



August Interviews

Interviewee: Kim
Capacity: Moderator

Hello Kim, how are you today?

Hello, I'm good. How are you?

We are here to interview moderators for the yearbook. To start off, could you please introduce yourself?

Err, my name's Kim and I am a moderator for The ㅇㅈㅍ KSG server.

How long have you been on the server?

I think it's been almost a year since I first joined.

When did you decide to become a moderator?

Around January of this year.

And how do you find your experience?

I think it's pretty straightforward, I don't know, but I guess it has exposed me to crazy people sometimes, but overall it's been pretty smooth.

Why did you decide to become a moderator?

I saw a lot of people were having a hard time using Discord. This was my first server and figuring out how to help server members use the app more, it just made sense for me to help other people who are in the same position as I was when I first joined.

You've been a moderator for quite some time now, what do you think the best part about being a moderator is?

I would say just overall surveying the server. There are a lot of people, and I don't wanna name any names, but there are people who are active in the studying channels and just overall improving their Korean. So, it's really cool



to just see their growth because I get the feeling that I was here at the start. I'm not necessarily taking credit, but it's just cool to see improvement within the server.

What is your favourite task to do as a moderator?

I guess answering questions and explaining the rules because you just want to make sure that everyone is doing things properly and not feeling that the server doesn't have anything to offer because I think for the first three months I was here, I was afraid to ask questions. I didn't really do anything except textbooks, but once I got on activities like Run KSG, Twitter activity, and lives, I realized it was really helpful. So, we just want to promote that more.

What was your favorite activity to do?

Probably the live sessions when they were around but now I'm doing the Beginner Korean 2 (Soundcheck). So, anything with lives basically.

What are some of the challenges you have faced while being a moderator?

Just some technical difficulties, but nothing that interferes with what I have to do.

Have you faced some kind of conflict?

Oh yes, there is a lot. There are some people that join the server and want their answers right away, but you know sometimes I get messages when I am at school or while all of us are sleeping. So, there are incidents like that where they just want us to drop everything and rush through and when I do make time to answer, they just leave right away, so, it feels like wasted effort. There are also other incidents where they take the Korean Assessment Test, send us the screenshot of the test results and mention that the questions didn't make sense in Korean or that we should have a native Korean make the test questions. I told them to contact modmail because I don't know how to reply to those kinds of questions, hahaha. It's because if we don't reply instantly, then we would have avoided the confrontation, but yeah I guess that's it. It rarely happens.

How do you manage situations as such?



We try to diffuse it, especially in a situation where they say, “a native speaker should do this”. I always tell them that, first of all, we didn’t know what they got because we can’t check and if I assume that they got an easy question wrong, it says more about you than the server, especially before really getting to know us. So, I tell them that they can leave if they find this too tedious, but just don't be rude about it because we are all here to improve.

How long have you been studying Korean for?

When I first joined I didn’t really study a lot because I was also taking different classes in real life so I just did it as a hobby. But I took studying more seriously starting this year, so that would be around January.

So since you became a mod.

Haha, yeah basically.

How did you get into learning Korean?

Erm, I guess it first started when I got into BTS. I had looked into Korean songs before, but I never found a band where I needed to look at every single translation and lyrics to see what it said. So, I guess that’s kind of what motivated me to get into it.

You mentioned earlier about BTS, since when have you been an ARMY?

I’m pretty new, I think it was around Black Swan era.

Just before the pandemic?

Yeah, exactly haha . So then, that happened and then, I couldn't go to the concert for so long.

Are there any other K-pop acts that you listen to?

Yeah, urm... honestly, I don’t really. It’s always like BTS and then a bunch of girl groups. My preferred genre is acoustic guitar and it’s a completely different genre.

Do you feel like K-pop has helped you learn Korean?

Yeah, to a degree. Especially when you stop and look at the lyrics and kind of pick up some vocabulary.



And how about in regards to stanning BTS?

When I got into BTS, all I did was watch RUN BTS and whatever interviews they had. So, because of that you can kind of pick up a couple sentences. And just get familiar with the language.

Run BTS is coming.

I know. I am so excited for it. The teaser is so funny, haha. They are really good. You can tell they are good friends and you know you can laugh along with that. It's not like they are trying to put up an act for their fans or something.

How is your mod team? and how do you find working with them?

I think they are really good. Everyone works together and even though time zones may be an issue sometimes, they are always active in the mod chats. So, we know what happened and what is going on. I don't feel like I forgot to do something because it is already taken care of by the other mods. So, we always have each other's back.

I believe you guys work with organizing staff too, how is working with them as well?

We have the mod-org channel. So usually if we have an issue or if we have a question we can ask there. Sometimes I ping certain moderators, based on previous conversations or whoever is active, and it goes pretty smoothly. Sometimes we actually uncover more problems so it's helpful on both sides, I think. For the most part, it's been pretty smooth.

How was your experience joining this server and being a part of it?

It was really scary honestly. Because of this whole verification thing. I was like "What if I don't pass," but luckily when I first got in we were still doing live server tours so I was able to ask questions and get familiar with staff so it became less intimidating.

Is there any change you were looking for in the server? Or do you have any ideas?

Oh, any change? No, I don't think so. Well, I do think that we need more mentors. That's more of an overall problem though, so that's it.



And what about being a mod trainee? How was the experience and process as a mod trainee and how you went on to becoming a moderator?

Well, I had to be really diligent to make sure that my thread wouldn't close. I would always ask questions if I felt like the thread would soon close.

I would ask the questions because sometimes the whole server is quiet and no one would ask anything so I would ask "...hmm, I wonder how this goes haha,"

I would say the hardest part of being a mod trainee is when the server gets updated, so it's hard to kind of keep up with that. Oh, and also adding waitlists, that happened during training so I was like "what's that," haha, and then we also had the secretary, I also had to learn that too. I also had to cross check to make sure that people were following instructions.

How long was your training process for?

I think a couple of months.

I believe you have some new mod trainees right?

Ah, yes!

Are you training anyone right now? Or helping new trainees?

Yeah, I'm training two of them.

How is the training going?

I think it's going well. Careful, one of them is here listening in haha.

Yeah, you gotta be careful of what you say.

Oh well... Okay, let me talk bad, hm haha. I'm kidding, there's nothing.

How does it feel, becoming the trainer from the trainee?

I feel way more responsible when I answer questions because I feel more pressure now. It was easy to answer other people, but when you are training someone you think, "What if I say the wrong instructions that aren't applied anymore? Or it only applies to me because that's how I do."



I can imagine training takes a lot of time to do.

Yeah, and it also depends on the kind of questions we get on the server. Sometimes you know the answer right away as a moderator and you don't give a chance for the mod trainees to answer and practice. So, there are things like that sometimes.

Keeping mod trainees in mind, we have one final question for you. What advice would you give to anyone wanting to apply to be a mod?

Be patient, haha, and answer with a clear head. Sometimes you might get weird people trying to get in and sometimes you know you have to think "Do you want this person to be part of the group?", and I know that's kinda mean, but when someone is rude or sketchy I just ban them right away because we don't need that negative energy around here. You also have to remember that there are a lot of young members here who can get as young as 13, so you have to keep that in mind. I always take action if I feel like they cuss a lot; you can't cuss in general, but you can kind of tell when they are about to. So, I feel like we need to get this member out, because they're becoming too aggressive. So, just use your instinct I guess, and be kind. Be kind to the mods as well.

Thank you so much for the interview!