

CHAPTER FIVE

EVALUATING THE CLERICAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

5.1 The Training Programme

The Staff Training Centre of Bank Negara Malaysia conducts the Clerical Development Programme twice a year for the clerical and secretarial staff. This study covers the programme which was conducted on 25 - 29 March 1996 and repeated on 13 - 17 May 1996. The five-day programme is designed, developed and delivered by the in-house trainers of the Staff Training Centre. It focuses on the clerical staff's ability to develop the skills required of their job. The target audience for this programme is the non-executives comprising the typists and the clerical officers. The outline of the course is given below:

Course Objectives

On completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- o plan their work and manage time effectively
- o put into practice good communication and interpersonal skills
- o handle telephone calls professionally
- o conduct themselves in a proper manner in the office and at functions
- o identify areas for their own personal development

Course Contents

- Day 1 : Ice-breaking Session
Group Dynamics
Work Ethics and Role of Clerical Staff
- Day 2 : Grooming, Social and Table Etiquette
Planning Your Work
- Day 3 : Communication and Interpersonal Skills
- Day 4 : Personal Development and Motivation
- Day 5 : Telephone Techniques and Courtesies

Methodology

- o Lectures
- o Guided Discussions
- o Role Plays
- o In-tray Exercises

5.2 Characteristics of Participants

The profile of the participants is given below. The data indicated that the majority of the participants were Malays and that more than half of the participants were also males. In terms of age group, 91% were in the 26 - 35 year age group implying that most of them have less than 15 years work experience in the Bank. The Clerical Officers form the largest group.

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Race</u>		
Malay	37	88.0
Chinese	2	4.8
Indians	3	7.2
<u>Sex</u>		
Male	32	76.0
Female	10	24.0
<u>Age Group</u>		
18 - 25	1	2.0
26 - 35	38	91.0
36 - 45	2	5.0
45 - 55	1	2.0
<u>Job Levels</u>		
Clerical Officer	34	82.0
Typist	4	9.0
Security Assistant	4	9.0

5.3 Research Results

Level 1 : Participants' Reaction

A 5-point scale was used to obtain the responses with 5 being the highest response possible and 1 the lowest. For the Clerical Development Programme, the following scores were received. The total score was obtained by multiplying the number of responses to the rating. The average score was then obtained by dividing the total score with the 42 respondents.

Rating					Content	Total Score	Average Score
1	2	3	4	5			
-	1	-	27	14	Relevance to Present Job	180	4.3
-	-	6	29	7	Achieving Course Objectives	169	4.0
-	-	7	28	7	Coverage of Topics	168	4.0
					Instruction		
-	-	8	29	5	Speaker's Knowledge	165	3.9
-	-	10	28	4	Presentation Skills	162	3.9
					Overall		
-	-	4	28	10	How did you find the course?	174	4.1
					Administration		
-	2	8	18	14	Meals/Refreshments/Facilities	170	4.0

Level 1 findings indicate that for each item course participants reacted very favourably to the programme. Positive reactions increase participants' receptivity to the knowledge and skills presented in the course. The majority of participants felt that the course objectives had been met and that the course was very relevant to their jobs.

Level 2: Learning

Level 2 evaluation consisted of demonstrating competency. Participants demonstrated their proficiency in role plays and in-tray exercises. The trainer then observed the participant and evaluate whether he or she has performed well. In the role plays and in-tray exercises, the trainer used a checklist which include all the principles of good communication skills, time management and telephone techniques to evaluate the participants' performance. For the communication skills, each participant was videotaped before and after training. Before the training, the first presentation was made by participants with no course content given. The second presentation was done after the training has been given. The trainer then provided the feedback to the participants on where they have improved. The observation checklist for presentation covers 2-eye contact, gestures, voice, organisation of contents and overall presentation. Participants were also requested to rate on a five-point scale (in which 5 was the highest and 1 the least) for knowledge gained. On this measure, an average score of 3.9 was received. Level 2 findings indicate that course participants gained new knowledge and skills particularly in the following areas:

Planning Work - Participants have learned how to plan their work and manage time effectively. In-tray exercises were given to participants in which participants had to prioritise the assignments.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills - Participants found the session useful to their present job as it helps them to communicate with their bosses.

Telephone Techniques - The session taught the participants how to answer calls professionally.

In the verbal feedback session conducted by the trainer, overall the participants felt that they have learned a lot and were using the skills taught in the course when demonstrating during role plays.

Level 3: Behaviour

Level 3 findings indicated that course participants applied the knowledge and skills acquired in the course as observed by their supervisors. Evidence provided by supervisors indicated there was an improvement. The post course survey was conducted two months after the course was held. One question asked, on an overall basis, "To what extent has the participants' job behaviour changed since the programme?" The pre-course and post-course survey is given in Appendix 7.

The table below shows the responses which are given in percentages.

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Before</u> <u>Training</u> (%)	<u>After</u> <u>Training</u> (%)	<u>Variance</u> (%)
Managing Time and Planning Work Effectively	65	76	11
Skills Oral Communication	71	75	4
Self Confidence	73	84	11
Telephone Etiquette	78	84	6
Interpersonal Relations	77	89	12

Positive changes were indicated in all five areas with the greatest improvement occurring in managing time and planning work effectively as well as exhibiting self confidence. All supervisors observed positive results. The area showing the least improvement is in oral communication skills.

Level 4: Results

Level 4 evaluation was not conducted due to difficulty in collecting data such as reduced costs, higher quality, increased production and lower rates of turnover. None of the participants resigned from the service of the Bank in 1996.

5.4 Comments

The study indicates that evaluation up to Level 3 can be implemented without much difficulty. However, it would have been more systematic if some ground work has been undertaken to decide on the method of evaluation. The evaluation would then be more accurate.