

**EFFECTIVENESS OF CRM SYSTEM FOR CUSTOMER
SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES (CSR) TRAINING AT
TELEKOM MALAYSIA**

BADRUL AZIZ BIN MUHAMMAD

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

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REPRESENTATIVES (CSR) TRAINING AT
TELEKOM MALAYSIA

BADRUL AZIZ BIN MUHAMMAD

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DEDICATION

“Without the support, encouragement and love from my parents, my wife and my children, this thesis and where I am in my career today would not have been possible. Your love, caring and pray are so great and precious”

“May Allah bless us all”

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ABSTRACT

Organizations viewed training as part of investments in their human capital development for the benefit of the business. Appropriate training evaluation tools, instruments and methodologies are needed to evaluate training programmes that are considered critical for business. Skill-based training programmes are considered critical to the business and the effectiveness of such programmes is of great importance. This study focused in evaluating training effectiveness of CRM system for Customer Service Representatives at Telekom Malaysia. This is to ensure effective training programmes will result in successful deployment of the CRM system. Questionnaires were used as the research instrument to assess the extent of effectiveness of CRM system training programme. The participants for the research were drawn from TM sales outlets (TMpoint) encompassing Customer Service Representatives (CSR) from areas that have been deployed with CRM system.

The results indicated that the group that had undergone the CRM system training had shown marked improvement in terms of acquisition of knowledge and skills. The evaluation shows changes in knowledge, skill, and behavior to specific training interventions, thereby providing evidence to organizations with regards to the value of training and development. Although findings for relationship between knowledge and skills towards job performance was less significant but it was due to system performance immediately upon deployment. It has been perceived by respondents that system performance is affecting their job performance. The finding is of importance theoretically as it provided insights into methods for evaluating the training effectiveness of computer system skill training. For organizations, the findings of the study will help to provide an invaluable tool to assist organizations in evaluating IT system training.

ABSTRAK

Organisasi menganggap latihan adalah sebahagian daripada pelaburan dalam pembangunan sumber manusia untuk kepentingan perniagaan. Instrumen penilaian latihan dan metodologi yang bersesuaian perlu digunakan untuk menilai program latihan yang dianggap penting untuk kelangsungan perniagaan. Program latihan untuk peningkatan kemahiran dan kecekapan dianggap kritikal dan penilaian perlu dilakukan untuk mengukur keberkesanan program sedemikian. Penyelidikan ini difokuskan dalam menilai keberkesanan latihan sistem CRM kepada wakil perkhidmatan pelanggan di Telekom Malaysia. Ini untuk memastikan program latihan yang berkesan akan menghasilkan pengguna sistem yang mahir. Kertas soalan penyelidikan diedarkan kepada responden sebagai instrumen kajian untuk menilai tahap keberkesanan program. Para responden untuk kajian diambil dari unit jualan TM iaitu TMpoint dari kawasan yang telah diperkenalkan dengan sistem aplikasi CRM.

Keputusan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kumpulan yang telah menjalani latihan sistem CRM menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan dalam pengetahuan dan juga kemahiran. Hasil kajian ini menyokong bahawa latihan kemahiran dalam sistem CRM akan meningkatkan prestasi pekerjaan di tempat kerja. Walaupun hubungan pengetahuan dan kemahiran dengan prestasi kerja kurang signifikan, itu adalah kerana prestasi sistem CRM tidak memuaskan semasa diperkenalkan. Ia telah menyebabkan persepsi responden mempengaruhi prestasi kerja mereka. Penemuan ini penting secara teori untuk menilai keberkesanan latihan. Penilaian menunjukkan perubahan dalam pengetahuan, kemahiran, dan perilaku selepas latihan membantu organisasi dalam menilai latihan dalam bidang teknologi maklumat.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Increased competition, rapid changes in technology, an ever changing customer demands for better products and services have made changes to the landscape in the business world. Telecommunication industry is one of the sectors that faced the situation. We could not deny the fact that modern and more complicated lifestyles have brought about changes in the way we do business and the way customers are demanding for quality products and services. Competition exists beyond offering products and services, inclusive the way we handle customer and to satisfy if not exceed their expectations. Customer experience is the keyword for business success besides quality products and services. Many companies today are racing to strengthen their connections with existing customers while striving to get new customers to boost sales and customers loyalty. Some companies are ahead in this competition and compete effectively through the implementation of customer relationship management strategy. Effort is made to enhance the services inclusive automation of the systems in managing the customers.

Customer relationship management (CRM) has become the focus in today's competitive market. Now the marketing model is changing from product-centered stage to customer-centric stage (Yurong Xu et. al, 2002). In reality, customers are demanding for better and personalized relationship with service providers. On that

note, CRM will help company to deliver these customer-centric principles through its people, process and technology applications.

According to Osarenkhoe (2007) from technology perspective, CRM consists of a set of applications that address the needs of customer-facing functions that in turn feed a common database that is supported by business analysis tools. CRM is expected to increase contact with customer, increase sales and revenues and create greater competition in the market place. Technology applications coupled with best practices processes will ensure better interaction in CRM applications with the customers. CRM technology helps to understand, anticipate and respond to customers' needs in a consistent way, right across the organization because it provides customer and management information. Provide real time information of customers to sales, contact centre, customer service management and service fulfillment team to complete customer requests for service installation and restorations. It would also enable employees to work as one team and seen as “one-face” by our valuables customers.

In today's competitive business environment, a successful CRM software solution cannot be implemented by only installing and integrating CRM software application designed to support CRM processes. CRM integrates people, process and technology in enriching the customer experience and customer centricity. CRM is a business strategy to understanding customers' needs and enables organization to build better relationships, acquire new customers and retain existing customers and increase sales. CRM is to enable organizations to better manage their customers through the introduction of reliable processes and procedures during customers' interactions. With the right CRM solution, it will increase productivity, improve customer experience, and better customer service. It will also simplified business processes, increase sales and reduces costs (Yurong Xu et. al, 2002).

Besides CRM technology and processes being deployed, another important element in CRM strategy is people or human resource. People familiarization with the new system and processes must put of high importance to ensure successful

implementation. Proper training and guidance must be planned and provided to employees much earlier before the introduction of CRM in the organizations or companies. Maul and Gillard (1993) suggested that successful organization values knowledge and such belief is demonstrated clearly in its training and development strategy. According to Phillips (1997) training and development (T&D) is closely related to business strategy of an organization.

As such implementation of CRM in any organization must make sure employees are well-trained and accepted the new changes that are taking place. If CRM implementation focus more on technology and less attention paid to training and users' competency development, the implementation may fail to meet its objectives.

TM has moved forward and developed a systematic approach in managing the customers and continuously enhanced the competency and skills of employees' involved. One of the areas that TM focused is training and how it helps TM to improve the services rendered to the customers.

1.2 Research Background

With Telekom Malaysia Berhad (TM) Group workforce exceeding 27,000 employees, TM recognizes the huge contributions of its people that have driven its growth and success to date. The human capital remains the most important asset of any company. As a responsible employer, TM is fully committed to developing its people to meet the demanding challenges of the business world. In this CRM project, the total number of employees that will be directly impacted by CRM implementation will be about 6,000 employees.

TM has continuously emphasized the need to upgrade and develop multi-disciplinary skills and competencies of its people. Various human resource development programmes are constantly implemented to ensure that this philosophy

is strictly adhered to. In its effort to provide excellent customer service and enhancing the customer experience when dealing with TM, human resource development has always been priority to the organization. Through well-planned training and development programmes would certainly enhanced TM human resource capability.

TM has established its own training centre since 1963 known as TM Training Centre (TMTC) to cater for various programmes under human resource development. TMTC is a division within TM of which the main responsibility is to provide training and development at various levels for staff of TM and its subsidiaries. TMTC and its three main training schools namely School of Engineering, School of IT and Multimedia, and School of Management offers wide range of programmes from Leadership and Managerial development to skills-based training in the areas of TM core business in information and communication technologies. Besides providing training for employees of the Group, TMTC also offers its courses to external parties such as its suppliers and contractors. With hundreds of courses being conducted each year for TM and its subsidiaries, there is always concern of the management to know how effective the training programmes and how has it contributes to TM effectiveness especially in providing services to TM customers.

In determining the training effectiveness, there were many efforts made by TMTC to evaluate their training programs. There were efforts to use valid and reliable method to conduct training evaluations. Before a whole evaluation processes were done, most of the data gathered by trainers are for evaluation of trainees' reactions towards the programme and analysis of data used for improvement to existing training programmes. Less attention is given to recognize the importance to evaluate the training effectiveness and impact of training to the organization. This situation has been addressed with the concern that millions of ringgits that have been spent and will continue to be spent annually on training efforts as a result of the business strategy, customer behaviour, economic, and technological changes. Hence, TMTC has to prove that its trainings are giving a positive impact to organizational improvement.

Therefore, training programmes evaluation should be carried out to measure the effectiveness of the programmes and the outcomes meet the organizational objectives and requirements. The outcomes must show impact made to the organization either in term of enhance skills and productivity or in monetary value. In order to conduct this evaluation it requires a well-plan and systematic process. It is imperative that the outcomes from the training evaluation will help to ensure all issues, concerns and key elements are integrated in an organized way.

Related literature (Kirkpatrick, 1994; Rothwell *et al.*, 1995; Phillips, 1999; Brinkerhoff, 2006) recognizes the importance of evaluation in terms of evaluating the program and its impact, management requirements and the return on the training investment. The concern is not only for those who have engaged or hired the trainer or from training organization and participants but also the management and other stakeholders, must be satisfied with that training. If the management and stakeholders do not perceive a return on their investments, whether measured in terms of productivity, time or monetary, they may not be willing to continue to invest in training. So, it is the aim of this research to investigate further on the outcomes of training evaluation from identified CRM system training programmes conducted for TM Sales Outlets.

1.3 Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in TM

Globalization, liberalization, deregulation, increased competition in business and customers demand for better products and services have created a great awareness within the organization to understand their customers more than ever. The organization focuses in customer retention and capturing new customers have draw attention to have supporting tools to assist employees in their jobs. These are some of the reasons why TM has embarked on Customer Relationship Management (CRM) initiatives.

Telekom Malaysia Berhad (TM), being a leading integrated information and communications company in Malaysia, offers comprehensive range of communication services and solutions in broadband, data and fixed-line. As a market leader in the broadband and fixed-line businesses, TM is driven to deliver value to its stakeholders in a highly competitive environment. The Company stressed on continuing customer service quality enhancements and innovations. With customer base for telephony services of about 4.0 million and broadband customers of more than 1.67 million in year 2010, TM is committed to provide exceptional customers service. Managing a customer base of this size is not an easy task for TM. To ensure that customers experience better services from TM, CRM was established and implemented in TM and all its related subsidiaries.

Telekom Malaysia Berhad (TM) delivered a better performance despite a challenging competition and uncertain economic environment faced last year. According to TM Press Release February 2011, TM registered a Profit After Tax And Minority Interest (PATAMI) of RM1,206.50 million, an increase of 87.6% as compared to RM643 million recorded last year. TM posted a revenue of RM8,791 million for the Financial Year 2010 ended 31 Dec 2010, up 2.1% as compared to RM8,608 million recorded in year 2009. The growth was led by the increasing demand for Internet and Data services. Voice (telephony) and Internet services contributed 62.7% of the total revenue. The report also mentioned that TM spent 5.1% of revenue to improve customer experience. Table 1.1 shows TM revenue for the year 2010 breakdown into different products.

Table 1.1: Total TM Revenue by Products

Products	Full year 2010 (RM mil)	Contribution %	Full year 2009 (RM mil)	Contribution %
Voice (Tel)	3,862.9	43.9	4,046.0	47.0
Data & Leased	1,754.3	20.0	1,519.4	17.7
Internet	1,652.8	18.8	1,561.3	18.1
Others	1,521.0	17.3	1,481.3	17.2
TOTAL	8,791.0	100.0	8,608.0	100.0

(Source: Corporate Communication TM, Press Release 25th February 2011)

TM CRM will focus on improving customer relationships and services for customers subscribing to voice or telephony and internet services. It is TM's strategy to implement CRM to enhance its business performance through better customer relationship and services thus improving TM revenue. TM CRM is a combination of business strategy, business processes and information technologies that are used to learn about customers' needs and behaviors in order to develop stronger relationships with them. TM CRM project document has defined CRM as follows:

“The management of customer relationship in an organized and controlled manner at all customer interaction points with the objective of improving the customer experience, satisfying the customer preferences and extending his life cycle with the company – resulting in growth and profitability.”

(Source: CRM Project Document)

There are many reasons why TM has embarked on CRM. Among the reasons identified in TM CRM Project document on why TM requires CRM as its business strategy are:

- Today's customers have plenty of choices and substitutes.
- If TM does not embrace customer centricity, existing customers will churn; new customers will not come in.
- Competitive business environment forces us to change in order to stay ahead in the business.
- Need to inculcate a customer oriented commercial work culture so that customer will remain with TM.
- CRM will enable TM to maximize the enormous information potential from TM's customer base to meet customers' needs.
- CRM can enhance customer experience by providing frontliners with capabilities and intelligence to better serve the customer.
- CRM can increase TM's revenue share through intelligent marketing campaign management, smart segmentation, quick analysis and effective customer retention.
- CRM can improve operational effectiveness through integrated customer interaction capabilities at all interaction points.

1.3.1 TM CRM Strategy

The CRM strategy will guide TM into the implementation of CRM for the benefits of TM customers, employees and organization. Figure 1.1 below depicts the TM CRM Strategy. It detailed out the elements under the four phases of the strategy namely understanding market and customers, develop offerings, retain customers and acquire customers.

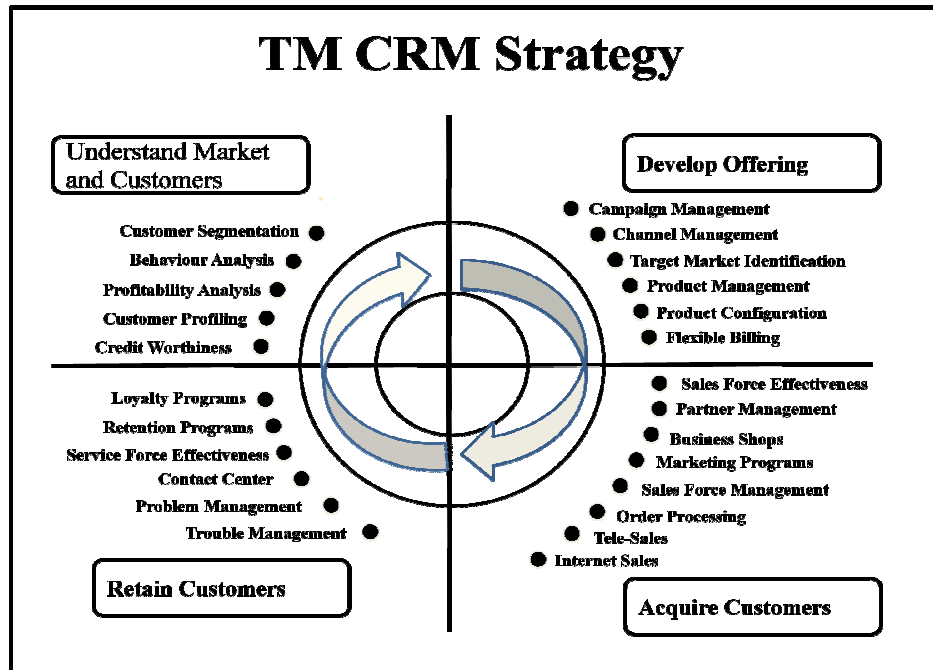


Figure 1.1: TM CRM Strategy

(Source: TM CRM Project document)

Since CRM is the integration of system, process and people. The first component is the CRM system solution as shown in Figure 1.2 below. The system solutions are divided into Operational CRM, Analytical CRM, and Infrastructure that integrate CRM with other systems and support. Operational system is the main part of CRM system solution and meant for the frontliners of TM to interact with the customers. The application system within Operational CRM is Frontdesk Application system. This application system is called Integrated Customer Allied Relationship or iCARE. The system is the customization of Oracle Siebel 7.7 CRM system. The iCARE is the system that interacts between TM frontliners or customer service representative (CSR) and TM customers either for product and services enquiry, order request and fulfillment, complaints and service request and fulfillment. CRM system i.e. iCARE was introduced early 2007 and the total employees that will be using CRM system as their tools in managing the customers is about 6000 people. The functions ranging from order capturing at TM Sales outlets, Contact centres for service request and trouble tickets, Field operations for service fulfillment and order tracking management by iCARE centre.

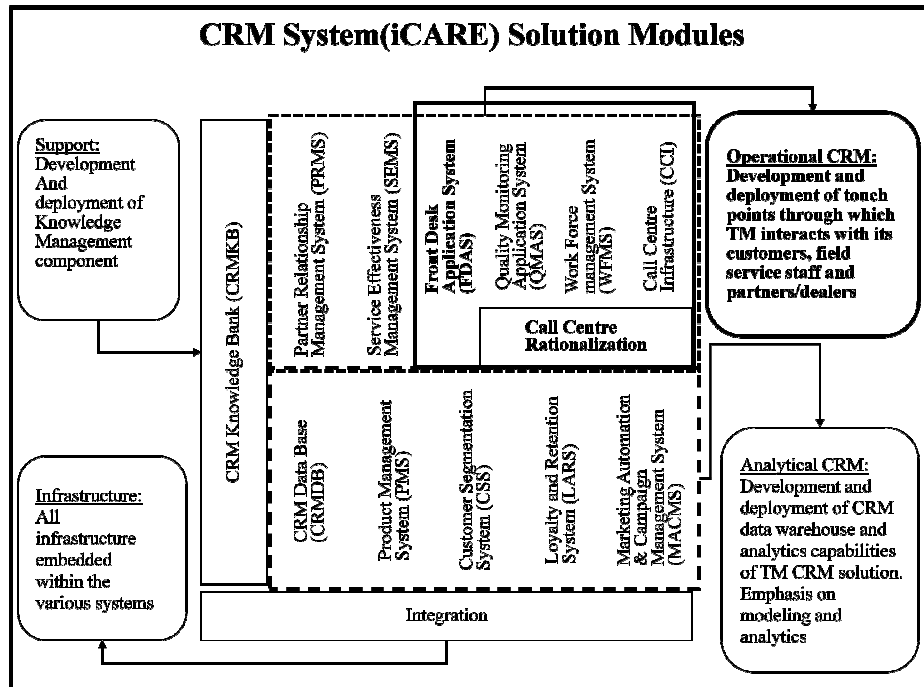


Figure 1.2: CRM System Solution Modules

(Source: TM CRM project document)

The second component is the CRM processes. Among the major processes TM has embedded in CRM implementation are related to the following functions;

- Order Capturing and Processing - This would facilitate CSR to capture customers' orders for products or services. The orders are mainly divided into new installation, removal or disconnection, transfer or change of service and modification of service.
- Service Request and Trouble Tickets - The functions are to capture any additional service features request or to record any complaint about the service. It also to report and log any trouble tickets or trouble reports about faulty services.
- Service Fulfillment - This function and processes is about the installation of service after receiving the service order. It also includes the tracking and

monitoring of service orders until services installed and customer confirm the service is ready for use.

The third component is the people. The people aspect of CRM implementation is main criteria for successful deployment of CRM. With the latest technology and best practices business processes, CRM is not successfully deployed until people or employees use them in their daily operations and customer interactions. The challenge is to ensure employees are well trained and accepted the changes in work processes and new support system being introduced to them. Without the acceptance of the employees, this CRM initiative is considered a failure.

It is to stress here that CRM is not just about CRM system but the whole process of providing services upon capturing customers request and enquiry, service fulfillment, service restoration until excellent customer service. CRM would assist CSRs to provide a positive customers experience when dealing with TM. As such the higher usage of CRM system, more information will be captured about the customers and this would be an advantage to TM in managing and retaining its customers. The information captured about customers are from personal details, services subscribed, usage patterns, payment history, and complaint history All this information will be useful to support any customer requests either current or future needs. Furthermore, the information will be used by organization for analysis of most preferred products or services, analysis of predictive churn, marketing campaign, loyalty and retention strategy and other future planning to meet customers' demand.

1.3.2 TM CRM Implementation

TM CRM was implemented in stages starting from year 2007. It cut across many divisions within TM. The three components of CRM i.e. system, process and people were integrated with the project implementation was monitored closely by TM management. The CRM management reports 2009 have shown different usage pattern of iCARE system among the employees at different TM outlets or touch points. The pattern included different outlets and division, different employee

category e.g. length of service and different functions to operate. Example of usage pattern report is usage of iCARE system at Contact Centre that showed 98% utilization and at TMpoint 24% utilization. We cannot conclude that contact centre has better system utilization performance compare to TMpoint because both touch points are different in nature of services provided to customers. But why the low usage at TMpoint is to be determined and compared within TMpoint outlets. There are also high usage rates of iCARE system at certain TMpoint outlets by some CSRs. This also puzzled the management as why the inconsistency in usage rate. If system and process is an issue then it should be a consistent low-usage pattern across all the outlets since every CSR will have low usage rate and translated in overall low usage at TMpoint outlets.

The above issue has created some concern among TM management whether different usage level is related to training effectiveness, system issues, different functions, staff attitude or other issues. One aspect of low utilization of new system and processes within the organization is due to people not trained or lack of training. The normal reason given is lack of skills to operate CRM system that caused low usage. Lacking of skills is directly related to training and hence CRM Human Competency Development unit has been assigned to evaluate the effectiveness of the training programmes. The management would also like to find out whether those participants that have attended iCARE system training and provided with necessary tools would used the systems to the optimum level. All CSRs have actually attended CRM (iCARE) system training but not many have been using the iCARE system to manage the customers from order capturing, order fulfillment up to service installation.

The graph in Figure 1.3 shows the utilization report for selected TM sales outlet i.e. TMpoint. It shows inconsistent usage of the report across the organization. The above figure only covers 20 outlets out of 106 TMpoint outlets. TMpoint Kudat shows 90% utilization rate while TMpoint Beaufort shows 50% utilization rate. The graph also shows comparison between the existing system i.e. CASS (Customer Automated Services System) utilization against new system iCARE Siebel. Some reasons that employees normally give for low utilization are slowness of the system,

no confidence in using the system especially when interacting with customers, lack of training and training was done earlier and they forgot to use them since most of the time they use CASS.

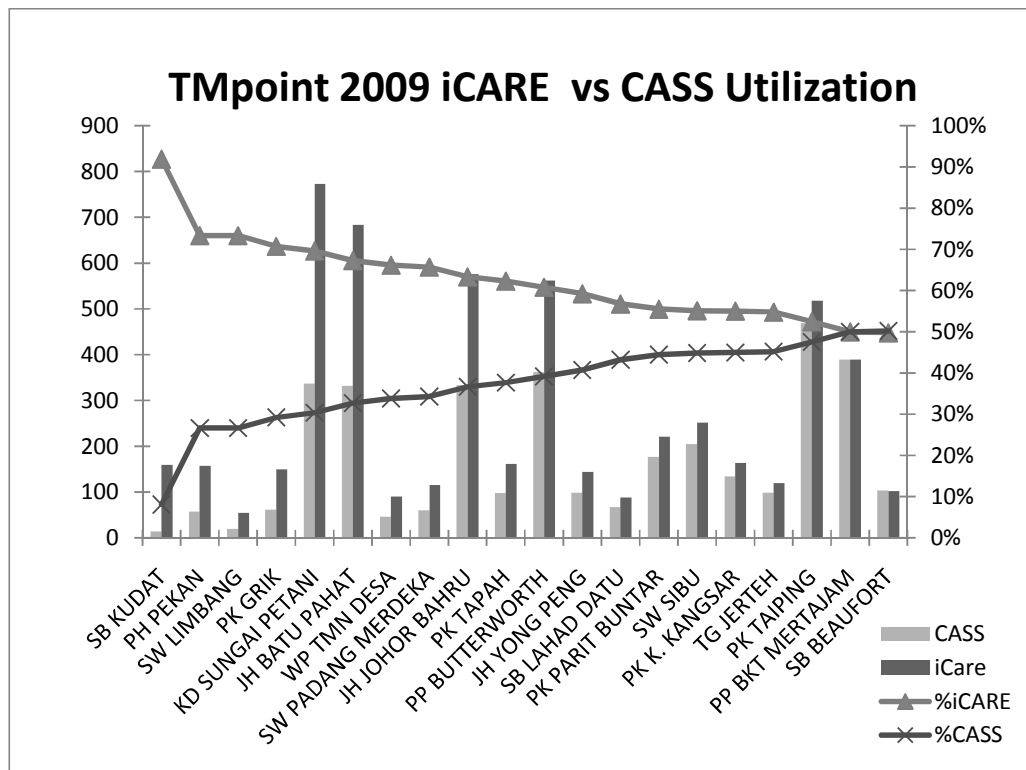


Figure 1.3: iCARE Utilization Report

(Source: TM CRM Project Document)

The employees claimed it would take a longer time to serve the customer if the new system iCARE is used. CSR would prefer to use the existing or the legacy system CASS to manage the customers. It is understood since they are already familiar with the system. But the existing system is already 20 years old and CASS is not built based on CRM requirement. The CASS system is meant for service orders transaction and would not support the CRM requirement of TM. Furthermore, job sheet for service installation would be available the same day for the installers compared to the next day with CASS system. Two parallel systems are in operations due to the fact that not all TM products and services are orderable through the new system. Enhancements to iCARE system are being made to support all orders but it

will take some time before completion. CASS is not able to support these CRM functionalities.

Due to the above challenges faced by TM employees in using the iCARE and CASS system, the management has decided to make major enhancement to the iCARE system. TM management has engaged external CRM system provider to make major enhancement to the capabilities of current iCARE system. The iCARE system has been renamed iCARE Prime (iCP) system. This enhancement is required to improve the system performance based on feedback given from the system users. The enhancement is also done to improve the business processes in order to deliver faster service to TM customers. The improvement done to the system is to cater the current business needs and key benefits as shown in Figure 1.4 below.

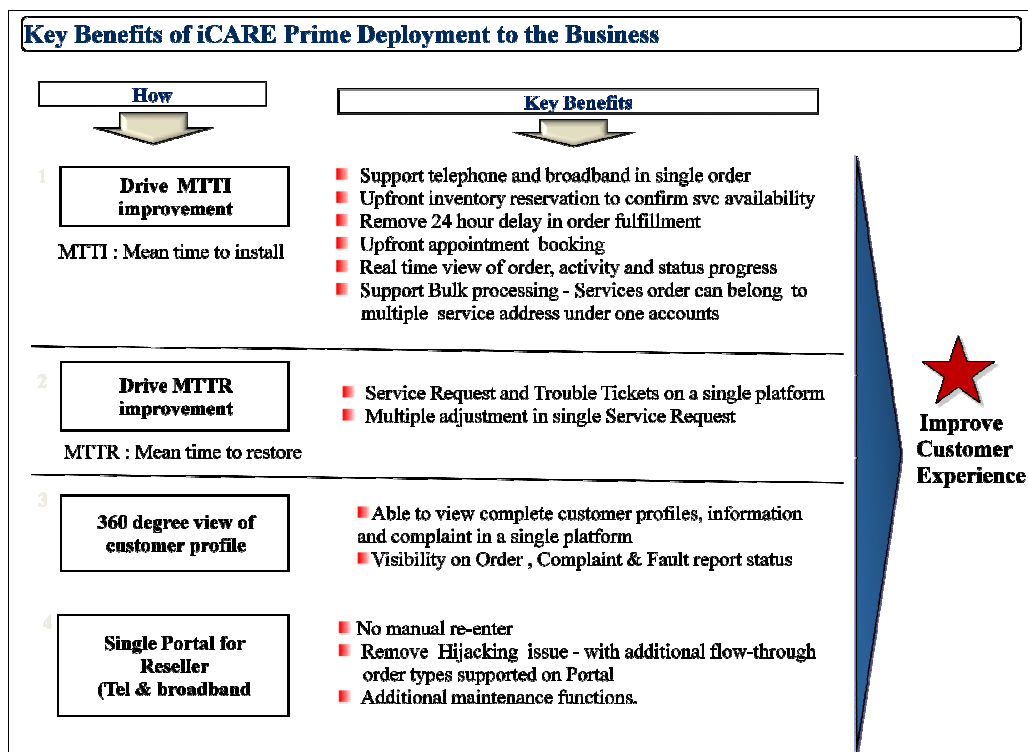


Figure 1.4: Key Benefits of iCARE Prime
(Source : iCare Prime Project Document)

With the iCARE Prime system users would be able to perform better than previous iCARE system. It is expected that users would make full use of the system without the need to use legacy system such as CASS. This legacy system will be closed down in stages depending on the deployment of iCARE Prime.

The above benefits would translate into faster customers' serving time and less waiting time at TMpoint counters. It then reduces the installation time for services requested by customers and also reducing the service restorations time whenever there are complaints made by customers. These would definitely save cost and improve revenue collection since services can be installed or restored in shorter time.

With the system and processes that being enhanced, now leaving the people readiness to ensure successful deployment. As stated earlier, people readiness is one of critical success factors in system deployment. Main component of people readiness is training and training effectiveness.

1.3.3 CRM System Training

As a requirement for any system deployment or enhancement, training for users needs to be conducted. CRM system training for users was conducted again in 2010 to all related users in few phases. Training programme for iCARE Prime users has been conducted since February 2010 for Selangor and Kuala Lumpur. It was the pilot area of iCARE Prime deployment. The pilot deployment was done in April 2010 for areas covering Wangsa Maju Kuala Lumpur, Sungai Long and Selat Kelang Utara Selangor. After pilot deployment, there were many more functionalities need to be added and some system fixes need to be done to improve the overall system features and performance. After the system has been fixed with new functionalities and features, the management has approved the new schedule for deployment. The training programmes were conducted with the new system release starting from September 2010 and will continue until completion of nationwide deployment.

Figure 1.5 below shows the iCARE Prime Project nationwide deployment plan. Training programmes begin about two months before the deployment date.

The iCARE Prime Deployment Plan covering the Pilot area, Wave1 i.e. Melaka and Puchong (Selangor) was launched in 2010. Then wave2 was launched end 2010 covering more areas such as Perak, Pahang, and some exchanges and TMpoints in Klang Valley. In year 2011, the deployment covers all states including Sabah and Sarawak.

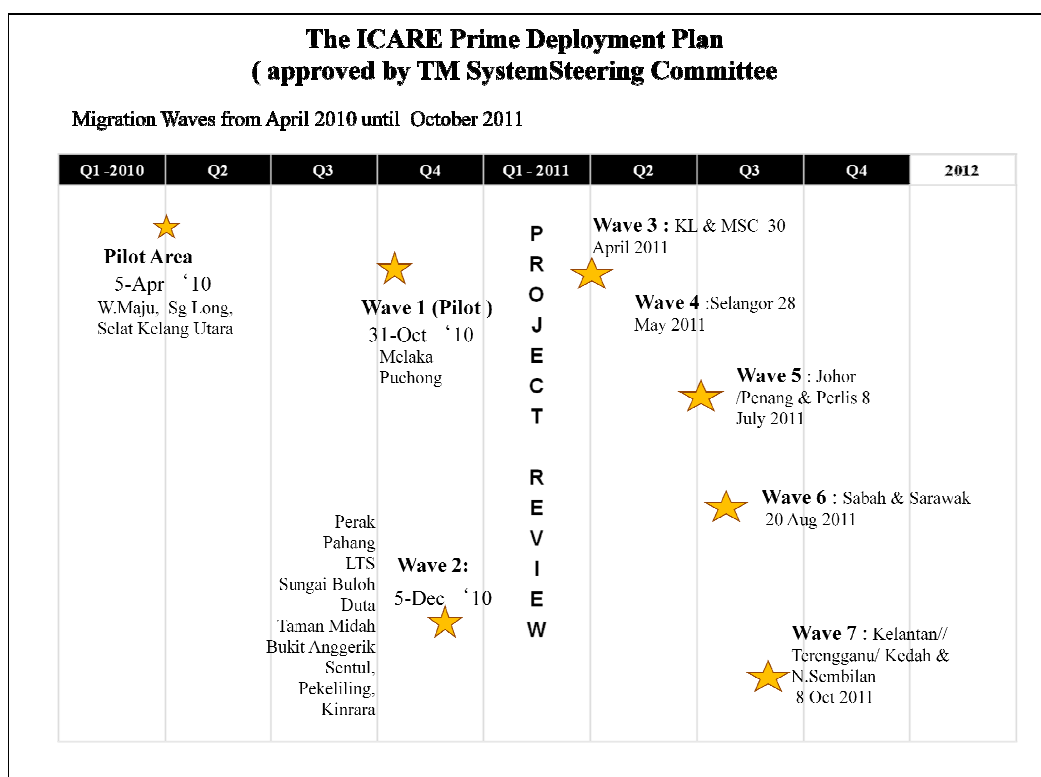


Figure 1.5: iCARE Prime Deployment Plan
(Source: iCARE Prime Project Document)

Figure 1.6 below shows the training attendance report after the programme was conducted for all users of iCARE Prime until November 2010. There are many divisions in TM involved with iCARE Prime deployment and have attended the training programme. However our focus for this study is TMpoint. TMpoint has 800

employees to be trained and 455 have attended the iCARE Prime training programme.

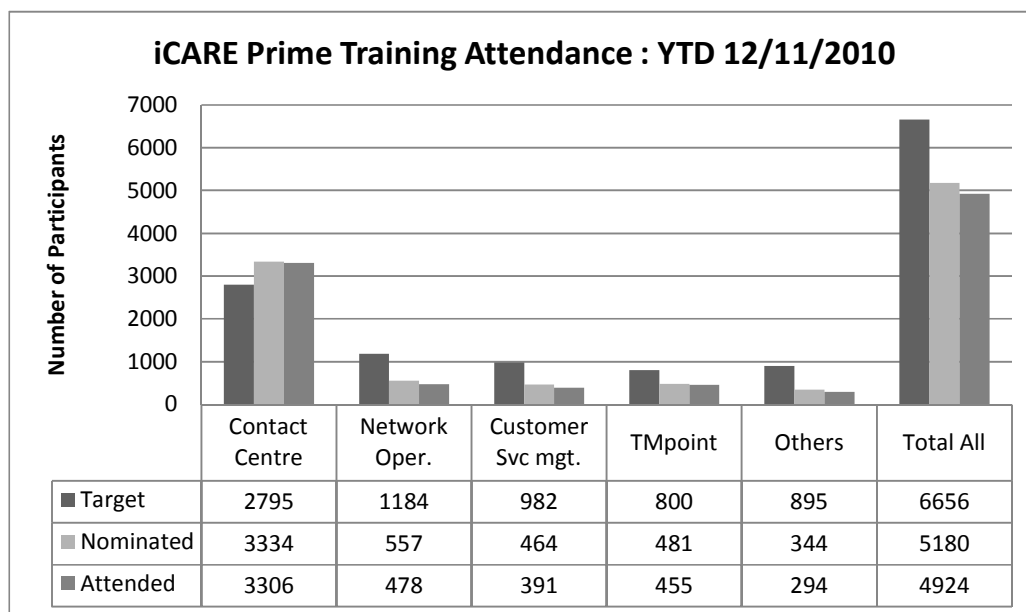


Figure 1.6 : iCARE Prime End User Training Attendance

(Source : iCare Prime Project Document)

TMpoint being the major sales outlet for TM and interface direct with customers must be able to deliver exceptional services in line with TM vision and mission. It is important for TMpoint to be competent in using the iCARE Prime system when serving the customers and expedite the processes involved, thus reduce the cycle time of dealing with the customers. The training programme meant for TMpoint is called iCARE Prime Order Capture.

The training programme covering pilot and other deployment areas received positive response from respective CSRs. Nevertheless, Eastern Region's attendance was less encouraging with 74.2%. With the total number of 481 employees nominated for the programme, 455 attended or 94.6% and completed the programme successfully. The CSRs from Klang Valley contributed to the highest attendance with 77.6% covering both pilot and non pilot training (refer to Table 1.2 for details).

Table 1.2: iCare Prime Order Capture for TMpoint
Training Attendance Report (YTD: 12/11/2010)

REGION		CENTRAL	NORTHERN	SOUTHERN	EASTERN	TOTAL
State		(Klang Valley)	Perak	Melaka	Pahang	
Nominated		371	54	27	29	481
Attended	Pilot	250		27		455
	Non Pilot	103	54	-	21	
% Attend		95.1%	100.0%	100.0%	72.4%	94.6%

(Source: iCARE Prime Project Document)

The area of concern is TMpoint participants and their performance after attending iCARE Prime training. TMpoint being the major sales outlet for TM and interface direct with customers must be able to deliver exceptional services in line with TM vision and mission. It is important for TMpoint to be competent in using the iCARE Prime system when serving the customers and expedite the processes involved, thus reduce the cycle time of dealing with the customers. It would also ensure the benefits of iCARE Prime is realized through effective use of the system in processing customer orders. The training programme meant for TMpoint is called iCARE Prime Order Capture.

The iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme is a five-day training programme. The aim of the programme is to provide CSR with necessary knowledge and skills to operate iCARE Prime system and able to capture any customer requests or complaints based on work processes and to resolve and escalate any system issues. Participants will be taught on work processes for services such as telephone, internet/broadband services (streamyx) and combination of both namely combo orders. Work processes are business rules and processes that governed a particular service. It encompasses the understanding of services offered, installation processes, service charging and after sales. Participants will also learned system processes to improve their ordering skills using iCARE Prime system.

The training module is divided into two parts i.e. business processes and system processes. The business process modules covered CRM knowledge, iCARE Prime Implementation, products supported by iCARE Prime, telephone work process, Streamyx work process, Combo work process and service request work process. On the other hand, the system process covered search and create customer accounts, new install (NI) telephony, new install (NI) Streamyx, new install (NI) Combo, add/remove Streamyx, upgrade/downgrade Streamyx, modify billing account / service account, modify commercial offer, transfer owner, service suspension/reconnect and termination and service request & reporting.

1.4 Problem Statement

With the deployment of new iCARE Prime system to TM frontliners especially TMpoint there were issues raised during post-implementation review. Among the issue discussed was the competency of users to operate iCARE Prime upon deployment of the iCARE Prime system. This is related to the training programmes that were conducted to support the deployment. The issues discussed inclusive of inadequate training to perform job, lack of confidence in using the new system, not competent i.e. took longer time to serve customers, reduce efficiency and productivity, knowledge on business processes were lacking and poor cross-function coordination.

The management would certainly want to know whether there is improvement and change of behaviour due to training programmes attended. The transfer of learning at workplace has taken place would be shown with the efficient and productive usage of iCARE Prime system and improve job performance. The concern is related to huge amount of training budget allocated for the training.

Another important factor why training effectiveness is of concern to the management is competent users will be an element in successful deployment of iCARE Prime. Unlike the previous iCARE training programmes, where users were

complaining about lack of confidence due to lack of practice and training were not effective. Much improvement has been done to training modules and methodology to ensure participants would benefit from the training programme.

This study is to determine five key research questions that are essential for TM to evaluate the effectiveness of its iCARE Prime system training programme and to ensure that knowledge and skills acquired from the training improve job performance.

The five key research questions are:

- i. What are the reactions of participants towards iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme?
- ii. What is the level of knowledge before and after attending iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme?
- iii. What is the level of skills before and after attending iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme?
- iv. What is the relationship between knowledge acquisition and job performance?
- v. What is the relationship between skills acquisition and job performance?

1.5 Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the effectiveness of CRM system training programme, focusing on iCARE Prime Order Capture for TMpoint and how the knowledge and skills acquired from the programme helped the participants improve their job performance.

1.6 Research Objectives

Research objectives have been established to examine the influence of iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme to improve order capturing skills amongst the CSR of TMpoint and its impact on job performance.

The specific research objectives are as follows:

- i. To examine the reactions of participants towards iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme.
- ii. To compare level of knowledge before and after attending iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme.
- iii. To compare level of skills before and after attending iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme.
- iv. To establish relationship between knowledge acquisition and job performance.
- v. To establish relationship between skills acquisition and job performance.

1.7 Research Hypothesis

The following hypotheses will be tested:

- i. H₁: There is a difference of participants' level of knowledge before and after attending iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme.
- ii. H₂: There is a difference of participants' level of skills before and after attending iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme.
- iii. H₃: There is a significant relationship between knowledge acquired and job performance
- iv. H₄: There is a significant relationship between skills acquired and job performance

1.8 Significance of Study

This study is expected to provide valuable information for TM HRD to examine the knowledge and skill improvement gained from training attended. With the introduction of iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme, this study will benefit TM in these several areas:

i. Contributions to TM employees

The result would enhance the employee's acceptance towards iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme and how have the programme benefited them in their job performance. It contributes some facts and figures on the iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme that have been conducted and overall performance of the programmes.

ii. Contribution to TM

The study provides TM HRD with valuable information on knowledge and skills improvement gained from training attended and with the outcome of the study, TM HRD could plan for more appropriate developmental programme for TM. The study will determine relationship between and skills acquired and job performance. The study can lead to the development of more practices in CRM, which gives direction to new skills and knowledge expansion.

iii. Contribution to Body of Knowledge (human resource development discipline)

This study will add to the body of knowledge on CRM training by providing empirical support on the impact of iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme on both knowledge and skills.

1.9 Scope of Study

This study was conducted based on a training programme namely iCARE Prime Order Capture; specially designed for TMpoint in TM. The study was conducted among the CSRs at TM sales outlets (TMpoint) in Klang Valley who involved in pilot deployment only. There were fourteen outlets involved in the pilot deployment. Other pilot outlets outside Klang Valley were not participated in this study due to time and budget constraints. The travelling cost and time incurred in managing the questionnaire are quite high and the availability of CSR to be around during the study could not be guaranteed. Hence, the study was focused in Klang Valley only. There are also TMpoint in Klang Valley not being listing above because they did not involved in the deployment plan during this study.

1.10 Limitation Of Study

The scope of the study is limited in several ways. This study involved TM CSRs located in TMpoints. The sample of CSRs is limited to those who have attended iCARE Prime Order Capture Training Programme conducted by TM Training Centre (TMTC) for the year 2010.

The study focused only on one target group even though there are other divisions involved namely iCARE Centre, Contact Centre and Customer Service Management. Since the respondents will be sampled, the generalization of the findings will only be inferred to that particular division.

1.11 Conceptual Definition

Werner and DeSimone (2009) described training as providing employees the knowledge and skills needed to do a particular task or job, though attitude change

may also be attempted. Blanchard (1999) and Rothwell (1996) stated that when training has been conducted and learning has taken place, the next step is to determine whether training has been transferred to workplace and do the outcomes increase the skills and performance of trainees.

1.11.1 Training Effectiveness

Training is effective when it is transferred to workplace or when there is a change in behaviour (Phillips, 2002). Training would have impact on business when there is improvement on performance such as reduced in cycle time, increase in sales, reduced in customer complaints or declined in waste (Phillips, 1997). In order to be effective, many factors influence training. Some of them are course objectives, contents, training delivery, training methods, practice sessions, management supports and participant backgrounds.

1.11.2 Job Performance

Job performance refers to how well an employee performed his/her job and is related to business impact. These may include impact measures such as increased revenues, improved quality, reduced response times and enhanced efficiency. Recognizing that there are many factors that can influence job performance, training evaluation tool must measure the effect of training on employee job performance upon completion of the programme.

1.11.3 Knowledge and Skills

Werner and DeSimone (2009) defined knowledge as understanding of factors or principles related to a particular subject. It usually involves an understanding of information either of factual or procedural that are required to performance of a task. Knowledge acquisition is the process of gaining knowledge from extraction of information from a certain source.

Skills are often categorized as psychomotor activities and skills are typically measured in terms of ease and precision evident in the performance of some tasks (Werner and DeSimone, 2009).

1.12 Operational Definition

This study focuses on identified attributes to measure iCARE Prime knowledge and skills improvement gained from iCARE Prime Order Capture training programme. The effectiveness of training programme will be shown with the improvement of job performance of participants upon completion of training programme.

1.12.1 Knowledge of iCARE Prime Order Capture

Knowledge of iCARE Prime order capture is the understanding of all businesses or work processes related to customers and products management in CRM system that will be used together with iCARE Prime (iCP) system procedures during deployment of the system. The business or work processes include policies and procedures in managing customers from start to capture customers' orders until service is provisioned. It can also be referred to as the standard operating procedures for managing customer orders in iCP environment.

The level of understanding of participants in acquiring the business or work processes knowledge through attending formal training is divided into several levels i.e. poor, basic, moderate, good and excellent. .

1.12.2 Skills of iCARE Prime Order Capture

Skills of iCARE Prime order capture is the ability and capacity acquired through formal and systematic training programmes that are required to perform job functions involving technical skills on how to operate CRM system i.e. iCARE Prime system(iCP). iCP system manual is the iCP operating manual and employees are expected to use the manual when operating iCARE Prime system. Skills acquisition is how the participants acquire skills through formal instruction and practicing the usage of the system during training programmes.

The ability of participants to acquire the technical skills of iCP system is through attending formal training and mastery of the system operating manual. The level of skills acquired are divided into several levels i.e. poor, basic, moderate, good and excellent..

1.12.3 Training Effectiveness of iCARE Prime Order Capture Training

The effectiveness of the above training would be observed if there is an increased in knowledge and skills when CSR start to use iCARE Prime system upon completion of training programme. CSRs would be able to take orders and immediately process orders in front of customers. The CSR would be able to explain the whole process from start of order taking, installations and after sales. CSR would improve order capturing time and improve customer serving time. It is expected for CSR to be able to capture order immediately upon completion of training programme and the speed and accuracy of the order capturing will improve over time. This is related to improvement in efficiency and work productivity.

1.12.4 Job Performance

Job performance is the accomplishment of work-related tasks or skills by an employee in operating the iCARE Prime system. It is related to the completion of capturing orders from customers with all the required details of the customers and the

requested service orders within a stipulated time frame. It is related to specific business or work processes and technical skills acquired through training and reflected in overall performance of the employee who are using iCARE Prime system. It is measured through speed and accuracy of using the system and the results would be the shorter time taken to capture customer requests and accurate completion of the order details. Complete and accurate orders will ensure fast installation of service requested by customers since installation team will interpret customer request correctly and installation can be done as promised to customers. Operating iCARE Prime system and its work processes are not straight-forward therefore employee need to manage problems related to processes and system and also need to work closely with other technical and installation teams in meeting customers' demand. Employees who are able to understand and apply the work processes and system processes in daily operations would perform their job effectively, improve productivity, improve teamwork, motivated, more confident in managing customers and have positive work attitude.

In TM, job performance is assessed through company appraisal system named Managing and Assessing Performance System (MAPS) which is done annually. The MAPS is based on key results area which is divided into Financial, Customer, Internal Business Process (IBP) and Organizational Learning and Growth (OLG). Job performance in this study refers job assigned to an employee and it is measureable by the output and how well it is executed. The job performance will be based on evaluation of OLG.

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