

# **DOLE, NCMB partners with Nanyang Polytechnic and TEMASEK Foundation To enhance Philippines' productivity and innovation in labour management**

PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL CONCILIATION AND MEDIATION BOARD

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), through the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB), has partnered with Nanyang Polytechnic International (NYPi) of Singapore and Temasek Foundation International to enhance productivity and innovation in labour management in the Philippines.

In a memorandum of understanding, the NYPi, together with Temasek Foundation, implemented the Third Phase of the Joint Undertaking between DOLE, Temasek Foundation International and Nanyang Polytechnic International Programme on Productivity to develop productivity tools and innovation in labour management of the Department and its clientele.

NCMB Executive Director Shirley M. Pascual said the agreement, signed last 15 January 2016, helped the labor department in enhancing the capability and capacity of the 115 officials and program managers and specialists of the DOLE and some LMC advocates.

Selected participants underwent a Leaders Programme Training for one week, Managers Programme Training for two weeks, and a

three-week training for Specialist Programme.

The one-week Leader's Programme, which was attended by 20 DOLE senior officials, was provided with an overview of Singapore's experience in productivity and innovation in labour management regulation and policies, labor management relations, wage management, conciliation-mediation and arbitration.

The two-week Manager's Programme equipped the 40 participants with technical skills on how to manage changes in productivity and innovation in labour management conciliation, mediation and arbitration.

The three-week Specialists Programme provided the 55 DOLE participants and some LMC advocates with a more in-depth and hands-on coverage in productivity and innovation in labour management conciliation, mediation and arbitration. The said program developed a core group of productivity specialists who were tasked to cascade productivity concepts to different establishments nationwide.

The DOLE-NCMB core group of productivity specialists cascaded their learnings on productivity and innovation by incorporating these through the conduct of area-wide seminars, in-house learning sessions and other LMC facilitation and enhancement activities.

Pascual said that the NCMB has adopted innovative approaches in maintaining industrial peace by integrating productivity and innovation concepts in the area-wide seminars given to different establishments aimed in enhancing labor and management relations .

"We believe that higher productivity benefits all, the workers, the company and, even the government. Productivity increases the competitiveness and higher profitability for the company and empowered workers," Pascual said.

One of the participants from the Specialist Programme, Rico A.

Babalcon, from RCMB-VIII said that his attendance in the Nanyang training changed his perspective on the implementation of the NCMB's productivity program. "It gave me confidence to initiate activities relating to productivity since the Singapore training provided me with so many new insights that enabled me to lengthily discuss the concept of productivity," he affirmed.

Babalcon added that the discussion of the Singaporean version of unionism expanded his knowledge and skills in the conduct of conciliation-mediation of labor disputes. "Comparing the culture of unionism in Singapore and the Philippines, I was able to appreciate the concept of delayed gratification, which simply means that it is imperative that employees improve their productivity first before asking for an increase in wages and benefits," he observed. "On the other hand, management commits to share the fruits of production to the employees once the company becomes profitable," Babalcon said.

Another Specialist from NCMB-NCR, Grace E. Membrere, related that participants have expressed that discussions on productivity improvement during the area-wide seminar made them aware of the productivity's role in ensuring their company's competitiveness.

She also added that one of the companies got inspired with the productivity topics that they launched an Employee of the Month award aimed to encourage and motivate their employees to be more productive that resulted in increased outputs that benefitted both the company and its employees.

Lester B. Panem of RCMB I shared his learnings on the difference of innovation and productivity concepts. Productivity concept was built on the premise that innovation increases productivity. He further said that while both are behavioral and economic in nature, innovation is connected to personal and organizational mindset as related to being efficient and effective while productivity deals with things

involving quantity and quality, output and input.

“Companies must realize what to innovate and how it must be done, to the least, soon enough for them not to be left behind”, Panem said. “Productivity matters because it is crucial for potential growth. To innovate must be in the mind-set of the entire organization,” he added.

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