

Asian Productivity Organization

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PROJECT NOTIFICATION

29 May 2012

1. **Project Code:** 12-IN-12-GE-WSP-B
2. **Project Title:** **Workshop on SME Best Practices in the Service Sector**
3. **Duration:** 2–5 October 2012 (four days)
4. **Venue:** Tokyo, Japan
5. **Implementing Organization:**
Japan Productivity Center (JPC)
Address: 1-1 Shibuya 3-chome, Shibuya-ku
Tokyo 150-8307
Telephone: (81) 3-3409-1135
Facsimile: (81) 3-3409-5880
6. **Number of Overseas Participants:**
Up to 18 qualified participants from Republic of China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, IR Iran, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. Other member countries with special interest in the subject are also encouraged to apply.
7. **Number of Local Participants:** Up to six qualified participants
8. **Closing Date for Nominations:** **3 August 2012**

All nominations along with the **completed biodata** form and medical certificate of the nominees should reach the APO Secretariat by the above date. Selection of participants will be completed immediately after this date. Member countries are requested to inform the APO Secretariat as soon as possible if they decide not to nominate anyone for the project.
9. **Objectives:** To observe the key concepts and priorities of winners of business excellence in customer satisfaction and service awards in the private sector based on the Japan Quality Awards (JQA), High Service Japan 300, etc. and examine the applicability of advanced Japanese SME best practices in service excellence in other Asian countries.

10. Background

The service sector plays a vital role in a country's economic growth. This has become especially evident recently in the Asia-Pacific region. Thus, the promotion of productivity and business excellence in the sector is crucial to revitalize national economies. As part of Japan's effort to enhance the standards of service quality, the JPC has been promoting the business excellence framework since 1995, encouraging Japanese enterprises to transform their management structures to compete internationally by being customer focused and continuing to create new value through innovation. In addition, in 2007 the JPC developed the Service Productivity and Innovation for Growth framework to resolve various issues faced by the service sector by introducing a Japanese Customer Satisfaction Index and developing the High Service 300 service award system.

Since SMEs make up the largest number of business entities and are the backbone of the economy in any country, the quality of SMEs' products and services can have a great influence on the strength of the national economy. A similar program was implemented last year during which participants gained valuable knowledge and experience of the best practices implemented by various SMEs in Japan. This workshop is being organized again to provide participants with the opportunity to learn and examine best practices of advanced Japanese SMEs in service excellence. This aims to encourage greater competitiveness of service-related businesses and make other Asian SMEs more customers oriented.

At the end of this workshop, the participants are expected to prepare action plans based on what they learned. The plans will be shared with NPOs and heads of participants' organizations. Participants will be requested to submit progress reports on action plan implementation six months after completion of the course.

11. Scope and Methodology

Scope

- Introduction of the JQA system;
- Management philosophy and strategies of top SME managers to achieve service excellence; and
- Sharing information on quality improvement activities in participating countries including promotional activities and other areas of interest.

Methodology

Lectures, group discussions, observational site visits and preparation and presentation of action plans.

12. Requirements of Candidates

- (a) Age: Preferably between 35 and 45 years.
- (b) Education: Preferably university degree or higher qualification.
- (c) Present Position: Top managers of service-related SMEs or NPO consultants.
- (d) Experience: At least five years of experience in best practices in the service sector.

- (e) Language
Proficiency: Proficiency in written and spoken English is essential.
- (f) Health: Physically and mentally fit to attend an intensive program entailing strenuous travel and several plant/field visits.

13. Financial Arrangements

(a) To be borne by the APO

- (i) Round-trip economy-class international airfare by the most direct route between the international airport nearest to the participants' place of work and Tokyo, Japan. As far as practicable, all participants should purchase discount tickets (Please note that any arrangements for the purchase of air tickets should be in accordance with the "Guide on Purchases of Air Tickets for APO Project Participants" on page 16 of the *APO Guide for Participants*, which is available on the APO website at <http://www.apo-tokyo.org> and from APO Liaison Officers in member countries.) Please note that no additional per diem allowances will be provided due to early arrival, delayed departure, rerouting of tickets, or any other reason whatsoever.
- (ii) The cost of hotel accommodations (including tax and service charges) and a per diem allowance for three overseas participants for up to five days.
- (iii) All assignment costs of overseas resource persons.

(b) To be borne by the host country—Japan

- (i) The cost of hotel accommodations and a per diem allowance for 15 overseas participants for up to five days.
- (ii) Other local implementing costs in Japan.

(c) To be borne by participants or participating countries

- (i) Participants must be fully insured in Japan, regardless of any insurance coverage obtained in their own country, against accident and illness (including hospitalization and death) for:
 - accidental death and dismemberment up to 4,000,000 yen,
 - medical expenses for accident up to 4,000,000 yen, and
 - medical expenses for illness up to 4,000,000 yenfor the entire duration of the project. The APO will secure this insurance on behalf of the participants in the host country from the day before project commencement until the day after project completion. Each participant must pay the premium himself/herself from the per diem allowances provided. Neither the APO nor the implementing organization will be responsible for any eventuality arising from accident or illness.
- (ii) Any expenses incurred by participants for stopovers on the way to and from the project venue as well as for extra stay at the project venue before and/or after the official

project period on account of early arrival, late departure, or rerouting of air tickets, for example, due to either limited available flights or any other reason whatsoever.

- (iii) Any expenses related to visa fees and airport taxes

14. Actions by Participating Countries

- (a) Each member country is requested to nominate two or more qualified candidates in accordance with Section 12 above. Please ensure that candidates nominated meet the qualifications specified above.
- (b) We will not accept any form of self-nomination. All nominations must be endorsed and submitted by an APO Director, Alternate Director, Liaison Officer, or their designated officer.
- (c) Please note that nomination does not necessarily guarantee that a candidate will be selected. Selection is at the discretion of the APO Secretariat. A basic criterion for selection is the homogeneity of the participants in terms of qualifications and work experience. Nonselection therefore does not mean that the candidates concerned are not competent. Sometimes candidates are not selected because they are overqualified.
- (d) Each nomination should be accompanied by the documents listed below. A nomination lacking any of these documents may not be considered:
 - (i) Two copies of the candidate's biodata on the APO biodata form together with a passport-sized photograph. The biodata form can be downloaded from the APO website (<http://www.apo-tokyo.org/project/participants.html>). Downloading information is also available from www.apo-tokyo.org. We encourage submitting the biodata form to the APO Secretariat in electronic form as an attachment to a cover e-mail message from the APO Director, Alternate Director, or Liaison Officer.
 - (ii) APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form. Every candidate must complete and submit a copy of the APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form with his/her biodata at the time of nomination. Please note that for this particular project self-declaration is sufficient for candidates without any of the health conditions or illnesses enumerated on the reverse side of the medical form. However, for all others, medical certification by a recognized physician on the reverse side of the medical form is required.
- (e) Member countries are encouraged to submit the necessary documents electronically as mentioned in (d)-(i). In that case, there is no need to send a hard copy by postal mail. However, if the documents are submitted by fax, member countries are requested to send the originals of the documents to the APO as well. If a digital photograph of a nominee is not attached to the electronic biodata form, a hard-copy photograph should be sent to the APO Secretariat by postal mail. Please specify the candidate's name and the project code on the reverse side of the photograph.
- (f) Member countries are requested to abide by the nomination deadline specified in Section 8 on the first page. The APO may not consider late nominations as they have in

the past resulted in considerable difficulties to the implementing organization in its preparatory work for the project.

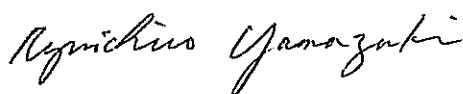
- (g) Member countries are requested to inform candidates that, once selected, they are not to bring family members or to engage in any private business activities during the entire duration of the project.
- (h) Under normal circumstances, candidates who are selected after the initial screening will be informed of their acceptance at least four weeks prior to commencement of the project.
- (i) Further, if they should become unable to take part, the NPOs concerned are requested to inform the APO and implementing organization **promptly** of their reason for withdrawal. Member countries and selected candidates are reminded that last-minute withdrawals and no-shows result in unnecessary expense and waste resources and therefore must be avoided.
- (j) Each selected candidate is required to arrive at the venue one day before the start of the official project. Also, he/she is expected to return home upon completion of the official project because he/she is visiting the host country for the specific purpose of attending this APO workshop.

15. Preparation of Country Papers

Country paper submission is required for this project, on which more information will be provided later.

16. Guide for Participants

Other conditions for participation are given in the APO "Guide for Participants" which is available from APO Liaison Officers/NPOs in member countries and on the APO homepage (http://www.apo-tokyo.org/05part_guide.htm).



Ryuichiro Yamazaki
Secretary-General