

## SME service excellence

**T**he service sector plays a vital role in a country's economic growth. The promotion of productivity and service excellence is crucial to drive national economies. Economic growth in advanced economies with a good quality of life typically is dominated by the service sector. The strength of the national economy requires efforts to raise service quality and create an experience of hospitality for customers.

The service sector is also important in Thailand and accounted for more than half of the economic growth registered in the last decade. Seventeen participants from 12 countries and six local ones spent the workweek from 19 to 23 May involved in a workshop on SME Best Practices in Service Excellence in Bangkok. Implemented by Thailand Productivity Institute (FTPI), the workshop aimed to share, learn, and observe the best practices utilized by SMEs in the sector to achieve service excellence. In conjunction with the workshop, the FTPI organized a seminar on Enhancing Service Excellence in Organizations on 19 May with 70 participants.

Three international experts from Singapore, Japan, and the ROC served as resource persons for three core modules and discussions during the workshop: transforming SMEs for service excellence through productivity and innovation; benchmarking and integrating the customer satisfaction index for productivity improvement; and principles and practices of service quality for SMEs to create new value for customers. It was concluded that the fundamental model of service excellence consisted of two factors: service experience design; and organizational culture building.

Participants also shared best practices from their home countries. Tsung-Tse Chen from the ROC explained the customer experience efforts of Lian-Ji Tea, a small company with 20 employees producing its own-brand tea and operating tea shops. That component of the workshop proved popular. "The specific knowledge I have gained by participating in this program is the best practices of other participants. They really represent valuable knowledge," enthused Bolor-Erdene Baatar from the Golomt Bank of Mongolia.



*Participants viewing the intensive care unit of Thonglor Pet Hospital in Bangkok.*

Examples of service excellence in Thailand observed by participants were Thonglor Pet Hospital with the motto "Choose the best for your pet," where they saw the organizational culture created in a hospital setting. Another visit was hosted by Nakornchai Air Transportation, a bus company that improved its passengers' experience by developing an IT-based reservation and customer management system. Participants were also introduced to the vehicles and related facilities of the company. 🌀