



PRESS RELEASE

Singapore Manufacturers' Federation and Republic Polytechnic Unveils Singapore's First Training Programme to Boost Silver Productivity

Singapore – October 07, 2011 – Singapore Manufacturers' Federation (SMA) and Republic Polytechnic (RP), today signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to develop Singapore's first training programme dedicated to raise the productivity of mature workers. This training programme, slated to debut in the first quarter of 2012, is estimated to impact over 300,000 mature workers aged 55 and above from the manufacturing and services sectors. This accounts for 15% of the total employed residents in Singapore.

Supported by the Employment and Employability Institute (e2i), this training programme addresses the new re-employment legislation (to be implemented in January 2012). The new re-employment legislation states that all employers will be required to offer re-employment options to eligible employees who reach age 62. In light of this, SMA is championing the "Silver Productivity" concept to assist companies in coping with productivity challenges and the impending influx of mature workers, dubbed the Silver Tsunami.

"RP and SMA complement each other in their collaboration. RP offers extensive expertise in Human Factor Engineering, which highlights the various human capabilities and limits relating to mature workers, and educates managers to redesign systems and processes appropriately for mature workers," said Mr Teo Ser Luck, Minister of State for Trade and Industry. "SMA can help link companies to RP with their extensive network in the manufacturing industry. Such collaborations will benefit the companies, boost the productivity of their mature workers, and has the potential to encourage society to embrace and value the contributions of the ageing population."

Building on the existing partnership between SMA and RP, the three-year MOU paves the way for further collaboration between the two organisations to provide specific training programmes and industry projects for both students and adult learners. RP students will also continue to participate in internships and technical visits to member companies to learn from their best practices.

The training programme consists of four modules which will be developed over the next six months. These modules specialise in training operations managers and human resource personnel to redesign systems and processes to improve workplace performance in the face of the ageing workforce. A module on Human Factors Engineering, an area that RP has extensive expertise in, will be part of the training programme. This module plays an integral role in the education of human capabilities and limitations of an aging workforce. Lab-based training, which studies in detail the ergonomics in the workplace, will also be integrated in the module.

"SMA is committed in our drive for 'Silver Productivity', and in doing so, we will be coming up with the first-ever training programme to boost productivity amongst the mature workers. With the extension of their working lifespan, manufacturing companies will be able to overcome the challenge in manpower shortage, and at the same time, benefit from the valuable work experiences that these mature workers' have over their younger counterparts, to see that manufacturing growth is sustained." said Mr Gwee Seng Kwong, SMA Secretary-General.

“The MOU underscores the commitment of RP and SMA to equip professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to streamline internal operations and increase productivity,” said Mr Yeo Li Pheow, Principal and CEO of Republic Polytechnic. “I am confident that this collaboration between RP and SMA will widen RP’s expertise in the field of supply chain management and productivity while opening doors to more partnerships.”

The MOU signing took place at the Supply Chain and Productivity Cluster Technology Day 2011 hosted by RP. The objective of Supply Chain and Productivity Cluster Technology Day 2011 was to raise awareness of productivity improvement in manufacturing and supply chain management through the various channels, such as industry associations; company case studies and best practices; technology and innovation; training and education; and funding schemes. Guests were given the opportunity to experience the various interesting facilities and technology in RP which will be used as teaching tools for the Human Factor Engineering module. The facilities and technology range from the Sound-Proof room, Neuropsychological Test Battery and the Simulation Software.

Note: Please use “SMA” if an acronym for “Singapore Manufacturers’ Federation” is required. The “a” in “SMA” does NOT stand for “Association”.

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About Republic Polytechnic (www.rp.edu.sg)

Republic Polytechnic (RP) is the first educational institution in Singapore to embrace a Problem-Based Learning approach to nurture innovation and entrepreneurial learning, develop problem-solving process skills and a life-long learning attitude in its students. RP has six schools and one centre, offering 36 courses in Infocomm Technology and Interactive Digital Media, Engineering, Applied Science, Arts, Design and New Media, Sports, Health and Leisure, Events and Hospitality, and Culture and Communication. Its holistic, broad-based curriculum covering culture, enterprise development and cognitive processes, coupled with its engaging and fulfilling campus life outside the classroom including more than 100 extra-mural interest groups across community service, sports, music, art and dance ensures students are ready to play an active and meaningful role in society.

RP’s Centre for Professional development also offers Continuing Education & Training programmes at the certificate and diploma level which are designed to help working adults upgrade their work skills or prepare for career transitions.

RP strives for excellence both in its students and as an institution, and has achieved various international and national accreditations, including ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001, SS540, Singapore Quality Class, People Developer, Innovation Class, and Service Class. For more information, visit www.rp.sg.

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About Singapore Manufacturers' Federation (SMA)

Established since 1932, SMA represents the interest of the Singapore manufacturing community, driving its competitiveness and sustainable growth through serving industry-specific needs.

Supported by 11 industry groups and Centres of Excellence, SMA offers a holistic approach towards enhancing competitiveness of its members. Current membership stands at more than 2,800 corporate members ranging from SMEs to MNCs.

For more information, please visit www.sma.sg.

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