


Knowledge management forum: Be a winner

"Be a winner. Get that KM advantage" was the theme of the Knowledge Management Forum for SMEs held at the EDSA Shangri-la Hotel, Manila, the Philippines, on 23 October. The forum was organized to share the results of the APO's Knowledge Management (KM) demonstration project for SMEs. This 12-month project, which started in September 2008, was conducted in the Philippines by the APO and Development Academy of the Philippines. Another aim of the forum was to encourage others to discover the benefits of KM and implement it. The forum was attended by 229 individuals, governmental officials, industrial institution and association representatives, and most importantly SME owners and managers, who accounted for more than 65% of the audience.

"KM is an integrated approach for creating, sharing, and applying knowledge to enhance organizational productivity, profitability, and growth," APO KM expert Praba Nair explained, citing the APO's KM definition. Nair briefed the audience on the APO KM Framework and its implementation approach, which was applied by the demonstration company Moonbake, a local SME confectioner.

An 11-minute video on the KM demonstration project at Moonbake followed the opening ceremony. The video featured the Moonbake CEO and staff talking about their KM progress. The video described how KM was implemented at Moonbake with images of its production lines and processes. Company President Rufino Manrique, Jr. then detailed the sequences of

activities and benefits and challenges encountered. Among the tangible outcomes and benefits arising from KM implementation, Manrique mentioned 2009 sales growth of 28% as a consequence of streamlining Moonbake's products and distribution method; the introduction of a new product line as a result of market research; a significant productivity increase, with a 27% increase in production coming from rationalizing operations; and improved customer satisfaction. Manrique also explained all the efforts and investments the company had made to improve staff access to knowledge and information. Starting with one Internet connection and 12 personal computers, Moonbake now has four Internet and WiFi connections and 21 computers. It maintains its own KM portal called Moonbakekm.ning, where staff can share knowledge, make suggestions, and comment on lessons learned.

The successful KM project at Moonbake is a vindication of the APO's focus on promoting KM, especially for SMEs. As part of its KM promotion, the APO has recently published the *KM Facilitators' Guide and KM Case Studies for Small and Medium Enterprises*, which can be downloaded from the APO Web site free of charge. 



APO Program Officer Kamlesh Prakash (L) congratulating Moonbake President Manrique (R)