

EDITORIAL

An article, published in late 2010 in one of Bangkok English dailies, reads in part as follows: *'Next year's job market will be driven primarily by job candidates as the country's demand for talent outpaces supply.'* The article goes on to state that *"talent seekers are facing tough times finding candidates."*

This analysis by an international recruitment firm operating in Thailand speaks volumes about the favorable economic climate in Asia. Job seekers in this part of the world have many reasons to be optimistic; in fact, a lot more than their European or US counterparts who are still reeling from the last financial crisis.

Also of note in this article is the following statement: *"Especially short in supply are candidates with good English-language ability."* The ubiquitous use of English in international transactions, including extra- and intra-ASEAN trade, has made it imperative for managers to master Shakespeare's tongue; which raises the issue of education, a complex topic whose discussion though is beyond the realm of this editorial.

Suffice to note, however, that this employment situation is forcing many organizations to adjust themselves to become an employer of choice by providing the best possible salaries and benefits in a bid to attract talented candidates; a situation likely to be exacerbated when ASEAN Economic Community becomes fully implemented in 2015 and skilled labor enjoys freedom of movement within the ten-member-state economic bloc.

Employer-employee relations, employment market trends and ASEAN are at the core of a number of contributions in this 6th edition of the journal, starting with Zofia Rummel-Syska's article on the values of trust and truth in the workplace.

In *Trust and Truth: Looking back at Two MNC Plants in Poland at the Time of the Switch from Planned to Market Economy*, she chronicles the hurdles met by an MNC conducting business in Poland when the country switched from planned to market economy and argues that trust and truth in labor relations are essential for social institutions, governments, economies and communities to function properly.

Employer-employee relations - in this case future ones - are also the focus of Seiji Kakei's article, *Lifestyle Gap Analysis: Student Lifestyle and Employer Preferences*. As many graduates embark on inappropriate careers and corporations often chose inappropriate employees, both students and corporations end up wasting resources and time. Focusing on students at one large university in Bangkok, Thailand, this study takes a close look at this gap.

In her article, *Strengthening Organizational Effectiveness through an ODI on Performance Management at the Departmental Level: A Case Study*, Nattaya Choekanoknapa reports on her experience setting up a performance management system (PMS) that incorporates goal clarity, key performance indicators, and performance feedback at a Bangkok-based company.

In the next article, *ASEAN and its Future: Some Cautionary Notes!* Noel Jones considers some of ASEAN's achievements since its establishment in 1967. Written as a set of chronological questions and answers, it condenses a vast amount of information meant to increase the readers' awareness and understanding of ASEAN and its many dimensions.

In the first student's contribution, *A Study of the Relationships among Perceived Quality, Country-of-origin, Brand Loyalty and Brand Equity at a Footwear Company in China*, Lu Li focuses on an issue especially critical to Chinese firms seeking to establish themselves on the world stage and compete with household brand names; that of brand image. As she reports, even at home, the road to brand recognition is bumpy.

In the second student's contribution, *Sun and Sand Holiday Makers' Assessment of Patong Beach, Thailand*, Yuan Ping investigates foreign tourists' perception of selected beaches in Phuket. While the overall image of the areas considered remains positive, she claims some improvements are needed.

Finally, an action research article by Natanuj Vanichkul entitled, *Enhancing International Satisfaction through an Organizational Development Intervention: A Case Study*, investigates the impact of organizational development intervention (ODI) on enhancing internal customer satisfaction.

Dr. John Barnes' review of *Tourism Geography: a New Synthesis* reminds us of the importance of geographical issues in the theory and practice of tourism and also of understanding them.

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