

Penyampai : TAN SRI ABDUL HALIM BIN ALI
Tajuk : MAJLIS DINNER BLACK TIE
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1. Tahniah saya ucapkan kepada tuan-tuan dan puan-puan yang telah dipilih untuk mengikuti kursus Pra- Jawatan Utama Sektor Awam (Pra-JUSA) pada kali ini.

Walaupun tujuan berkursus ini ialah untuk memenuhi keperluan Sistem Saraan Baru (SSB) namun demikian pada saya, setiap kali kursus sebegini diadakan ianya telah mengumpulkan pegawai tinggi kerajaan dari berbagai bidang yang mempunyai berbagai pengalaman, kepakaran, bakat dan ilmu pengetahuan.

Sudah tentu ini satu peluang istimewa yang mesti tuan-tuan dan puan-puan rebut untuk berbincang dan mempertingkatkan ilmu dan kebijaksanaan masing-masing bagi membolehkan perancangan, tindakan dan penilaian yang adil dan saksama. Adalah diharapkan juga peluang sebegini akan melahirkan satu pakatan jitu demi untuk memperkukuhkan lagi ketrampilan perkhidmatan awam menuju ke abad 21.

2. In an environment characterized by blurring national boundaries and collaborative advantages, Malaysia is open to cross border-activities and instantaneous technological based communication.

This has provided Malaysia with an array of new knowledge, expertise, technology, products, services, and standard. Our global partnership, strategic alliances, and other international linkages, have further enhanced our creative efforts to generate new benefits for the country in such fields as education, technology, communication, health, transportation, agriculture, science, governance, family values and societal concerns.

Such creative efforts have impacted our business organizations and communities-- in the cities villages, and particularly, the workplace.

3. In this regard, the R words--reinventing, restructuring, right sizing, rebuilding, revitalizing, and reengineering have captured the nation's imagination. These words have become the buzzwords in the workplace for organizational renewal and transformation at all levels of the Malaysian public service. For the public service, this transformation serves to make its function, people, process and mechanism more effective, efficient, responsive, and more importantly, an ethical enterprise. The innovative efforts, which have pervaded the workplace are vital for organizational survival in these times of unprecedented changes, where answers that worked before may not fit our changed environment.

Organizations must be geared towards a constant state of rapid learning and unlearning in order to remain meaningful. Pra-JUSA officers must be prepared to lead the way towards the creation of this process of learning and unlearning within their respective agencies.

4. Central to this "winds of change" is the advent of the Knowledge Age. Ladies and Gentlemen, we in Malaysia have entered it. The new currency in this Knowledge Age is LEARNING, admittedly, the paradigm that has staged rapid and revolutionary changes in the current Malaysian economic, technical, and organizational development. The agent of change in this Knowledge Age, as referred by Peter Drucker, is the Knowledge Worker. He contends that the social center of gravity has shifted to the knowledge worker who possesses new values and expectations.

It is this group of knowledge workers who will effect the pursuit of by knowledge, how it is learned and taught. Friedlander says "learning is the process that underlies and gives birth to change. Change is the child of learning." The process of change is through organizational learning and the state of the change is the creation of an intelligent organization.

5. Organizational learning demands a shift that goes all the way down to the core of our organizational culture. Its purpose is continuous transformation and the process is through collective thinking and

working together. Before collective thinking can start, organizations must endeavor for the generation of a widespread of information that integrates all information within the organizational context. Members of the organization learn to interpret these information collectively and act on it. This process engages people to be thinking actively. We hope that through this process, public outcry against some organizations turning deaf ears to their short falls, repeating their mistakes, failing to adapt to customers needs, unable to adapt their work processes and performances to meet competitive standards, and succumbing to unethical practices, will be a thing of the past.

6. Knowledge that we create through organizational learning allows us to reframe and reconceptualize issues in the organization's working environment, as the two factors learning and change reinforce each other. The faster the rate of change the more new knowledge we create to deal with the change. Winston Churchill once said that "Empires of the future are empires of the mind." Hence, the more new knowledge we create the faster we change the world to make it a better place to live in.

While it is commonly held that change is caused by outside forces over which organization has little control, we must however, realize that we are also responsible for creating much of those changes.

Thus, we must learn to develop the ability to adapt to these change collectively, an alternative to which the present day knowledge workers have no problem adopting.

7. Organizational learning when successful should pave the way towards the creation of an intelligent organization. Members of the organization demonstrate their highest commitment for quality and integrity through self-directed teams. Everyone exercise their intelligence to co-create products, improve services, solve problems, enhance each other's skill, and work with each other to ensure the whole system operates smoothly. The essence of an intelligent organization is care and wisdom achieved through close collaboration, strategic alliance, collective thinking and organizational and interorganizational learning.

8. The twenty first century is just around the corner. Organizations around the world are preparing to usher in the century with revolutionary changes and paradigm shifts in almost all spheres of human life. Managers and leaders in Malaysia, like their counterparts across the world, are continuously looking for an effective strategy for organizational renewal. We in the government have tirelessly developed and tried numerous strategies for change so as to improve our efficiency and effectiveness in serving the masses. While some of our attempts have been challenging to us, many of the strategies developed proved to be not only effective but also useful in helping our nation forge ahead in many frontiers of development. In fact, it was the courage and the willingness on our part to continuously experiment with and improve on our ways of doing things that helped us ride the tide of turbulence in the past, and prepare us for a more exciting journey ahead. Even though our experiments with policy initiatives, administrative processes, methods and techniques proved to be fruitful, our challenge at hand had always been the issue of poor sustainability and low renewal capacity in most of our innovative plans implemented. Thus it is imperative upon us to embark on scanning new dimensions of administrative interventions which could positively supplement, complement, and reinforce our successful strategies of the past. It will also sharpen our analysis and hone our strategic choice of redressal measures.

9. The rapidly changing market environments and increasing global interdependencies have created the need for flexibility in organizational design and performance. The development of new forms of organizations to meet such challenges effectively, could result in a dramatic effect to society itself and the way organizations and work will be perceived in the future. Organizational change will principally be people focused. They will maximize their skills, knowledge, and experience to the advantage of both the organization and the individual. Organizations must develop higher-trust cultures, responsive systems, and knowledge workers imbued with espoused values, able to adopt and adapt to changes. It is recognized that to promote proactive responses to change, individuals must be adequately equipped to create and sustain values, knowledge bases, processes, skills and systems.

Individuals in organization must be prepared to change their work habits and patterns in order to enable them tolerate and deal more effectively with uncertainties and paradoxes.

10. It is not enough for us in the public sector to respond, adapt, adopt and adjust to the pressures of change. The push for innovative efforts requires us in the public service to have a different kind of learning that goes beyond adapting to challenges and solving problems. Our innovative efforts should be focused on opening new frontiers, imagining other possibilities and generating fresh ways of looking at the world. Through a collaborative system and by invigorating a learning culture, we will be able to create radically innovative organizations.

11. Given the present scenario, Pre-JUSA officers must develop the art of collaborating not only with each other but also with their private sector counterparts particularly, in the affairs of organizational learning and in the mastery of relevant knowledge. This knowledge based approach provide will them with the leadership skills necessary to steer their organizations into the next millennium.

12. Saya berharap tuan-tuan dan puan-puan para hadirin sekalian, dan peserta kursus Pra JUSA khususnya, dapat mengimbuah dan memikirkan dengan lebih mendalam apakah lagi yang diperlukan bagi menyedia dan membolehkan diri kita berfungsi sebagai pekerja berilmu yang senantiasa merangsang perubahan di mana sahaja kita berada.