

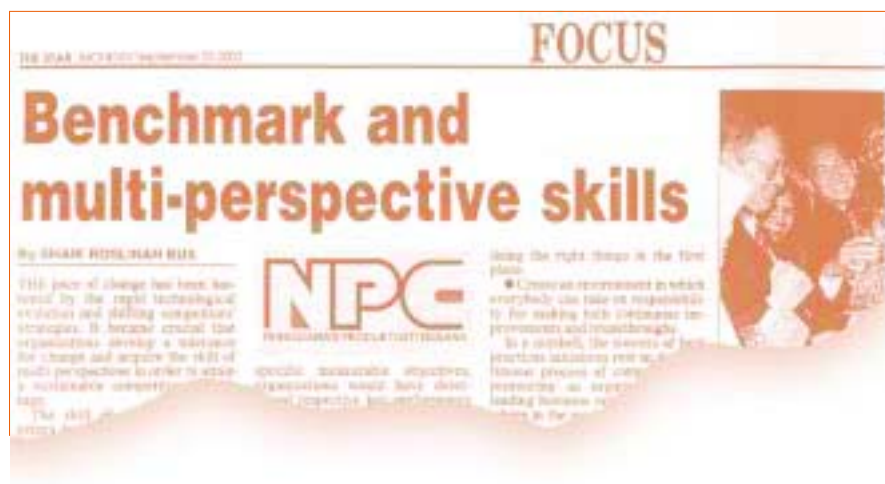


A·P·O news

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

Reaching for *The Star*: Innovative productivity promotion in Malaysia

The task of promoting productivity and disseminating information on how it can be further improved is serious business. Much is at stake as the issue of productivity is central to a nation's wealth creation, the competitiveness of its products and services, and the quality of life of its people. For this reason, many governments have made a paradigm shift in economic growth strategy—from one that is input driven to one that is productivity driven. No one is more aware of the fundamental importance of productivity than the people in the national productivity organizations (NPOs). Their primary mission is to generate productivity awareness among the people. Most have included the provision of training and consultancy services on productivity to industries in all the economic sectors as another basic function.



In promoting productivity, apart from using tried and tested activities like seminars, conferences, exhibitions, awards, talk shows on TV and radio, press conferences, and how-to publications on ways to achieve higher productivity, NPOs are resorting to new and innovative means of getting the productivity message across to the public. For example, we have productivity marches in Sri Lanka; student productivity organizations in the Philippines; the "Think Smart, Act Smart" productivity campaign in schools in Thailand; mobile offices in the Republic of China; and Thinkathon, a national brainstorming exercise, in Singapore.

In its productivity and quality (P&Q) campaign for this year, Malaysia came up with yet another novel idea—the publication of a series of weekly P&Q articles in one of the country's major daily newspapers, *The Star*. The rationale is sound and simple: the articles reach a vast cross-section of the population and they bring updated information on P&Q to the public. Since its debut, more than 15 articles have been featured. Some past subject areas dealt with included:

- The Business of Productivity
- Push for Productivity, Go for Quality
- Malaysian Route to Excellence
- Adopting an Excellence Framework

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"It is not enough to have knowledge, one must also apply it. It is not enough to have wishes, one must also accomplish."

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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- Quality Systems in Enhancing Competitiveness of SMEs
- Eight Criteria of the Prime Minister's Quality Award
- Samsung's Continuous Pursuit of Success
- The Knowledge Worker in Quality Circle Activities

To ensure a sufficient supply of quality articles for *The Star*, the National Productivity Corporation (NPC) Malaysia, the NPO of the country, set up a special task force called *Pasukan Petugas Penerbitan Rencana* (PPPR) to administer this project. It comprises a non-executive chairman, an executive manager, an executive secretary, and four other members representing the major functional areas of the NPC: Training and System Development; Research; Promotion; and Best Practices. These officials of the PPPR are appointed by the Director-General of the NPC. The PPPR determines the topics for the articles, commissions the writers, appoints the editors, and

submits completed manuscripts to the management of the NPC for final approval before submission to *The Star* for publication.

When writers are assigned an article, they are instructed to prepare it in English and to ensure that the content is current, factual, accurate, easy to read, and with a human-interest element. There must be no plagiarism. The length is about 1,200 words with a minimum of diagrams and tables. Writers receive an honorarium for each article published and their authorship is acknowledged.

"Response from the readers and the public has been very encouraging," said Mr. Abdul Latif Abu Seman, NPC Director for Promotion and Joint Ventures. "The number of enquiries received for more information on the subject matters featured in the articles and the P&Q enhancement services of the NPC has been increasing steadily." 