

CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Recommendations

6.1.1 Because the Clerical Development Programme will be offered 3 - 4 times in future, it is worthwhile to spend some time to do an evaluation. It was rewarding to find such positive responses from both the participants and their immediate supervisors.

For future evaluation, the Staff Training Centre could continue to adopt the following existing and new guidelines:

- o A systematic appraisal of on-the-job performance should be made both before and after training.

- o The appraisal should be made by one or more of the following:
 - the person receiving the training
 - his/her supervisor
 - his/her subordinates
 - his/her peers

- o A post-training appraisal should be made at least three months after the training to determine how well trainees have integrated the new skills on their jobs.

- o A group not receiving the training should also be evaluated.

- o A pre-test and post-test should be conducted for Level 2 evaluation as its results can be interpreted easily.

6.1.2 Bank Negara Malaysia is undergoing a right sizing exercise. Training and retraining will have to become an essential aspect of the Bank's ability to prepare for the challenges ahead. Right sizing would mean less staff doing more work. Staff need to be multiskilled. The Bank would need to apply two universal principles: Just in Time and Task Aligned. Staff should be trained just before they will have a chance to apply it, and the knowledge and skills that they are trained in should apply directly to a specific task that they must accomplish. This would then bring about useful organisational learning and high performance. Equally important, training requires systematic assessment.

6.1.3 In view of the resource constraints, the following is recommended for Bank Negara training programmes:

- o Level 1 evaluation be conducted for all courses.

- o Level 2 evaluation to be carried out for any course in which trainees need to retain certain knowledge or apply specific skills. An example might be the word processing course, in which the trainees be taught the word processing skills.

- o Level 3 evaluation can be conducted where the objective is to change behaviour on the job. For example, telephone operators be taught to answer the calls professionally. As front-line customer service personnel, they must communicate with the public effectively. These behaviour changes would directly affect the organisation's image.

- o Level 4 evaluation can only be meaningful if Levels 2 and 3 have been used. In Level 3, if transfer of learning did not occur, a level 4 evaluation cannot show any results. It is therefore best to use a Level 4 evaluation in combination with Levels 2 and 3. It is suggested that Level 4 evaluation be undertaken for expensive programmes.

Finally, the responsibility for improving performance on the job rests with the managers. By setting up a Level 3 or Level 4 evaluation, the training department will be giving the managers the means to determine improved performance. The editor of American Society for Training and Development, Jack Phillips (1994) in his article "In Action: Measuring Return on Investment" recommended evaluating different percentages of programmes at the four levels. He suggested that one could evaluate 100 percent of all programmes at Level 1, 70 percent at Level 2, 50 percent at Level 3, and 10 percent at Level 4.

- 6.1.4 The American Society For Training and Development provides some evaluation tips. The trainer should always give participants enough time to complete evaluation forms. Before the training programme ends, the trainer should also put aside some time to review the programme and answer questions about the evaluation forms. To get a balanced picture of the effectiveness of the training programme, one should try to ask the same number of questions about the strengths and weaknesses of the programme. A "mixed review" can be more accurate and helpful. The trainer could share responses with the group and discuss the issues that seem important to them. One can stop and evaluate a training programme at different times such as mid-way through the course.

6.2 Conclusion

Donald Kirkpatrick developed a four-level model for evaluating training programmes in 1959: learner reactions, learning, job application and observable business results. Many organisations like Bank Negara evaluate training in some manner. Most of them, however, use only reaction evaluation and learning tests. While both of these responses are valuable, the question of whether the learning is applied on the job remains uncertain. Understanding the four levels is a good start for the Staff Training Centre of Bank Negara Malaysia to evaluate their programmes.