



## Comment board



*Consultant **Koichi Hiratsuka**, Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development.*

Resource speaker, workshop on Management Assessment Criteria for SMEs, 20–23 October, Vietnam.

“The performance assessment or diagnosis of a client is the first step in conducting a consulting service. It is the most important and difficult process since an inaccurate diagnosis, as in medical practice,

can put the patient or the client in critical condition due to wrong medication or treatment. This workshop was organized to introduce a simple but very effective tool for performance assessment to APO member countries. The tools were developed a couple of years ago in an APO project and subsequently applied in more than 10 model companies. It consists of two parts: management assessment criteria for SMEs and the executive guidelines for self-improvement (kaizen). All the participants worked hard to master how to use them in a very short period of time. I am sure that these tools will help many consultants provide better services, especially to SMEs. I hope that NPOs will make information on the criteria and guidelines available in their local languages so that they can be used by consultants and SMEs more easily and widely.”

*Associate Professor **Dr. Zahiruddin Khan**, Institute of Environment Science & Engineering, National University of Science & Technology, Pakistan.*

Participant, seminar on The 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle), 6–10 October, Japan.

“The seminar was attended by consultants, NPO officers, leading waste managers, and academics from all around Asia. My objective, which was to strength-

en my knowledge of resource recovery and environmental regulations in Asian countries, was fulfilled. Professional presentations delineated the historical development of 3R regulations and their successful implementation in Japan, Malaysia, and Singapore. Incineration, as carried out in Japan, seems a viable environmental solution. A highlight of the program was the well-selected site visits. Visits to the Sai-no-Kuni Resource Recycling Factory and the Food-to-Energy Plant, in particular, exhibited great examples of zero-waste technologies. All the information obtained through the seminar has been incorporated into my courses on cleaner production and industrial and solid waste management. Currently, I am preparing a short course on the 3Rs and developing a proposal to promote 3Rs among local SMEs.”

*Executive Director **Sovathara Heng**, Beman Champion Co., Ltd., Cambodia.*

Participant, Web-based e-learning course on Customer Relationship Management for SMEs, 6–17 October.

“Before attending the course, I thought that customer relationship management (CRM) was simply a method to keep track of customers according to their segmentation, classification, spending power, and contribution. However, my whole perception of CRM has changed. The course broadened my ideas on how to classify and identify customers and how to track the performance and contribution of customers to the entire organization. Furthermore, I learned how to utilize IT in monitoring customer performance and about incentive programs to keep them loyal to the company as well as attracting new customers. I am planning to start practicing CRM within my company. In addition, I would like to keep in touch with the resource speakers and the APO to obtain continuous advice and guidelines in utilizing this material in real-life situations.”