



EMPLOYEE COUNSELLING PROGRAMS  
IN THE MALAYSIAN WORKPLACE

by

Peter Tong Hing Tham

A dissertation submitted in partial  
fulfillment of the requirement for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

St. Clement University,  
British West Indies.

September, 1998

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the need of employee counselling programs in the Malaysian workplace and the key issues involved in the designing and promoting of such programs. The dissertation covers the essential elements of employee counselling programs and the appropriate steps needed to successfully implement the program. It also addresses the values and culture of the Malaysian workforce that may affect the success of implementation of the programs.

The dissertation incorporated a study that was conducted on 102 employees from two companies in Malaysia to find out the attitudes towards counselling services and the types of problems commonly being experienced by the employees in the organisation. The results indicated that the employees were positive toward the provision of counselling programs in the company and that the main problems experienced were that of career, financial and health.

The dissertation also included the recorded responses of employees to an existing employee counselling program in the National Bank of Malaysia. The findings support the results of the above-mentioned study.

The dissertation will provide the conceptual framework upon which counselling programs in the Malaysian workplace are based, as well as the types of activities and skills that are involved. The focus is on such programs that will help employees deal with personal or health problems that might affect their productivity. The dissertation will show that an employee counselling program can succeed only in the context of an organisational commitment to its goals. The successful programs tend to be the one that is carefully planned, efficiently implemented, and well received by the people it has been designed to serve.

## DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person where due reference is not made in the text.

---

Date Peter Tong Hing Tham

iii

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thanks are due to my mentor, Prof. Leticia Arbis, Mr. H.S. Sandhu and Ms. Teres of the Institute of Professional Financial Manager, and Mr. Lee Chee Loi, the former Senior Vice President of the Group Human Resources Division, MBf Management Sdn Bhd for the interest, assistance and support given in the preparation of this thesis.

vi

## LIST OF TABLES

Table Page Difference in attitudes towards counselling 28  
by gender

2 Difference in attitudes towards counselling 29  
by ethnicity

3 Difference in attitudes towards counselling 29  
by job categories

v

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ABSTRACT i

DECLARATION ii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT iii

LIST OF TABLES vi

## Chapter

1 THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND	1
2 RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES	10
3 METHODOLOGY	22
4 PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA	28
5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	34
REFERENCES	45
APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE	47

## Chapter 1

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

#### Introduction

#### The Importance of Developing and Preserving Human Resources

Counselling programs geared specifically for employees in or near their work settings have grown steadily in recent years in Malaysia, primarily because employers have come to recognise the importance of developing and preserving valuable human resources. Managers have begun to listen to the ideas of people like Peters and Waterman, whose best-selling book on corporate excellence exhorts,

Treat people as adults. Treat them as partners: treat them with dignity; treat them with respect. Treat them - not capital spending and automation - as the primary source of productivity gains... In other words, if you want productivity and the financial reward that goes with it, you must treat your workers as your most important asset (1982).

#### Two major categories of employee counselling

In general, counselling services for employees can be divided into two major categories, namely, those dealing with personal problems and those dealing with career development.

The employee counselling programs that deal with personal problems will focus on employees' mental and physical health and deal with personal problems that might, even indirectly, affect job performance. Those that deal with career development programs

will use assessment, counselling, planning, and training to help individuals make and act on career decisions within the context of the organisation's human resources plans. Each of the two approaches is built on the theory that individual and organisational needs can be compatible (Lewis & Lewis, 1986).

### Background of the Study

It is estimated that Malaysia, in experiencing an astounding pace of development and as it maintains its current growth rate of 8.5% per annum, will become an industrialised nation in the year 2020. However, being part of an emerging industrialised nation, the Malaysian workforce is already suffering from some of the ills that have befallen developed countries, such as an increased rate of family violence, divorce and stress-related illnesses.

The Malaysian Government had been fully aware of the effects that had taken toll upon the Malaysian workforce. This was evidenced by the speech made by Tan Sri Dato' Seri Ahmad Sarji Bin Abdul Hamid, the Chief Secretary to the State in 6th Convention of the Counselling Association of Malaysia in 1993,

Generally, in any organisation an average of about 10% of the employees are incapacitated by acute or chronic personal problems such as family and marital problems, financial difficulties, legal problems, drug and alcohol abuse, emotional upsets or career problems. All these will affect work performance. Studies also show that employees have three times as many accidents, four times the rate of absenteeism, make more health insurance claims and more likely to make mistakes at their work and take more sick leave, under such circumstances. All in all, this will add on to the loss of work time and productivity for the organisation. This in fact constitutes the major loss of work time rather than industrial action.

The Chief Secretary went on to say that employee counselling was to be a major activity in the promotion of employee development. He stressed that supervisors and managers should be engaged in formal counselling sessions for the purpose of handling grievances, dealing with discipline matters, improving performance, disseminating information about benefits, policies and procedures, and helping employees in career development.

It is therefore evident that there is a real need for employee counselling programs to be implemented in the workplace to address the various social and psychological problems being faced by the Malaysian workforce. This is supported by the fact that the demand for counselling services in corporate settings in Malaysia has been growing steadily in recent years.

Some of the larger corporations had already initiated either partial or full fledged counselling programs based in the workplace and were designed to deal employee's personal or career concerns. They have come to recognise the importance of developing and preserving valuable human resources.

## The Origin of Employee Counselling Programs in Malaysia

In a broad sense, employee counselling programs in Malaysia had its small beginning in the settings of the churches, social work centers or non-governmental organisations in the early eighties. These were the centres that offered counselling to the public as a free service. However, the ever increasing problems on drugs, alcoholism, broken relationships, families and other social ills then have prompted the Malaysian Government to give serious attention to the lack of professional counselling centers for the public at large. By the late eighties, there were concerted effort on the part of the Government to set up more counselling centers in the public sector to help its workers deal with problems. It was reported at one stage that the Malaysian Social Welfare Ministry was sending many of its officers abroad to be trained as counsellors to meet the gigantic need for counselling. It was only in the early nineties that certain private sector firms began to introduce professional industrial counselling to its employee as they realised that counselling have proven to be effective in not only reducing social problems, but also improving employee productivity that can run into millions of dollars in cost savings.

However, it cannot be denied that in Malaysia, the employee counselling programs are at an initial stage in a gradually evolving field designed to meet the needs of problem employees. Little as yet is known about the effectiveness and the design of the programs. It is therefore important at this juncture, to take a closer look at what an employee counselling program is?

### Objectives of this study

This study aimed to :

1. study the benefits of employee counselling programs in Malaysia
2. examine the essential elements necessary for the successful implementation of employee counselling programs in Malaysia taking into consideration the culture and custom of the people.
3. suggest some appropriate strategies in designing a successful employee counselling programs for the Malaysian workforce.

### Specific Objectives

Essentially this study sought to deal with the following issues:

1. The benefits that the employee counselling programs can offer to both the corporations and the workforce in Malaysia.
2. The openness the employees in Malaysia have towards to the counselling services being offered.
3. The essential components of employee counselling programs in Malaysia.

4. The cultural issues relating to counselling on the job.
5. The barriers (or problems) encountered in the programs implementation and the ways to overcome them.
6. The appropriate steps needed to successfully implement the programs.

#### Significance of the study

This study provides the conceptual framework upon which counselling programs in the Malaysian workplace are based, as well as the types of activities and skills that are involved. The focus is on such programs that will help employees deal with personal or health problems that might affect their productivity. The study will show that an employee counselling program can succeed only in the context of an organisational commitment to its goals. The successful programs tend to be the one that is carefully planned, efficiently implemented, and well received by the people it has been designed to serve.

With the increasing emphasis on workplace productivity at the Malaysian workplace, employee counselling programs can create a conducive work environment for them to produce value-added work. Continuous guidance and counselling becomes a key factor for improved workplace productivity.

Such a study will definitely interest the Malaysian corporations which are planning to implement or had already implemented employee counselling programs in their workplace. The study will provide vital information for these corporations either to know how to start right or to improve their existing programs. Ultimately it is for the betterment of the Malaysian workforce.

#### Scope and limitation of the Study

The scope of this study will cover a study that was carried in a large local multi-national corporation in the city of Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia to assess the attitudes of the employees towards counselling services and the common problems faced by the employees.

The population of the study included employees of positions from general clerk to managers. The study which took about three months was conducted by an undergraduate student from a local University in cooperation with the writer.

The limitation of the study is that it is focussed on the sample of the population and is therefore confined to the response of this sample. Also as stated above, the duration of the study is limited to a three months period only. If the duration could have been extended, the study may perhaps have been able to cover a bigger sample size.

## Definition of Terms

### Employee Counselling

Employee counselling can be defined as a process which is initiated by the counsellor or the manager to assist the employee or subordinate to gain knowledge, understanding and insights on a performance concern. This could relate to the counsellee's attitude, motivation or interpersonal skills. Essentially the counselling is to provide timely professional and confidential aid for employees whose personal problems might otherwise lead to work impairment, absenteeism, reduce productivity and cause accidents and conflicts in the workplace, or even job termination.

### Culture

Culture can be defined as a shared and commonly held body of general beliefs and values which define the 'shoulds' and the 'oughts' of life for those who hold them. As stated by Hofstede (1984), culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another. It is the cumulative deposits of knowledge, experience, meanings, beliefs, values, attitudes, religions, concepts of self, the universe, hierarchies of status, role expectations, spatial relations and time concept acquired by a large group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.

### Values

Values have a great influence on the way we think, behave and relate with people and perform our daily tasks. The current thinking is that values drive the business. An organisation's values, what it stands for and what its people believe in are crucial to its competitive success. Values provide a common language for aligning organisational leadership with its people. It gives shape and character to the organisation, and in turn the organisation gives recognition to actualising the values through shared practices (Westwood, 1990).

In the context of this study, the word value refers to the cultural responses to the concept of counselling and the benefits that will be derived from such services.

### Psychological tests

Psychological tests need objectivity and possess standard measurement on the response of the sample. Psychological tests like other scientific tests, are conducted on a small but carefully selected sample. The reaction of the sample can be observed according to the responses from the subjects. The responses can be taken as scores or data for analysis. In answering the psychological test, there is no right or wrong answer because the focus is on getting the descriptive response that is representative of the individual views and

values. Therefore the test was to be a measurement that is objective, uniform and standard in measuring the response of a selected sample (Anastasi, 1982).

### Measures of Effective Counselling

Employee counselling programs are meant to provide effective means of dealing with problems in the workplace. Each program therefore must be designed to meet specific goals that have been identified as important to the well-being of the organisation and its members. Planning a program and evaluating its effectiveness go hand in hand. At the planning stage, goals and objectives are set; at the evaluating stage, the success of the program in meeting its stated objectives is measured.

Counselling programs of various types have implied goals that tend to be common across organisations. Samples of these indicators that might be used to assess the impact of the employee counselling programs are:

Improved performance attributable to removal of personal problems.

The extent to which under-utilisation of employee skills is alleviated.

Increased productivity.

Reduction in absenteeism

Reduction of accidents both on and off the job.

Improved employee satisfaction obtained by self reports or peer reports.

## Chapter 2

### RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

#### Foreign Literature

##### Counselling

The connotation of the word “counselling” is misleading. Some of the skills and techniques used in employee counselling resemble those used by professional therapist. It is imperative to emphasize, however, although the techniques are similar, the purpose of the sessions are dramatically different. Employee counselling is reserved for work-related problems. A major role of employee counselling is to help employees recognise problems and seek appropriate assistance. It is important to realise the fundamental difference between therapeutic and workplace counselling. The major goal of therapist is to make individuals feel good or better about themselves. Work-place counselling is concerned

with developing employee competence, in order to succeed in corporate lives. It would be foolhardy to expect supervisors to be fully trained as functioning counsellors. In fact, many problems are created because supervisors fail to realise their limitations as counsellors. They sometimes delve too deeply into non-work place problems, and inadvertently cause more harm than good. The most effective supervisory counsellors are those who are trained (Lewis & Lewis, 1986).

### The Origin of Employee Assistance Programs

The origin of employee counselling programs in Malaysia has been mentioned in Chapter 1. However, globally, the employee counselling programs had evolved from employee assistance programs. In Western countries, employee assistance programs concept had emerged from scattered attempts during the last forty years to establish alcoholism rehabilitation programs in a few industries. These programs were essentially alcohol-only treatment programs in the major industries. Over the years, their development had broadened to include employees whose work efficiency has been reduced by other personal problems. Most employee assistance programs today offer a variety of services for the employee for everything from marital problems to financial management. Other specific problems upon which the 1980s model employee assistance programs focus include : depression, stress, anxiety, domestic trauma, and serious psychiatric and medical problems (Dicman & Emener, 1982).

A further development in the recent years has been the widespread adoption of employee assistance programs in hospitals, governmental units, and educational institutions. Roman (1980) pointed out that there are a number of problems in using the industrial employee assistance programs model within a professional work population characteristic of schools and colleges. Nevertheless many colleges, smaller business, public schools, and hospitals in the United States of America did adapt to and adopted the employee assistance programs.

Continuing action in employee assistance programs had produced a widespread national marketing training effort. Specialist in marketing human service programs have been training human service delivery personnel in how to promote employee assistance programs to business, industry, governmental units, schools and colleges (Bilik, 1982).

Employee assistance program is a system for identifying and treating a variety of medical or behavioral problems that might be responsible for an employee's poor job performance. Its main objective is to restore an employee to normal work behavior and productivity. By offering an alternative to being fired, employee assistance programs can help the employee to be a better producer for his employer as well as to function better as an individual.

### The major assumptions

The major assumptions underlying the early employee assistance programs are as follows:

1. Unless job performance is impaired, a person's life or problem is his own.
2. Most problems, regardless of their nature, eventually manifest themselves in poor job performance.
3. It is the role of supervisors to measure and evaluate job performance. Thus they can identify deteriorating job performance without having to diagnose the nature of the underlying problems (Googins, Bradley, 1975).

#### Evolution of employee assistance programs

Forrest (1983) gave a brief, evolutionary history indicating some major events that have affected the use of growth of employee assistance programs in the United States of America:

1911 - Frederick Taylor published "Principles of Scientific Management." This book was greatly read in the business world and emphasized the use of workers as though they were machines.

1940s- The Dupont Corporation efforts became the first systematic U.S. corporate program to assist employees with alcohol programs.

1960s - For the first time a serious slippage in the rate of increase in productivity per hour was observed in American industrial workers. This trend has continued.

1971 - NIAAA formed. The National Institute of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse was created under Public Law 91-616. This marked the first heavy infusion of federal funds into occupational alcoholism programs.

1972 - NIAAA provided 3 year grants to states and territories to employ state occupational alcohol programs among public and private employers.

1974 - For the first time there was a decline in productivity per hour in American industry.

During the early 1970s, manual workers who earned their living by job skills became outnumbered for the first time in any society by knowledge workers whose work depend on mental skills rather than physical skills and whose productivity is directly related to formal education. This historic shift in the nature of work made the adoption of theory "Y" or theory "Z" management a necessity because knowledgeable workers seem not to produce well under the old directive theory X model.

1973-74- J. Wrich (1980) wrote and published the monograph titled , "The Employee Assistance Program for the Hazelton Foundation, Center City, Minnesota". This model, called the broad brush approach, advocated a volunteer self-referral component and service to wider range of employee problems beyond alcoholism.

1973-74- NIAAA officials recommended dropping the words alcohol and alcoholism out of the then existing occupational alcohol treatment program titles. They suggested employee counselling or employee assistance service as titles.

1975 - The first national program on employee alcoholism in higher education was held at the University of Missouri. Four subsequent yearly programs have been held to discuss adaptation of employee assistance programs to college and university environments.

1976 - The employee assistance programs model became the dominant model

in business, industry, and government.

1977 - An estimated 2,500 employee assistance programs are found to be in existence.

1981 - Over 5,000 employee assistance programs are found to be in operation in the U.S.

### Current employee assistance programs philosophy

The early employee assistance programs were sold to management on the basis of the cost effectiveness of treating the most prevalent problem - alcohol abuse. Lowered productivity and performance were the issues of interest to the leadership, and programs that positively addressed these issues were acceptable. The operational process, once the program was in place, was that the employee whose work efficiency was affected negatively by alcohol was confronted by his supervisor and advised to accept help or to risk being fired (Roman, 1980).

The employee assistance programs operational philosophy has changed considerably since the 1950s, and many of the programs put into operation in the 1970s and 1980s are far more humane and broader in focus. Forrest (1983) had observed the following statements that seem to reflect the basis upon which many employee assistance programs are operating in the early 1980s:

1. A trained employee is a valuable asset to be protected, if possible.
2. It is more cost effective to rehabilitate a competent employee with problems than to hire and train another.
3. Statistical estimates on employee problems and the national cost to business and industry in absenteeism, accidents, health claims, turnover, and low productivity is staggering, costing from 15-30 billion dollars per year.
4. Employee assistance programs can have a preventive and remedial focus, both of which are good for the employer, the family, and the employee.
5. Employees' personal problems are private unless they cause the employees' job performance to decline and to deteriorate.
6. Employee assistance programs give the employer more flexibility in dealing with problems that used to be ignored or covered up.
7. Employees are beginning to hold their employers liable for mental, emotional problems, and stress that are said to be work related. Employees are winning lawsuits in this area.
8. Productivity is related to worker feelings of well-being. Efforts to improve worker well being should improve productivity.
9. Employee assistance programs are both humane and cost effective.

Today the employee assistance programs are fast growing programs which are being implemented in corporations all over the world. In Malaysia, the more advanced and open corporations have taken note of the proven track records of the employee assistance programs and are ready to invest in such programs for their returns of the benefits.

## Understanding the Malaysian Workforce

One important determining factor that will dictate the success of the employee assistance programs will be the culture of the workforce into which the programs are to be integrated. The culture of a country has a strong influence on the way people behave. It plays a significant role in determining and developing the culture of an organisation, its expected norms and practices and the training programs available for increasing the productivity of the local workforce. Without a clear understanding of what constitutes acceptable behavior, styles and practices at the work place, programs such as the employee assistance programs may be labelled as being too Western, too foreign and therefore are unacceptable for the local context.

### The Cultural Issues

Ultimately, the types of programs which are being offered and adopted should take into consideration the cultural and individual values of employees of the organisation.

### Culture

As defined in chapter 1, culture is a shared and commonly held body of general beliefs and values which define the 'shoulds' and the 'oughts' of life for those who hold them. Culture manifests itself both in patterns of language, thought and in the forms of activity and behavior.

### Ethnic Values

Culture is very closely linked to the concept of values. Also defined in chapter 1, values have great influence on the way we think, behave and relate with people and perform our daily tasks. The current thinking is that values drive the business. An organisation's values, what it stands for and what its people believe in are crucial to its competitive success. Values provide a common language for aligning organisational leadership with its people. It gives shape and character to the organisation, and in turn the organisation gives recognition to actualising the values through stated practices (Westwood, 1990).

### Local Literature

In Malaysia there are three main ethnic groups being the Malays, the Chinese, and the Indians. The common values of the three ethnic groups are in the "we" orientation, face, modesty and harmony (Abdullah, 1993).

Abdullah (1993) has made the following findings on the culture and values of the Malaysian workforce:

A value of non-assertiveness

Malaysians are seen to be extremely dedicated to do a good job. They are eager to please others but may find it difficult to say “no”.

A value of respect for seniors/elderly people and preserving face

Generally subordinates will not argue with the boss, for it will be seen as a loss of face for the boss. For the same reason, a subordinate would pretend to understand the instruction given to him by his seniors for otherwise he would be seen as stupid. They are also reluctant to check back if there is a problem and have a tendency not to bring the problem to the attention of the boss. They are often reluctant to ask for help when they do not understand. They are loyal to authority and tend to act with deference and obedience towards their elders.

A value of loyalty, respect for authority

An authoritarian style of management is still predominant. Subordinates are expected to be loyal to the company. They go along with the paternal attitude that often develops between employer and employee.

A value of collectivism - “we” orientation- teamwork - cooperation

They work extremely well in a team environment as they have a strong sense of belonging. The spirit of collectivism is more important than that of individualism and this is often translated in the willingness to give priority to group interests ahead of individual concerns. Satisfaction at work comes from having opportunities to receive appropriate respect from fellow colleagues and maintain harmonious, predictable and enjoyable friendships with subordinates and peers.

A value of harmony

They prefer compromise to confrontation, and often seek consensus and harmony in business dealings. The perspective of superior and subordinates are less likely to be in conflict. Every attempt is made to preserve self esteem or face. Open public criticism and outspokenness are to be avoided at all costs because they undermine harmonious relationships. Tolerance and understanding count more than legalistic and rationalistic arguments which are based on objectivity.

A value of preserving face

They are less forthcoming in expressing views and opinions and are uncomfortable in critically evaluating peers and subordinates. Giving negative feedback can be awkward and difficult as indirectness is more the norm than directness in day to day behaviour. Criticisms, when given, can be taken seriously and may lead to loss of face.

A value of respect for hierarchy

Social formalities are extremely important as one's social status in the community deserves respect.

A value of trust and relationship building

There is a strong preference for a relationship-based orientation or a person-oriented approach rather than a task-oriented approach in performing tasks. Developing trust and partnership understanding are far more important than the contractual obligation of getting the job done.

A value of third party and preserving face

There is a tendency to deal with ambiguities and uncertainties by using the indirect approach of a third party.

Work Values

Abu and Mah (1991) studied the work values of employees from five companies in the manufacturing and service sectors. They included a multinational electronics company with 2,000 employees producing printed circuit boards and diodes, a multinational producing television sets and cookers, and a public local bank with 170 branches.

The work values were:

1. job involvement – interest and involvement on job-related functions;
2. attitude toward technology – receptivity to technological changes;
3. pride in work – employee satisfaction and sense of achievement;
4. activity preference – preference for either productive or non-productive work;
5. upward striving – desire for advancement and promotion;
6. social status – concern for social and work position;
7. attitude towards earning – concern for monetary rewards for work done.

Cultural values and interpersonal relations

As in many other Asian cultures, the family has remained the basic social unit in Malaysia. The family provides the individual with physical protection, acceptance in the extended community, insurance for old age and sickness. Respect and status are accorded to the elders not only within the nucleus family, kinship group but also extended to the community at large, as well as business relationships (Tan and Tseng, 1989).

In the Malaysian community, aggressiveness is frowned upon and conflict is avoided. They avoid any form of unpleasant confrontation which may upset relationships. They avoid passing critical remarks. They find it difficult to have frank dialogues except among close friends. In most Asian cultures, the concept of "face" denotes greater significance than the physical look of a person. It connotes the dignity of the person resulting from an interpersonal relationship with his superiors, peers, and

subordinates. It is a reflection of social acceptance and respectability (Torrington, D. & Tan, C. H., 1994).

The aforementioned characteristics of Malaysian employees are found to be some of the commonly observed behaviours demonstrated at the workplace. As mentioned earlier, underlying these behaviors are the influence of ethnic values of the three main groups on their behaviour at work. These factors would have to be taken into consideration in the implementation of an employee counselling program. Such factors would ultimately determine the success or failure of the employee counselling program.

### Chapter 3

#### METHODOLOGY

This chapter covers the research design, the target population, the data collection procedure and the analytical procedure.

##### Research Design

The study sought to determine what attitudes the employees have towards the counselling services in the organisation.

The study was also concerned with the types of problems commonly experienced by the employees and whether there were any differences in these problems faced by the different categories of employees. The problems that were examined were career problems, financial problems, health problems, emotional problems, family problems, and social problems.

##### Target Population

This study was conducted using 102 employees from two finance companies, MBf Finance Bhd. And MBf Leasing Sdn. Bhd. These are the wholly owned subsidiaries of the multi-national corporation mentioned above.

The population of the study included employees of positions from general clerk to managers. The total population of the two companies selected for this study was 600.

##### Sampling Procedure

The subjects were selected randomly from various departments of the companies involved.

##### Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was a psychological test in the form of a four sections questionnaire. Section 1 collects the information about the respondent. Section 2 contains

64 items of questions, 34 of which concerned the attitudes of the subjects towards counselling services and the other 30 items concerned the problems that they were experiencing. The questionnaire also contained a portion that solicit subjective responses concerning the common problems they were facing, the qualities that they felt were needed by a counsellor and their recommendations or suggestions for developing the standard of counselling services.

A copy of the questionnaire is included in appendix A.

In this test, the questionnaire approach is used and the scoring method is based on the Likert Scale. Using the Likert Scale will result in a score that represent the position and the preference of the an individual towards an object. The resulting score will show the differences, beliefs, needs and action that is obvious (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980).

#### Procedure

An undergraduate student from a Local University in cooperation with the writer conducted the study that took about three months. Permission was obtained from the management of the two companies involved to allow the subjects time off to answer the questions in their office premises. They were given about an hour to complete the questions. The questionnaires were collected back on the same day that they were distributed to the subjects.

#### Composition of the Subjects

The composition of the subjects was as follows:

##### Biodata Number Percentage (%)

###### Age

35 and below 91 89.2

36 and above 11 10.8

102

###### Ethnic

Malays 33 32.4

Chinese 46 45.1

Indians 21 20.6

Others 2 2.0

102

###### Sex

Male 46 45.1

Female 56 54.9

102

###### Marital Status

Single 64 62.7

Married 36 35.3

Others 2 2.0

102

#### Working Experience

less than 2 years 27 26.5

2 to 4 years 24 23.5

more than 4 years 51 50.0

102

#### Staff Categories

Executives 55 53.9

Clerical 47 46.1

102

The subjects came from the three main ethnic groups of the Malaysian population, namely, the Malays, Chinese and Indians. 89% of the subjects were aged 35 and below, and 35 % of them were married. 50% of them had more the four years of working experience. Of the total number of subjects involved, the executive level constituted 53.9 % and the clerical level constituted 46.1%. The reason for this is because the random sampling resulted in more executives being selected to participate in the study than the clerical level staff.

#### Pretest of Validation of Questionnaire

A pretest of the questionnaire was carried out to test its reliability and validity. The pretest was necessary as the questionnaire was a research prepared psychological test. A group of subject consisting of 20 employees from MBf Leasing Sdn Bhd was chosen to be involved in this pretest. The result of the pretest shows high degree of reliability.

#### The Scoring

Each item contains five categories of responses namely, strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree.

The points are given according to the positive and negative items in the measurement of the attitude of the subjects as shown below:

#### Response Items Positive Negative

Strongly agree 5 1

Agree 4 2

Not sure 3 3

Disagree 2 4

Strongly disagree 1 5

The indicator for the attitude of the employees towards the counselling services being either positive or negative depended on the scores. Subjects who scored more 102 points are considered to be having a positive attitude whereas subjects who obtained less than 102 are considered to be having a negative attitude.  
170 (highest score)

102 (average score)

34 (lowest score)

Section 3 of the questionnaire dealt with the dimensions of the problems experienced by the employees. The scores for this section are shown below:

Scores for the Dimensions of problems.

Response Scores

Strongly agree 5

Agree 4

Not sure 3

Disagree 2

Strongly disagree 1

The individual scores for each dimension of problems ranges from 5 (the lowest score) to 25 (the highest score). The average score is 15 (the sum of items under the not sure response). Subjects who obtained scores lower than 15 were considered as not experiencing the dimension stated. On the other hand, subjects who scored over 15 was considered as experiencing the dimension stated.

Section 4 contained three open questions about the quality that is needed by a counsellor, the common problems faced in life and the suggestions for establishing an effective counselling services in the organisation.

Analytical Procedure

The hypothesis testing was done using t-test, ANOVA oneway, Scheffe test and descriptive analysis. The t-test, ANOVA oneway, Sheffe test were conducted by using a computer program called Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSSX).

Chapter 4

## PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents the findings of the study and the interpretation of the results thereof. The chapter also presents the recorded responses of employees to an existing employee counselling program in the National Bank of Malaysia in support of the findings of the study.

Results

The data collected were analysed using t-test, ANOVA oneway, Scheffe test and descriptive analysis. The level of significance  $p$ , was fixed at 0.05.

The detail results are presented in the following tables along with the appropriate means and standard deviations.

Table 1  
Difference in attitudes towards counselling by gender

Gender	n	M	SD	df	t
Male	46	127.43	16.26	100	1.13
Female	56	124.07	13.80		$p > 0.05$

The t-test analysis showed no significant differences in attitude towards counselling between the genders.

Table 2  
Difference in attitudes towards counselling by ethnicity

Source	df	JS	MS	F
AG	3	641.55	213.85	.95
BG	98	22057.15	225.07	
Total	101	22698.70		

$F = 0.95, p > 0.05$

The ANOVA oneway analysis showed that there was no significant differences among the ethnic groups,  $F = 0.95, p > 0.05$ .

Table 3  
Difference in attitudes towards counselling by job categories

Category	N	x	SD	df	t
A	55	126.62	14.80	100	.75
B	47	124.38	15.29		

$p > 0.05$

The t-test Analysis showed that there was no significant differences among the employees of the job categories A and B ( $t = 0.75, p > 0.05$ ).

The results that were obtained showed no differences in the attitude towards counselling services in the organisation among the subjects regardless of their gender, ethnicity and job categories.

The questions in part 2 of the questionnaire that elicit responses from the subjects reflecting their attitudes towards counselling services were analysed by a Descriptive Analysis. The results showed that 89.22% of the subjects possessed positive attitudes towards counselling.

The Descriptive Analysis also showed that career, financial and health were the main problems faced by the employees and that the counsellor's qualities most favoured by the subjects were patience, experience and trustworthiness.

### Interpretation

As 89.21% of the subjects showed a positive attitude towards counselling programmes, it was clear that the results were indicative that the employees understood the importance of counselling and how it could have benefited them as employees in the organisation. The findings of this study concurred with the other similar studies carried out by Cheh (1993) and Ramli (1992).

The positive attitudes of the employees indicated that they valued the services of the counselling programs. This is also indicative that the employees were open to the counselling services being offered.

The results also showed that in terms of degree of severity of the problems experienced by the employees, the order of was as follows: career, financial, health, emotional, family and social. This clearly showed that a larger number of staff have more problems in their career than any other areas.

The following were some reasons given by the employees as they expressed their concern in their career: incompetence in carrying out their duties, contemplation of career move, problems with their superior, dissatisfaction with their job, etc. The qualities of the counsellor considered as important by the employees were in the following order: patience, experience, trustworthiness, responsible, physical attractiveness, honesty, status and health.

The subjects had chosen patience as the most important quality that a counsellor should possess. This could be due to the perception that this quality will enable the counsellor to spend time to understand more deeply the problems of the counselees.

### The Responses to an Existing Program

The above results of the study correspond to the responses of an existing employee counselling program in the National Bank of Malaysia, a government-controlled bank. The cases recorded are as follows:

Year	Male	Female	Total
June- December 1990	64	29	93
January –December 1991	117	101	218
January –December 1992	90	106	196
	271	236	507

Types of Problems encountered over the period June 1990 to December, 1992.

Type of Problems	Total cases
Personal	114
Marital	59
Finance	280
Career	39
Emotional	5
Others	10
Total	507

The significantly high number of cases recorded showed that the employees were open to the counselling services provided by the management.

The percentage of male respondents compared to female respondents is 55% and 45% respectively. This again showed that in terms of responses to the counselling services available, there was no significant difference between the gender

The problem that ranked the highest in this group was financial problems whereas the other group's main concern was career. The possible reason was that the National Bank is a semi-government body, in which the employees' jobs and career were secured and established. In contrast, the group in the study was in the commercial sector where competition and job movements were higher thereby causing more concern in the employees for their career.

### Conclusion

The responses in both programs had conclusively shown that employees were open to the counselling services provided and were willing to utilize the services so provided. The cultural factor of shyness or embarrassment did not hinder them from making use of the counselling services available. The awareness of the importance of the counselling programs enabled the employees to overcome the shyness and embarrassment in order to utilise the services provided.

It was evident that the employees will appreciate the management for providing the counselling services. Thus organisations should not just focus on productivity but also to consider the importance of the employee welfare. Mahler and Wrightbour (1973) did a study on the effects of counselling given to employees by 210 managers in three different organisations. The results showed that if managers give counselling to employees whether in formal systematic interviews or in informal sessions, the employees 1) feel more satisfied with their jobs, 2) trust their managers more, and 3) reported that they were happy with the way their managers motivated them.

Employees who are satisfied, motivated and happy with their jobs are more productive. Effective counselling programs are therefore beneficial both to the organisations and the employees.

## Chapter 5

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary of Findings

From the findings it is clear that the Malaysian workforce is a ground ready and fertile for the growth of employee counselling programs. However, these employee counselling programs will vary in terms of the services they provide because each can be designed to meet the unique needs of a specific work organisation and employee group. In general, however, employee counselling programs should share a number of features. Each program, regardless of where it is placed in the organisation should include some provision for each of the following components:

Clearly stated policies and procedures to guide the program and its implementation.

Training programs for supervisors and employee representatives.

Employee orientation and information mechanisms.

A system for offering confidential counselling, assessment, and referral.

Educational and preventive efforts.

The list above is summarized from the literature by Bush (1981), Dickman and Emener (1982), Googins, (1975), and Lewis & Lewis, (1986) which described the essential components for effective employee counselling programs to be as follows:

1. Early intervention and crisis assistance.
2. Self-referral, peer, supervisory referral.
3. Confidentiality and easy access.
4. Management/ leadership/union support.
5. Supervisor and union representative training.
6. Written pollicies distributed to all participants.
7. Insurance involvement.
8. Treatment separated from work evaluation.
9. Staffing by trained helping professionals.
10. Breath of service components.
11. Follow up and evaluation.

#### Components of Employee Counselling Programs

##### Policy Statements

Each company must establish a clear policy which recognizes that problems do occur in the lives of employees. It must fully support the treatment and rehabilitation of its employees in their efforts to resolve their problems, and furthermore it must make sure that their job security and status in the company will not be threatened. Procedures should spell out precisely how the policy is to be implemented, what steps should be taken, and what the proper roles of management and treatment personnel are.

The policy statement will allay any fears that the Malaysian employees may have due to their cultural inhibitions. This will help them to be receptive and to come forward to utilize the programs offered.

### Training

To implement an effective employee counselling program, the management has to modify or change its traditional ways of behaving and introduce new ways. Thus an important element of employee counseling program is supervisory training from the highest level of management down to the lowest supervisory level. Because the supervisor is on the cutting edge of the program, he must fully understand the philosophy and function of the program. He should also be made aware of the cultural factors in the Malaysia that may affect the response of the employees.

Training in policy, procedures, roles and especially in how to confront the problem employee in relation to his declining job performance is an ongoing function of employee counseling program. Training sessions for supervisors can review the various issues involved through role-playing, films, and discussions.

At the same time the employee counselling program must build strong support for supervisors because they carry the initial burden of documenting, identifying and confronting the employee's poor job performance.

Support is manifested primarily through consultation with the supervisors in relation to a specific problem: how to handle it and what appropriate steps should be taken to resolve it. In addition, all employees and their families must become aware of the program and the company's policy and procedures. A strong educational program should be developed that emphasizes the transmission of this information (Googins, 1975).

### Employee Orientation and Information

Clear communication with the company's entire work force is important. This is more so in the Malaysian context. As can be seen in the study conducted, the Malaysian employees will respond positively if they had been made to understand the importance and benefits of these programs.

All members of the organisation, including employees and their family members, need to know what the employee counselling program is and how they can use it. The company should use every available communication mechanism to furnish initial information about

the program's use and to maintain the visibility of the services by providing regular reminders.

The initial orientation of employees should use the organization's normal methods of disseminating information. In some organisations, mass meetings may be designed to provide an introduction to the employee counselling program for a number of employees at one sitting. If such an orientation session can be arranged, the opportunity can be used both to disseminate factual information about the program and to generate enthusiasm among employees.

Lewis & Lewis (1986) had suggested that some time, however brief, should be devoted to each of the following matters:

1. An overview of the policy and procedures upon which the employee counseling program is based.
2. Statements of support for the program by executives, union representatives, and other leaders.
3. Information concerning the relationship between work performance and mental and physical health.
4. Clear instructions concerning the methods to be followed for using the program.
5. Repetition of assurances concerning the voluntary and confidential nature of the services.
6. Introduction of people who will be providing services through the employee assistance program.
7. Opportunities for employee questions, discussions and input.

If large scale-orientation sessions are difficult to arrange, then smaller work groups should be arranged to disseminate some of the same information. Such meetings should be brief and should offer valuable opportunities for informal discussion of employee concerns.

Whether or not orientation meetings are held, each employee should receive written notification that an employee counselling program has been initiated. This notification should advertise the program by including both basic information and a positive message about its potential to be helpful. The brochure or handout should incorporate material found in the program policy statement but should be in an informal, non-threatening language.

The information sheet should be designed to encourage self-referrals by emphasizing the easy accessibility of services and focussing on the fact that help is not limited to people with serious problems.

In order to maintain the utilization of services in the long run, the program needs to be kept visible. Posters in central locations, wallet-sized cards imprinted with the program telephone number, items in the firm's newsletter, and brief notes in pay envelopes can

perform two functions: educate employees about health issues and remind individuals that they have easy access to personal help (Lewis & Lewis, 1986).

### Counselling, Assessment, and Referral

When an individual seeks assistance from the employee assistance counsellor, his or her current level of functioning should be assessed. The counsellor should try to determine whether significant problems exist in the individual's life and work. At the same time, the assessment should also identify the strengths and resources the individual has for coping with stress.

Albee (1980) makes a distinction between two models for explaining problems in human behavior: the "competency model" and the "defect model." The competency model assumes that everyone has the right and the potential to maximize his or her competence to deal with stress and that distress can be handled and even prevented by reducing stress and building competence. The defect model, in contrast, explains disturbed behavior in terms of some flaws within the individual.

In an employee counselling program the competency model is clearly more appropriate. From an organizational standpoint, the premise of an employee counselling program is that employees are valued resources who might sometimes need help in order to maintain their accustomed levels of excellence in job performance. From the employees' point of view, the employee counselling program is a benefit that allows them to enhance the quality of life for themselves and their families.

The counsellor's task, then is not to find out what is "wrong" with an employee but explore the possibilities for improving the interaction between the individual and his or her environment. The assessment process should involve a joint effort by the employee and the counsellor to recognize what stressors affect the individual and what mechanism he or she uses to cope with the world.

A broad assessment, taking into account physiological, social and psychological factors, helps to identify the components of the individual's life that he or she might wish to deal with and change (Balzer & Pargament, 1987).

### Education and Prevention

Employee assistance programs in the West have traditionally proven their effectiveness in "secondary prevention," which involves early identification and prompt treatment of problems that might otherwise become severe. Even more can be accomplished, however, in "primary prevention," which decreases the incidence of problems among a given population by concentrating efforts on people who have not shown any evidence of dysfunction.

In the context of a work organisation, a great deal can be done to prevent the development of mental and physical health problems by presenting programs that build employees' coping resources.

Such efforts, often referred to as competence training, are designed to improve the capacity of normal and at-risk populations to cope with predictable life transition and to more effectively manage stressful situations. The premise underlying this approach is that disorders can be avoided by strengthening an individual's group's capacity to handle environment stress or life crises (Detterer, Bader, and Levy, 1980, p.271).

Educational approaches can be used to prevent the incidence of the problems, most frequently seen among the employees of a given firm. A variety of methods, including workshops, seminars, firm presentations, and dissemination of written materials, can be used to educate employees about such health-related issues as substance abuse, smoking exercise, and nutrition. In addition, employees can be exposed to skill development in areas that seem to relate to individuals' ability to withstand stress and maintain good mental health.

An educational approach is very suitable for an employee counselling program because the employee population is made up of essentially normal adults who have been healthy enough to maintain employment. Most employees can be expected to have reasonably effective coping skills. They can learn to enhance their skills and withstand stress without the need for long-term, in-depth treatment. For these people, a newfound ability to relax, communicate effectively with family members, or to recognize early signs of alcohol abuse can make the difference between healthy coping and stress-related crisis (Lewis & Lewis, 1986).

In the context of the Malaysian workplace, education is crucial to help the employees understand the benefit and importance and to help them overcome the barrier of shyness and fear in order to openly accept the programs.

Strategies in the implementation of Employee Counselling programs

Program Management

Good (1984) had pointed out that the counsellor practicing in a corporate setting actually works in two worlds: the world of management and the world of the helping professions. "Counselling skills are only a piece of the skills pie needed to survive and grow in the corporate, industrial, or labor world" (Good, 1984, p. 2).

The fact that managerial and program development skills are as important as clinical skills in worksite-based programs is pointed up by the experience of individuals who have seen programs flourish or fail.

While serving as a consultant... I observed that programs seldom fail because of clinical issues. Invariably, it seemed that failure results from insufficient administration, lack of

political know-how, or a short supply of appreciation due to the absence of good evaluation. Whatever the causes, programs seemed most vulnerable in the non-clinical areas. And, again in my own experience, these problems usually relate to an inadequate design and implementation process (Wrich, 1984, p.4)

Services to employees need to be reinforced by excellence in program management. The counsellor working in an employee assistance program should be as skilled in consultation and program development as he or she is in counselling. The counsellor should be aware of the interaction between the individual and the environment and to recognize the impact of corporate values on employee and the program alike. The organizational context needs to be taken into account as the counsellor attempts to market, implement, and evaluate services.

#### Marketing the employee counselling program

The initial implementation of an employee counselling program depends on the acknowledgment by decision makers that such an effort is likely to meet organizational objectives. Practitioner who hope to encourage the development of new programs can do so only if they address the needs, problems, and values of targeted organizations. "Selling" a program to a specific client organization involves understanding that setting well enough to present plausible solutions to its real problems. "Marketing" requires an understanding of the entire marketplace. Successful marketing depends on the marketer's ability to carry out a number of steps, including conducting an audit of the marketing environment.

#### Evaluation

Once implemented, the employee counselling program needs to continue meeting specific goals that are important to the well-being of the organisation and its members. The planning and evaluating of the program are closely intertwined, with objectives set at the planning stage and assessed at the evaluation stage. Each program needs to be evaluated both in terms of process (whether the program is operating in accordance with expectations) and outcome (whether the program is having a measurable impact on individual employee and on the organization as a whole). The successful program tends to be one that is carefully planned, efficiently implemented, and well received by the people it has been designed to serve.

The importance of evaluating an employee counselling program cannot be overestimated. Many programs must be evaluated to justify their existence to some external authority. Even if this not the case, an employee counselling program should be evaluated, or at least audited, to ascertain the extent to which it is reaching its objectives and to find ways to improve the effectiveness of its performance. The goals of an employee counselling program should be built in from the beginning, and it is essential for organizations to be able to evaluate whether or not those goals are being met. (Highley, C. 1996).

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, the following model and processes are recommended for the implementation of employee counselling programs for the Malaysian workforce:

An external program model is recommended for the Malaysian corporations. The reason is being that in the Western countries, it has been discovered that many organizations find that employee assistance services provided by independent employee counselling programs providers are more effective. Also an external program will suit the cultural orientation of the Malaysian workforce by providing the sense of privacy in getting help from professionals who remain outside of the organizational structure.

The employee counselling program should be comprehensive and designed to meet the unique goals of the employing organisation. A policy needs to be developed to meet the professional standards of counselling while responding to the needs of the specific company or institution.

The program should be responsible for (a) training supervisors and employee representatives, (b) orienting employees and family members to the program, (c) providing each employee with the telephone number that can be used to set up a counselling appointment, (d) arranging to provide statistical information on a regular basis, and (e) developing a plan for preventive interventions.

Lastly the program should include an educational/preventive component in the form of workshops or seminars. These workshops or seminars should be based on the special needs of the organisation and its employees.

The steps outline in this paper should provide a framework for action to enhance the progress of Employee Counselling programs in Malaysia. If followed closely, there will be good prospects for the growth of Employee Counselling programs in Malaysia.

#### References:

Abdullah, A. (1993), "The Influence of Ethnic Values on Managerial Practices in Malaysia", *Malaysian Management Review*, pp. 3- 18.

Abu Hassan Othman and Mah Lok Abdullah (1991), "Productivity through people – Empirical study on organisational climate and work values in selected firms in Malaysia", *Malaysian Management Review*, vol. 26, No.1, 71-84.

Anastasi, A. (1982), *Psychological Testing*. Mac Millan Publishing, New York :

Bilik, S. (1982), "Marketing Mental Health and EAP services", *Personnel Administrator*, pp. 35-44.

- Cheh, Y.C. (1993), "Workers' attitude towards counselling services in an organisation", Unpublished research work. Bangi: National University of Malaysia.
- Dickman, F., & Emener, W. G. (1982), "Employee assistance programs: basic concepts, attributes and an evaluation", *Personnel Administrator*, 27 (8) pp.55-62.
- Fishbein, M. & Ajzen, C. (1980), *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Forrest, D. V. (1983), "Employee Assistance Programs in the 1980s", *The Personnel and Guidance Journal*, pp. 105-107.
- Googins, Bradley. (1975), "Employee Assistance Programs", *Social Work*, pp. 464- 466.
- Hofstede, G. (1980), "Motivation, Leadership and Organisation: Do American Theories Apply Abroad?" , In *Organizational Dynamics*, Summer, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 12-14.
- Mahler, W.R. & Wrightnour, W.F. (1973), *Executive Continuity: How to build and Retain an Effective Management Team*, Homewood: DowJones- Irwin.
- Peters, T.J., and Waterman, H., Jr. (1982), *In search of excellence: Lessons from America's best-run companies*, Harper & Row, New York.
- Ramli (1992), "Attitudes towards Counselling Services and the Effective Counsellor", Unpublished research work. Bangi: National University of Malaysia.
- Roman, P. (1980), "From employee alcoholism to employer assistance", *Journal of Alcohol Studies*, 47 (3) , pp.135-173.
- Torrington, Derek & Tan, Chwee Huat (1994), *Human Resources Management for Southeast Asia*, Simon & Schuster (Asia) Pte Ltd. Singapore.
- Westwood, Robert, "Managerial Values and Practices: Convergent or Divergent Trends" talk at the Symposium on Intercultural Management, Malaysian Institute of Management, on December 4, 1990 at Hotel Equatorial, Kuala Lumpur.

Appendix A

MBf Group Human Resources Division

Counselling Department

Dear Sir/Madam/Mr/Mrs/Ms,

Thank you for spending some of your precious time to answer this questionnaire. This is a survey regarding "Employees' problems and their attitudes towards counselling services in this organisation". Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

All information given are CONFIDENTIAL.

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME.

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Please read the questions carefully and circle the answers you prefer in part 1, 2, and 3 of the questionnaire. You are also requested to answer the open questions in part 4. All questions are to be answered.

#### PART 1

#### SELF- INFORMATION

Age : 1. Below 35 2. 35 and above

Ethnic : 1. Malay 2. Chinese 3. Indian 4. Others

Gender : 1. Male 2. Female

Marital Status : 1. Single 2. Married 3. Others

Working Experience : 1. Less than 2 years 2. 2 to 4 years 3. More than 4 years

Work Category : 1. Executives 2. Clerical Position

## PART 2

PLEASE CIRCLE THE ANSWER WHICH SUIT YOU MOST.

SA - STRONGLY AGREE

A - AGREE

NS - NOT SURE

D - DISAGREE

SD - STRONGLY DISAGREE

1. In my opinion, counselling play an important role in solving employees' problems.

SA A NS D SD

2. In my opinion, counselling services should be maintained in this company. SA A NS D SD

3. Counselling service is only effective for lower-level employees. SA A NS D SD

4. I believe that counsellor is not a good adviser in solving problems. SA A NS D SD

5. With the experience of counselling, may beneficial information (eg self-understanding) can be obtained by the employees. SA A NS D SD

6. In my opinion, counselling services is not too useful to the employees. SA A NS D SD

7. I believe that counselling helps employees in defining their problems. SA A NS D SD

8. I think the counselling programs are a waste of time and money. SA A NS D SD

9. Counselling can help employees in dealing with social problems. SA A NS D SD
10. I feel ashamed and shy to discuss my problems with the counsellor. SA A NS D SD
11. I feel comfortable of having counselling service in this company. SA A NS D SD
12. I feel that employees do not need help from counsellor in dealing with their personal problems.  
SA A NS D SD
13. I prefer to discuss my problems with my friends than consulting a counsellor. SA A NS D SD
14. I prefer programs which are related to counselling than others. SA A NS D SD
15. Counselling enables employees to be more responsible towards their duty at work. SA A NS D SD
16. Counselling enables employees to adapt themselves with colleagues and working environment.  
SA A NS D SD
17. I avoid myself from counselling session due to the incompetence of the counsellor. SA A NS D SD
18. I will try to participate in any counselling programs held in this company. SA A NS D SD
19. To meet and discuss problems with counsellor wil at least lighten the pressure on the employees.  
SA A NS D SD
20. Counselling service is more effective for female than male employees in tackling their problems.  
SA A NS D SD
21. I realise that the role of counselling in this company is to help the employees in tackling their problems.  
SA A NS D SD
22. In my opinion, counselling service is one of the important facilities in an organisation. SA A NS D SD
23. I am doubtful and lack of confidence in the counsellor's competence in solving my problems.  
SA A NS D SD

24. It is not essential to have a counselling unit in an organisation. SA A NS D SD

25. I think counselling process will take a long time and it is boring. SA A NS D SD

26. I think the counsellor does not practise confidential ethic in an organisation. SA A NS D SD

27. Attending a counselling session helps us to know and realise our weaknesses and problems.

SA A NS D SD

28. Counselling is an important element in improving job satisfaction among the employees.

SA A NS D SD

29. An employee's weaknesses will be revealed if he/she sees a counsellor. SA A NS D SD

30. I feel that the counsellor has the capability in solving most of the employee's problems.

SA A NS D SD

31. Counsellor which is unfamiliar may not understand and help me in solving my problems.

SA A NS D SD

32. I am sure that he counsellor will help the employees until problems are completely solved.

SA A NS D SD

33. I rather keep quiet and handle the problems myself than consulting a counsellor.

SA A NS D SD

34. Counselling helps us in developing self-improvement. SA A NS D SD

### PART 3

**THIS PART OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOCUSES ON THE PROBLEMS THAT EMPLOYEES NORMALLY ENCOUNTER.**

**PLEASE CIRCLE THE ANSWER WHICH SUIT YOU MOST.**

SA - STRONGLY AGREE  
A - AGREE  
NS - NOT SURE  
D - DISAGREE  
SD - STRONGLY DISAGREE

1. I often feel tired. SA A NS D SD
2. I usually have no appetite to eat. SA A NS D SD
3. I often fall sick. SA A NS D SD
4. I don't have enough sleep and I have difficulty falling asleep at night SA A NS D SD
5. I have frequent headache. SA A NS D SD
6. My family doesn't seem to understand me. SA A NS D SD
7. I am disturbed by my parent's attitude SA A NS D SD
8. I often have misunderstanding with my family member/wife/husband SA A NS D SD
9. One of my family members is extremely ill SA A NS D SD
10. Some of my family members feel jealous of my success SA A NS D SD
11. I am not satisfied with my work now. SA A NS D SD
12. My working place is dull and boring. SA A NS D SD
13. My workload is very heavy. SA A NS D SD
14. I used to encounter difficulties and obstacles in my work. SA A NS D SD
15. All the work I have done is not appreciated SA A NS D SD
16. I am still not satisfied with my financial standing SA A NS D SD
17. My debts are high and I used to buy things by installments SA A NS D SD
18. I have too much financial responsibilities SA A NS D SD
19. I often find myself having not enough money to spend SA A NS D SD
20. I often overspend my money. SA A NS D SD

- 21. I usually daydream even at working place SA A NS D SD
- 22. My emotion is usually unstable. SA A NS D SD
- 23. I often feel worried. SA A NS D SD
- 24. I often feel under pressure. SA A NS D SD
- 25. I am usually impatient and hot tempered SA A NS D SD
- 26. I often have difficulties starting a conversation SA A NS D SD
- 27. I often feel alone and isolated. SA A NS D SD
- 28. I have difficulties communicating with mu superior/subordinate SA A NS D SD
- 29. I have problem interacting with my colleagues SA A NS D SD
- 30. I usually find myself having too few friends at workplace SA A NS D SD

PART 4

1. In your opinion, what are the qualities that are needed to be a counsellor. Please pick 4 qualities from the list below and rank in order of importance.

\* patient \* qualified \* responsible \* honest \* warmth \* experienced \* trustworthy \* attractive \* others (please state)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please state types of problems that you are currently experiencing or have experienced recently. If more than two, please rank in order of severity or seriousness.

Examples: \* financial \* marital \* health \* work environment \* job \* chemical dependence \* family \* interpersonal relationship \* others (please state)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Please give some suggestions on how to develop an effective counselling service in the organisation.

---

---

---