

— KPC golden jubilee illuminates the future —

The age of 50, according to the Chinese philosopher Confucius, is when one understands destiny. This is the age at which true wisdom begins to accumulate after a half-century of learning and observing the world. What does it mean for an organization to reach 50 years? Chairman and CEO of the Korea Productivity Center (KPC) and APO Director for the Republic of Korea Sung-Ki Bae, speaking at an event celebrating the KPC's 50th anniversary said, "The KPC, having reached the age of 50, has become an expert group. We now understand destiny within the field of productivity." Bae expressed appreciation for the endeavors of the 250 KPC staff in attendance and for their contribution to the achievements of the organization.

At the 50th anniversary event, the KPC announced its new management vision, which is to be "the best total solution provider (TSP)" by 2010. "Being a TSP means being expert on knowledge service to provide integrated training and consulting solutions," a staff member explained. In the commemorative address, Bae pointed out that, "No organization can survive in today's competitive global market with an ill-defined management paradigm. An organization that is not proactive and lacks initiative can only react defensively within the competitive business environment because it does not have a mid- and long-term strategy for sustainable future growth." While emphasizing the importance of establishing a management vision and strategic objectives, Bae called upon KPC staff to commit themselves fully to supporting the new vision, saying, "We should all carry out the task of developing and investing in new projects, executing continuous management innovation, promoting the KPC's brand image, and establishing a harmonious organizational culture to make our vision a reality."

In addition to the commemoration of its anniversary, the KPC organized a variety of events to raise public awareness of productivity in its jubilee year. In January, a writing competition with the theme of "productivity innovation" was held for university and postgraduate students. In May, a special forum for top managers of Korean SMEs was organized, at which Minister of Commerce, Industry and Energy Young-Ju Kim spoke on the impact of the Korea-US free trade agreement on local SMEs and outlined measures to enhance competitiveness, both key issues for Korean industry. An online consulting service for SMEs, the e-Productivity Innovation Service, became operational on 2 July.

The KPC was established in 1957 to help rebuild the nation's industry from the ashes of the Korean War and to contribute to a better quality of life through productivity improvement. The Republic of Korea was one of the original signatories to the APO Convention, and the KPC has been the national productivity organization of the government from the beginning. It has been tireless in developing future-oriented consulting methods and effective training tools since it became a special corporation under the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy in 1986. This was in line with governmental initiatives to promote systematic productivity improvement in Korean industry.

Every year, the KPC offers more than 1,000 training courses to around 130,000 trainees, making it the largest training provider in the country. It is the leading organization in efforts to enhance national productivity and create customer satisfaction. KPC services are designed to meet the needs of both the public and private sectors. The organization conducts comparative research on international labor productivity and compiles an index for public reference.



Bae addressing KPC staff

It also tracks the National Customer Satisfaction Index and National Brand Competitiveness Index. The invaluable contributions these and other activities have made to the industry, service, and agriculture sectors established the KPC as the foremost provider of consultancy on productivity.

APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka sent a video message to the KPC in both Korean and English congratulating it for its past success and conveying best wishes for the future. The Secretary-General stated that, "The KPC's commitment to promoting the exchange of ideas, experiences, and know-how for improving productivity within the region has been greatly appreciated and respected by its counterparts in the region. The APO, in this regard, is very proud of having the KPC as a partner in the pursuit of higher productivity in the region." 🌐

