

Penyampai : TAN SRI DATO SERI AHMAD SARJI BIN ABDUL HAMID  
Tajuk : PELANCARAN MAJS MANAGEMENT CENTRE  
Lokasi : BANKERS CLUB, KUALA LUMPUR  
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I wish to thank MAJS and in particular YBhg. Dato' Dr. Mohd.

Shahari Ahmad Jabar The Chairman, for inviting me to officiate the launch of their Management Centre tonight.

The inauguration of the MAJS Management Centre marks yet another milestone in the provision of quality management training in this country. A management centre has an important role to perform in the progress and economic development of Malaysia which is rapidly developing to achieve the status of fully developed nation. The dynamic global environment that now exists requires managerial skills attuned to coping with, and mastering the changes in such environment.

2. The MAJS Management Centre can contribute towards the upgrading of management levels in the country, both in the public as well as the private sectors, through seminars, lecture programmes and intellectual colloquias where distinguished and learned experts and productivity management gurus can pass on their wisdom to the participants.

3. In order to attain the necessary credibility, the centre should also establish strategic alliances between local and foreign institutes and institutions. In doing so, the centre will facilitate the exchange programmes involving economic and management experts. Through this interchange and exchange of ideas and philosophies, Malaysia can learn from the experiences of developed countries, such as Japan, to avoid some of the pitfalls encountered by them. Most important, through the learning process, we will not abandon our positive traditional values in our pursuit of economic goals.

4. The MAJS Centre can also work with government institutions and statutory bodies to provide a forum for dialogue and exchange of views on important national management issues. The civil service has continuously placed great emphasis on training and skills upgrading. The centre can help by offering high quality training programmes through collaboration with government training institutions, in order to achieve the objectives of the administrative modernisation programmes which are geared to producing a transparent, productive, disciplined and quality oriented public service.

5. The establishment of management centres like the MAJS Management Centre is evident that the private sector is supportive of the Malaysia Incorporated Policy. MAJS can complement the Government efforts in spurring private sector-led growth through the training of more efficient and knowledgeable managers. Management centres such as MAJS are not only important focal points for the dissemination of knowledge and the building of managerial expertise, but also represent the confluence towards strengthening relationships with the private sector. It is only within such an atmosphere of close rapport and interaction can the exchange of knowledge, information-generation, information-sharing, can take place.

6. The challenge of establishing a fully moral and ethical society, whose citizens are strong in religious and spiritual values and imbued with the highest of ethical standards, must be grounded in the management training efforts of MAJS Management Centre. It is through such efforts that a strong and dynamic, robust and self-reliant, competent and honest management team will evolve together with a high sense of corporate duty. It is hoped that the MAJS Management Centre will be able to infuse such perspectives to a higher level of knowledge development. In view of the Government's policy to make education services as an export item perhaps greater development will be needed not only to cater for the domestic needs but also as a leading centre for the region. Hopefully the foreign graduates of the centre will bring home the Malaysian development experiences to meet their home country's development needs.

7. Management or the conduct of affairs of an organisation in an orderly and systematic manner are often

overshadowed by short-term demands, with little or no consideration for the future prospects and challenges.

Management must not only provide the mission of the organisation but also the vision or the medium and longer term focus, to help achieve the goal of sustainable growth and development. Management development must include the evolution of a value-system within the context of total development. This is to ensure that the achievements in material well-being are in tandem with the attainment of social objectives of national development. Promoting positive values and a sense of social responsibility must be institutionalised in the management system. Permit me now to touch on a matter of vital importance to the life of a nation. We should always be conscious of the need to adhere to high moral values and sound business ethics and practices. As I had only recently launched a book entitled "Upholding the Integrity of the Malaysian Civil Service" it is perhaps appropriate and opportune to reflect amongst us the paramount need for having the desired work ethics and values. That book has the objective of instilling discipline and maintaining integrity in the hearts and minds of all civil servants. But it is not just the civil servants who need to be reminded of the need for moral discipline and integrity at this juncture of the nation's life. The private sector too needs to uphold high ethical standards. Ethics is the moral strength to do what we know is right, and not to do what we know is wrong.

Professionals and managers within the business community must be accountable not just to their clients but also to society in general. Their duty is to maintain standards, to perform quality work, to reject everything that is inferior in quality or not fit for use is much more important than the blind pursuit of profit goals. The job of a professional manager is not to like people. It is not to change people. It is to put their strengths to work, says Peter Drucker.

8. The Prime Minister in his recent New Year Message to the nation had stated that Western societies are putting too much emphasis on managers who are believed to hold the key on the success of a business or operation. Because of this, the managers demanded very high salaries with bonuses and share option schemes and all sorts of perks. As a result of this approach, many big corporate giants had declined. They had also placed so much emphasis on quick profits that they did not invest in research and development or expansion.

Some companies, for instance, have also failed to recognise the changing nature of the production process thereby curtailing their responsiveness to customer needs, and failing to build and maintain their market share overtime.

9. We have to define a clear management philosophy for Malaysia, so that we can help prevent the similar approach wherein managers are demanding high salaries, perks and other benefits at the expense of the companies which will gradually decline. Most business failures do not sometimes stem from bad times. They come from poor management, greed, unethical practices, and bad times just precipitate the crisis. Sometimes managers should be reminded that its people who make the difference, not the manager. We need to have a management philosophy wherein there is a balanced responsibility with regard to the power leverage which will influence the viability of the company. The major stockholders and the board of directors must be able to influence and be accountable for the major decisions, and to prevent professional managers from getting golden parachutes etc. as well as playing the more dominant role in the management of the companies.

10. I hope the MAJS Management Centre will help us define the "Management Philosophy for Malaysia". Your Chairman, Dato' Dr. Mohd. Shahari bin Ahmad Jabar, is a personal friend whom I had known since 1957. He had been a good manager in the Civil Service for more than 30 years. He studied Philosophy at the University of Malaya. So, he is well qualified to define the philosophy of management for Malaysia. He is now an entrepreneur himself. He is suitably poised to lead this centre. Now, I have the privilege to officially launch the MAJS Management Centre.