

**COMPETENCY-BASED TRAINING AND WORK
PERFORMANCE OF THE SALES WORKFORCE
IN A TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANY**

By

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**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,
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Chairman: Associate Professor Hj. Saidin Teh , Ph.D.

Faculty: Educational Studies

Competent workforce is crucial for any organisation facing the global challenges and competition. Competency is very much linked to employee performance; and with proper competency and capabilities, it will increase productivity. The objective of the study is to examine the level of generic sales competencies of the sales workforce in a telecommunication company. Since competency-based training is an important element and antecedents for the competency level, the study examined the preferred learning styles of the respondents using Kolb's Learning Style Inventory. The study also examined the relationship between the dependent variables (work performance) and selected independent variables.

A self-administered questionnaire was used as a mode of data collection with a sample size of 289 respondents. All instrument items used in the study were constructed by the researcher except for Kolb Learning Styles Inventory. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation and percentage were used, besides t-test, ANOVA, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis were used for the statistical test.

The findings indicated that the preferred learning styles among the sales workforce were converger. In this style, they were motivated to discover the relevancy or “how” of a situation. The respondents also perceived that competency-based training was moderately effective, where only about 50 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the program. The major areas that required further improvements were contents of the module and instructional methods.

The study found that the competency level of the sales workforce was average. The study also found that there were weak relationships between work performance and respondents' age, working experience, effectiveness of competency-based training and competency level. Eight competencies were found to have significant relationships with work performance; these were interpersonal skill, teamwork, business understanding, analytical thinking, marketing skill, selling skill, product

knowledge and sales strategy. Regression analysis confirmed that two variables contributed to the work performance; they were teamwork and business understanding.

This indicated that the competency of the employees and the teaching method should be considered as an important element for the employees' performance and effective intervention programs needed to be carried out to narrow and ultimately close the gap.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi sebahagian keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**LATIHAN BERTERASKAN KOMPETENSI DAN
PRESTASI KERJA DI KALANGAN ANGGOTA JUALAN
DI SEBUAH SYARIKAT TELEKOMUNIKASI**

Oleh

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Anggota kerja yang mempunyai kompetensi menjadi satu perkara yang penting kepada organisasi untuk menghadapi cabaran globalisasi and persaingan. Kompetensi sangat berkait rapat dengan prestasi kerja anggota. Dengan menggunakan kekompetenan yang sesuai and keupayaan anggota, ianya boleh meningkatkan produktiviti syarikat. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji tahap kompetensi anggota jualan di sebuah syarikat telekomunikasi. Oleh kerana latihan berteraskan kekompetenan adalah satu elemen yang penting dan merupakan input atau permulaan kepada pencapaian tahap kompetensi. kajian ini juga akan mengkaji gaya pembeajaran di kalangan anggota jualan dengan menggunakan "Kolb's Learning Style Inventory (LSI)". Kajian ini juga

mengkaji perkaitan hubungan di antara angkubah bergantung (prestasi kerja) and beberapa angkubah tidak bergantung yang terpilih.

Soal-selidik sendiri telah digunakan untuk pengumpulan data dengan saiz sampel seramai 289 responden. Semua instrumen yang digunakan di dalam kajian ini telah direkabentuk oleh pengkaji melainkan “Kolb’s Learning Style Inventory (LSI)”. Deskriptif statistik seperti min, ‘standard deviation’ dan peratusan digunakan. Untuk ujian statistik, ujian-t, ANOVA, ‘Pearson product Moment Correlation’ dan ‘Multiple linear regression’ digunakan untuk analisis data.

Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa anggota jualan tersebut lebih cenderung kepada gaya pembelajaran jenis “Converger”. Dalam gaya ini, mereka lebih bermotivasi untuk mencari kesesuaian relevan atau lebih menekankan “bagaimana” sesuatu keadaan atau fenomena. Responden juga memberi persepsi bahawa latihan berteraskan kompetensi adalah sederhana efektif. Hanya 50 peratus daripada responden yang berpuashati dengan program tersebut. Bidang yang perlu diberi perhatian selanjutnya ialah kandungan program modul dan kaedah pengajaran.

Untuk tahap kompetensi, kajian ini mendapati bahawa anggota jualan memperolehi tahap sederhana kompetent. Kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa terdapat perhubungan yang rendah di antara prestasi kerja dan

umur, pengalaman kerja, keberkesanan latihan berteraskan kompetensi dan tahap kompetensi responden. Lapan kompetensi yang didapati mempunyai perhubungan yang signifikan dengan prestasi kerja, iaitu kemahiran interpersonal, kerja berpasukan, pemahaman perniagaan, pemikiran kritis, kemahiran pemasaran, kemahiran jualan, pengetahuan produk, strategi jualan. Di dalam analisis regresi, terdapat dua angkubah yang menyumbang kepada angkubah prestasi kerja iaitu kerja berpasukan dan pemahaman perniagaan,

Ini menunjukkan bahawa kompetensi anggota dan kaedah pengajaran perlu diambilkira sebagai satu daripada elemen penting dalam prestasi anggota dan program intervensi yang efektif perlu diadakan untuk mengurangkan jurang tersebut.

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I certify that an Examination Committee met on 15th March 2004 to conduct the final examination of Zainal Bin Abu Zarim on his Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled 'Competency-based Training and Work Performance of Sales Workforce in a Telecommunication Company', in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 198. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for the quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or other institutions.

ZAINAL BIN ABU ZARIM

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