



## Comment board



*Professor Dr. Zong-Tae Bae, Technology Management and Entrepreneurship, Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology Graduate School of Management, Republic of Korea.*

Participant, APO forum for Promoting Entrepreneurship in Asia, Japan, 13–15 January 2010.

“The forum was very well organized and efficiently managed. All the resource speakers brought us not only knowledge and information but also passion. The participants from APO member

countries were very energetic and fluent in English. We enjoyed the discussion even though the schedule was very tight. During the forum, I met several Japanese entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, and entrepreneurial consultants. I learned of their vision, passion, and plans for the future. Thanks to meeting with these invaluable resource persons, I came to a better understanding of the Japanese economy and society. My greatest benefit, therefore, was meeting face to face with the entrepreneurial leaders of Japan. I also learned about Japan’s efforts to enhance entrepreneurship. The visit to EGG Japan was very impressive. I am planning to introduce the cases that I studied during the forum to my students to help them widen their perspective. I will also share good examples of constructive collaboration between university and industry with people in my university to explore the possibility of creating our own action plan.”

*Chief of Health Promotion Program Dr. Direk Ekbawornwong, Suratthani Hospital, Thailand.*

Participant, multicountry observational study mission on Mental Health and Productivity, Japan, 17–23 January 2010.

“Mental health has become ever more important in productivity improvement as the world increasingly values brain work over physical work. However, the

management of mental health is very challenging due to the abstract nature of the topic. I was surprised to learn that Japan had studied this matter and implemented mental health systems in workplaces for more than 30 years. During the mission, I learned not only the theory but also the real experience of Japan, which made the program live and interesting. The details of the Japan Mental Health Inventory, a mental survey tool designed by the Japan Productivity Center, were helpful in identifying the hidden levels of mental health within the workplace and for the early detection and prevention of problems. Another impressive point is the joint effort by the Japanese government, companies, labor unions, and workers to share the responsibilities. I appreciated the many Japanese experts and practitioners who shared their expertise. This mission provided me with guidelines to start up mental healthcare in the workplace in the context of my own organization.”

*Assistant Manager Shamini Murugaya, SME Corporation Berhad, Malaysia.*  
National Expert, coordination meeting of APO Research on Financing of Small and Medium Business, Thailand, 26–28 January 2010.

“The coordination meeting was fruitful and informative as the meeting was to finalize the framework and methodology used for the research project. In the meeting, participants shared country papers on SME financing in their respective countries which gave an insight into the background of SME financing and best practices of each country. The chief expert also shared his view that the growth of SMEs comes from innovation as only innovation brings strength and sustainable competence to survive. The national experts also agreed that innovation is the driving force of productivity enhancement for SMEs. Thus the framework of the research was finalized with innovation as the core topic. Through the discussion, I gained a clearer picture of what is expected for the research and the likely barriers that I might encounter during the process. Henceforth I will do my best with the assistance of my colleagues to generate research results from the Malaysian perspective.”