流、一对一互动及中西方思维理解等方面的优势，“如果你能表现出开放的心态，人们就会乐于和你交流，并指导你。”他说道。求知欲无疑将帮助他达到自己的长期目标。“我会呆在上海直到中文水平有所提高，也许要两三年时间。在此之后，我可以去任何地方。我的目标是能为人类做出一点贡献。”此外，他还说：“我的终极目标是有一天自己不需要只为了谋生而工作，而是做一些真正想做的事情，以及能让我回馈社会的事情。我开始得比较晚，所以如果我能 在 50 岁前达成目标，我会很高兴。”

years. Unlike Indians who were willing to stay in the UK because they thought it offered more opportunities, many Chinese preferred to go back home since there were even more opportunities in China,” says Vijay. He had also been impressed by Chinese investment in Africa during his time in Tanzania. “Just before I left Tanzania, I heard about Chinese companies investing in a nearby town. That was about 13 years ago, and it had just begun. But after several years, when I visited the country again, I saw that Chinese companies were overtaking the Europeans and South Africans in investing in the country.” All of these factors shaped his decision to pursue his delayed MBA dream at CEIBS.

In 2012 Vijay and more than 200 classmates from various countries began their CEIBS MBA. Thanks to strong interpersonal skills honed over years, he was elected Student Committee President of MBA 2014. “Before the school officially opened, I participated in the pre-course. Within two months, I got to know 80% of my classmates, earning their respect and trust,” he says. In his two years of service, Vijay was devoted to boosting pride in their class – and in CEIBS. He’s still working on strengthening the bonds between groups of students not only from different cultures but also different industries. Just before graduation in April, Vijay proposed the idea of an Alumni Liaison Community, which means there will be at least 10 students working to keep their entire class together even though they are scattered all across the world. They have agreed to interact with and pass information among members of the community by using social media

and emails. The aim is for students in various regions, for example Europe, to meet every three months. Vijay sees the Alumni Liaison Community as a great platform through which classmates can explore professional and business opportunities as well as give back to their alma mater.

““

Maybe it was because of the friends I made here; I was able to dance for the first time in my life.

””

Looking back at his time at CEIBS, Vijay has fond memories and a lot of gratitude. “Some professors such as Prof Bala Ramasamy, Prof Xu Bin, and Prof Nikos Tsirikriktis, just sitting in their classes was fun and insightful,” he says. His Chinese classmates were also a pleasant surprise. “Their soft skills, the way they deal with other people, opened my eyes. I always thought I was the smartest guy before coming to CEIBS, but most CEIBS students were actually smarter than I am,” he says. At CEIBS, he also learnt how to dance. “I never danced before CEIBS. Maybe it was because I was back in school, maybe it was because of the friends I made here; I was able to dance for the first time in my life,” he says with a smile.

When he wasn’t in class, studying, or leading his fellow classmates, Vijay was mentoring three university freshmen as part of his commitment to the CSR alumni club’s CEDAR programme. The sessions took place every three months and the students were always from outside Shanghai. “I enjoyed passing on what I had learned from being exposed to the wider world,” he says. Today, he uses these same skills on the job. “I think employees find it easy to talk to me. Some people look to me for advice.”

He still has a lot to learn as an Indian working for a Chinese company, but he’s ready for anything. “In my eyes, there are no challenges – only opportunities. They are just two sides of the same coin. I just need to flip the coin and look at the positive side,” he says. He will rely on his strengths in cross cultural communication, his ability to interact with people one-on-one, and his understanding of both the eastern and western ways of thinking. “If you are able to demonstrate that you are open, people are happy to explain things to you and teach you,” he says. This eagerness to learn should come in handy for his long-term goals. “I will stay in China until my Mandarin improves, it may take me another two to three years. After that, I’m open to being anywhere. My goal is to contribute to humanity.” He adds, “Ultimately I hope I don’t have to work *just* to earn a living, but actually do something that I truly want to do, something that makes it possible for me to give back to society. I started late, so if I can get there before 50, I would be happy.”