

# Chapter 15

## The Green 5–S Model for Organisational Learning and Development

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### ABSTRACT

*Riding on his Total Learning Organisation (TLO), an ice-breaking paper published in The Learning Organisation, Ho (1999) has a chance to test out the model in a number of firms in HKSAR, China and Malaysia, based on his proprietary 5-S Practice, which he developed in Malaysia/HK/UK/China since the 1990s. Supported by various government bodies, Ho (2012) has used his 50-point 5-S Checklist for training and consultancy in no less than 10 countries with over 50,000 persons from over 1,000 organizations worldwide. From his observation and experience, in this chapter a powerful learning model for innovation in organizations is developed through what he defined in 1999 as the TLO. One significant finding is that in order to ensure effective knowledge transfer and organizational development, organizations should consider using a simple and useful tool such as the 5-S Practice as a seed to encourage learning and innovation. His practical experience is also shared in this chapter.*

### INTRODUCTION

Porter (1980) advocated Sustainable Development as one of the most important factors for organizational successes. Over the past two decades, his 5-force model (Customer, Supplier, New Entrant, Substitute & Rivalry) has been considered as the ‘bible’ in explaining the competitive scenario for businesses. However, during his era, oil crisis and financial tsunami were not that significant. Since the beginning 2008, the oil price has soared to

US\$148/barrel. This calls for the pressing need for LEAN, the most important word for any organizations in the contemporary world. By now, the oil crisis seems to have been over. Unfortunately, it has ignited the September 2008 Financial Tsunami (Chan, 2008), a much bigger problem than the oil crisis which we can live with. The American financial crisis has sent shockwaves throughout Asia as governments, banks and corporations scramble to cope with plunging share prices, international financial turmoil and the prospects

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Figure 1. The Green 5-S learning model (G5SLM)

### Green 5-S Learning Model (G5SLM) \*:

$$\mathbf{G5S^* = 5-S^* + L5S^* \rightarrow (ISO\ 9000/14001 + OHSAS\ 18001 + 6-\sigma) \rightarrow APBEST^*}$$

\* Developed by the Ho (1994)

- 5-S** = Structurise, Systematise, Sanitise, Standardise & Self-discipline [ www.hk5sa.com ]
  - L5S** = Lean 5-S from HK5SA [ www.hk5sa.com ]
  - ISO 9000** = Quality Management System (ISO, 2008)
  - ISO 14001** = Environmental Management System (ISO, 2004)
  - OH 18001** = Occupational Health & Safety Assessment System (OHSAS, 2007)
  - 6-σ** = Can use 5-S as a tool for 6-Sigma [ www.hk5sa.com ]
  - APBEST** = Asia-Pacific Business Excellence Standard Award based on the EQA/BNQA/JDP Criteria [www.apbest.org]
- indicates the sequential relationship between various quality tools and techniques.

of a serious downturn in the US and other major economies. As a result, the aim of this paper is to explore a “Learning Model” to improve competitiveness of firms.

The aim of the Green 5-S Learning Model is to *enable companies to effectively improve Safety, Hygiene, Quality Productivity, Image, Cost, Environment and Speed*. This will give rise to Sustainable Development for the company. The Model is summarized in Figure 1.

## BACKGROUND

With the benefit of hind-sight from the 1997 and 2008 financial tsunami, what are the lessons we can learn from these adversarial changes and how can we make things change for the better? Would the learning organisation have a role to play in the economic recovery and the improvement of business performance? In order to address these questions effectively, we need to identify the pertinent meaning of the key words: management of change, Total Learning Organisation (TLO), world class performance. Then we shall investigate the intricacy of how these concepts can be

developed to add more value to the successes of organisations.

## Management of Change

There is an old saying: “the only constant is change”. If change is part of our daily life, how can we drive it under our control rather than being driven off by it? Change in organisation would, in the long run, lead to change in the organisational culture. A typical example is the learning organisation, where people are excited in trying out new ideas and recognise that failure is an important part of success. Let us take a step back to look at the traditional strategic change process which can broadly be summarised by five key steps (Ho, 1998):

**Vision => Mission => Behaviour => Action  
=> Culture**

A new paradigm is:

**Action => Behaviour => Mission => Vision  
=> Culture**

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