

Asian Productivity Organization

Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F
1-2-10, Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo, 102-0093 Japan



Tel:(81-3)5226-3920 Fax:(81-3)5226-3950
E-mail: apo@apo-tokyo.org
URL: www.apo-tokyo.org

PROJECT NOTIFICATION

20 November 2012

1. **Project Code:** 13-IN-44-GE-OSM-B
2. **Project Title:** Multicountry Observational Study Mission on SME Development
3. **Duration:** 4–8 February 2013 (five days)
4. **Venue:** Tokyo, Japan
5. **Implementing Organization:** Japan Productivity Center (JPC)
Address: 1-1 Shibuya 3-chome, Shibuya-ku
Tokyo 150-8307
Telephone: (81) 3-3409-1135
Facsimile: (81) 3-3409-5880
6. **Number of Participants:** Up to 12 participants
(Four participants each from Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam)
7. **Closing Date for Nominations:** 21 December 2012

All nominations along with the **completed biodata** forms and medical certificates of the nominees should reach the APO Secretariat by the above date. Selection of participants will be completed immediately after this date. The three member countries are requested to inform the APO Secretariat as soon as possible if they decide not to nominate anyone for the project.
8. **Objectives:**
 - (a) To learn how to promote productivity tools and techniques among SMEs;
 - (b) To examine and adopt the best practices utilized by Japanese SMEs to enhance productivity, quality, and profitability through various techniques and methodologies; and
 - (c) To develop an action plan for SME development in the participating countries.

9. Background

SMEs play an important role in the economies of most countries in the Asia-Pacific region not only because of their sheer numbers but also the variety of their activities. SMEs have been forced to move beyond the philosophy of continuous improvements and adopt more radical, innovative ideas to successfully upgrade and transform due to severe competition in the global business environment and technological complexity. The lack of knowledge of advanced management practices, weak technical capabilities, and limited access to external assistance are their critical common factors and should be closely examined for the development of SMEs.

In January 2012, a similar program was implemented with successful results. It created awareness among participants through learning from the best practices in utilizing productivity improvement tools and techniques. Besides learning from the lectures and exchanging views with resource speakers and other participants, they also had the opportunity to visit several excellent SMEs in Japan. Overall, the participants who attended the program gained an understanding of their roles and responsibilities in developing productivity measures through their action plans.

This observational study mission is being organized to provide participants with the opportunity to observe and learn from operations in advanced Japanese SMEs. This program was initiated by the APO with the collaboration of the JPC to provide an opportunity for NPO trainers/consultants, government officials in charge of SME development, and SME owners to examine productivity enhancement and management improvement techniques adopted by Japanese SMEs. The participants will learn the actual applications of productivity and quality improvement tools and techniques, such as 5S, kaizen, total productive maintenance (TPM), and lean production systems using a holistic approach practiced by the Japanese SMEs.

At the end of this study mission, the participants are expected to prepare action plans based on what they have learned and observed. The plans will be shared with NPOs, and participants will be requested to submit progress reports on action plan implementation six months after completion of the study mission.

10. Tentative Scope, Methodology, and Program

Scope

- SME development measures, the roles of consultants and NPOs, and self-improvement efforts by enterprises;
- Management philosophy and strategies of top SME managers seeking to increase productivity and competitiveness; and
- Practical productivity improvement tools and techniques for SMEs (5S, kaizen, TPM, etc.).

Methodology

Lectures, presentations, company visits, and interactive discussions.

11. Requirements of Candidates

- (a) Age: Preferably between 35 and 50 years.
- (b) Education: Preferably a university degree or equivalent qualification.

- (c) Present Position: NPO trainers or consultants and top managers of SMEs working closely with the NPO in the national productivity movement.

Participants are expected to disseminate and practice the lessons learned from the study mission.
- (d) Experience: At least five years of working experience
- (e) Language Proficiency: **Proficiency in written and spoken English is essential.**
- (f) Health: Physically and mentally fit to attend an intensive program entailing strenuous travel and several plant/field visits.
- (g) Post project: All participants are obligated to prepare action plans and share the plans with their respective NPOs. APO will also request participants to submit progress reports six months after completion of the study mission.

12. Financial Arrangements

(a) To be borne by the APO

- (i) Round-trip economy-class international airfare by the most direct route between the international airport nearest to the participant's place of work and Tokyo, Japan, for all SME participants from Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam. All participants are strongly encouraged to purchase and use discounted tickets (following IATA PEX or other applicable discount fares). Please note that arrangements for the purchase of air tickets should be in accordance with the "Guide on Purchases of Air Tickets for APO Participants," which will be sent to the selected participants and is available on the APO website (<http://www.apo-tokyo.org>) and from APO Liaison Officers in member countries. Please note that no additional per diem allowances will be provided due to early arrival, delayed departure, rerouting of tickets, or any other reason whatsoever.
- (ii) All assignment costs of overseas resource persons.

(b) To be borne by the host country—Japan

- (i) The cost of accommodations (including tax and service charges) at the hotel to be designated by the JPC and appropriate per diem allowances for meals and other incidental expenses for six days for up to 12 overseas participants.
- (ii) Other local implementing costs in Japan.

(c) To be borne by participants or participating countries

- (i) Participants must be fully insured in Japan, regardless of any insurance coverage obtained in their own country, against accident and illness (including hospitalization and death) for:
 - accidental death and dismemberment up to 4,000,000 yen,

- medical expenses for accident up to 4,000,000 yen, and
- medical expenses for illness up to 4,000,000 yen

for the entire duration of the project. The APO will secure this insurance on behalf of the participants in the host country from the day before project commencement until the day after project completion. Each participant must pay the premium himself/herself from the per diem allowances provided. Neither the APO nor the implementing organization will be responsible for any eventuality arising from accident or illness.

(ii) Any expenses incurred by participants for stopovers on the way to and from the project venue as well as for extra stay at the project venue before and/or after the official project period on account of early arrival, late departure, or rerouting of air tickets, for example, due to either limited available flights or any other reason whatsoever.

(iii) Any expenses related to visa fees and airport taxes.

13. Actions by Member Countries

(a) Each participating country is requested to nominate **more than four** candidates for selection. Please ensure that candidates nominated meet the qualifications specified above.

(b) We will not accept any form of self-nomination. All nominations must be endorsed and submitted by an APO Director, Alternate Director, Liaison Officer, or their designated officer.

(c) Please note that nomination does not necessarily guarantee that a candidate will be selected. Selection is at the discretion of the APO Secretariat. A basic criterion for selection is the homogeneity of the participants in terms of qualifications and work experience. Nonselection therefore does not mean that the candidates concerned are not competent. Sometimes candidates are not selected because they are overqualified.

(d) Each nomination should be accompanied by the documents listed below. A nomination lacking any of these documents may not be considered:

(i) Two copies of the candidate's biodata on the APO biodata form together with passport-sized photograph. The biodata form can be downloaded from the APO website. Downloading information is also available from www.apo-tokyo.org. We encourage submitting the biodata form to the APO Secretariat in electronic form as an attachment to a cover e-mail message from the APO Director, Alternate Director, or Liaison Officer.

(ii) APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form. Every candidate must complete and submit a copy of the APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form with his/her biodata at the time of nomination. Please note that for this particular project self-declaration is sufficient for candidates without any of the health conditions or illnesses listed on the reverse side of the medical form. However, for all others, medical certification by a recognized physician on the reverse side of the medical form is required.

(e) Member countries are encouraged to submit the necessary documents electronically as mentioned in (d)-(i). In that case, there is no need to send a hard copy by postal mail. However, if the documents are submitted by fax, member countries are requested to mail the originals of the documents to the APO as well. If a digital photograph of a nominee is not attached to the

electronic biodata form, a hard-copy photograph should be sent to the APO Secretariat by postal mail. Please specify the candidate's name and the project code on the reverse side of the photograph.

(f) Member countries are requested to abide by the nomination deadline specified in Section 7 on the first page. The APO may not consider late nominations as they have in the past resulted in considerable difficulties to the implementing organization in its preparatory work for the project.

(g) Under normal circumstances, candidates who are selected after the initial screening will be informed of their acceptance at least four weeks prior to commencement of the project.

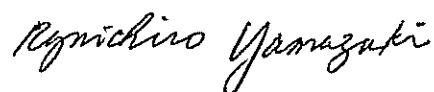
(h) NPOs should inform participants not to bring family members or engage in any private business activities during the entire duration of the project. Further, if they should become unable to take part, the NPOs concerned are requested to inform the APO and the host country promptly of their reason for withdrawal.

(i) Further, if any selected candidate becomes unable to take part, the NPOs concerned are requested to inform the APO and implementing organization **promptly** of the reason for withdrawal. Member countries and selected candidates are reminded that last-minute withdrawals and no-shows result in unnecessary expense and waste resources and therefore must be avoided.

(j) Each selected candidate is required to arrive at the venue one day before the start of the official project. Also, he/she is expected to return home upon completion of the official project because he/she is visiting the host country for the specific purpose of attending this APO project.

14. Guide for Participants

Other conditions for participation are given in the *APO Guide for Participants*, which is available from APO Liaison Officers/NPOs in member countries and on the APO homepage (http://www.apo-tokyo.org/05part_guide.htm).



Ryuichiro Yamazaki
Secretary-General