

22/05/2001

## Infineon Technologies' success story

A. Hafiz Yatim

EMPHASIS on labour and training has paid huge dividends for Infineon Technologies (M) Sdn Bhd as it has successfully reduced operating costs over the past two years.

Last week it achieved the pinnacle of its success when the company won the prestigious "Employers award to promote k-workers".

The Batu Berendam-based company scored a double success when one of its staff, Kenzer Tan Heck Wee, a manager of its total quality management and communications division, won the "Best Employee" award during last week's Labour Day celebrations.

The company's vice-president and managing director, Wil Fluit, said the company had made a total transformation since 1998 by allowing workers at the lower level to make their own decisions.

"Letting workers at the operational line make their own decisions and equipping them with the necessary knowledge to do so has resulted in an increase in productivity.

"Over the past 2 1/2 years, the company has saved a total of RM96 million in total costs following suggestions by workers on ways to improve production," he said.

A manifestation of its emphasis on training could be seen when the company completed building its RM2 million Infineon Academy, a facility used to train its workers as well as civil servants.

Its deputy managing director, Lee Ah Nga, who received the award from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last week echoed similar sentiments.

He said some companies might not see providing training to workers as worthwhile.

Infineon invests at least 1.2 per cent of the employees payroll on training, where workers are required to receive 40 hours of training annually to further improve themselves.

Tan, who heads the TQM division, said the company's emphasis on training was in line with the Government's vision of knowledge-workers (k-workers).

"Infineon promotes the three i's - ideas, information and innovation - among our workers.

"Under this requirement, each worker has to undergo training in four areas...computer, quality control, technical and others, like team-building and presentation skills."