

Upskilling deemed critical for 'green' economy

THE Department of Trade and Industry said upskilling and reskilling the workforce will be instrumental in any effort to sustain investment interest as the Philippines navigates the transition to greener technology.

"We need to stay on top of the game in terms of constantly upskilling and reskilling our labor force especially because there are

skills coming up now that were not present before," Trade Undersecretary Ceferino S. Rodolfo said on the sidelines of the launch of the Green Transition Investment Program (GTIP) in Makati City on Wednesday.

"There is a really a need to upskill our human resource as we transition towards a more sustainable future," he added.

Mr. Rodolfo noted the need for skilled workers for the wind power and solar power industry.

"There are certain key industries that will be important, such as renewable energy. We are focusing on two areas such as offshore wind power and floating solar power. The kind of skills needed to

develop these industries in the Philippines. There is already a base of human talent, but that has to be upskilled," Mr. Rodolfo said.

Mr. Rodolfo added that talent remains a key selling point when promoting the Philippines for foreign investment.

"Wherever we go in promoting the Philippines, there is re-

ally one thing that resonates with investors and that is the presence of talent. That has been a big factor for companies to locate in the country and for companies in other countries to recruit Filipino talent."

"The Philippines is positioning itself for sustainability, innovation-driven, and creativity for the region. These open up

investment opportunities on very important sectors such as renewable energy, data centers, and high-tech industries," he added.

— **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

FULL STORY

Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link bit.ly/Upskilling060223

OPINION Employee discipline without punishment

repeat offenders? Given the choice, would you rather fire violators or manage them?

The survey can also give you an idea of the number of violators currently working, and whether they pose challenges that are difficult to resolve. What are these challenges? How are you managing them? And so on.

The result of this survey should help you understand the advantages and disadvantages of compassionate justice. Before conducting the survey, obtain the approval of your CEO so your efforts do not go to waste. The idea is to get as much information about the workings of compassionate justice so you can fully appreciate the logic of the system.

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Speaking of family members, consider a positive discipline system in lieu of compassionate justice. If you don't want to directly challenge the CEO, then you might want to offer "positive discipline" to manage troublemakers. It's a type of progressive disciplinary system that seeks to

go the extra mile before penalties are imposed, depending on the nature of the offense:

One, double the number of verbal warnings.

If an employee has violated the tardiness policy, for instance, the line leader must immediately talk to the violator, first thing in the morning. This verbal warning must be documented by a formal memo stating that the employee was reprimanded. Such a memo must be signed by both line leader and worker. This memo establishes the fact that a reprimand has been issued.

The same procedure must be repeated in the event of another such violation, with a more strongly worded memo. Such reprimands are typically delivered in the afternoon or one hour before the close of office hours. The reprimand must also include an offer of assistance from the boss to discover the challenges the worker is facing in and out of the workplace.

Two, ask the violator to take a paid leave of absence. Instead of penalizing a violator with suspension without pay, offer three to five days of paid time off, or even longer depending on

the circumstances. Deduct such leave from the violator's vacation and sick leave credits.

This "penalty" is an opportunity for self-reflection. The ideal outcome is that the violator understands the consequences of their behavior on their career and on the organization. This type of leave is considered effective, especially if the organization allows the cash conversion of unused leave credits at the end of the year.

Three, allow the violator to resign rather than be dismissed. This option is preferable to going through the trouble of the substantive and procedural due process that accompanies dismissals. This can replace the extremely paternalistic approach of demoting a violator, which tends to be more challenging for line leaders.

The sooner the violator agrees to resign, require them to submit the resignation letter within one hour after the discussion with HR and the department boss. If the violator fails to submit the resignation letter at the agreed time, then prepare an incident report, issue a notice to explain, and all the other steps required to comply with due process requirements.

Four, require all line leaders to report all violations to HR. There's a saying — "Trust, but

verify." HR must be informed of all employee violations, big or small, so it can take the necessary action, including the issuance of memo-circulars reminding all workers and their managers of certain policies that are frequently violated.

MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

As a new HR manager, this is your best chance to prove your worth to the CEO, middle managers, and workers. Consult with them extensively. Make sure any move towards positive discipline is consistent with the company's mission, vision and value (MVV) statements.

If compassionate justice is inconsistent with the MVV, make an appeal to reason with the CEO. Many CEOs would not hesitate to agree with positive discipline if you can prove it to be superior to compassionate justice.

Join REY ELBO's June 23, 2023 Benchmarking Event on Managing Problem Employees at Dusit Thani Hotel. For details, chat with him via Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or e-mail elbonomics@gmail.com or via <https://reyelbo.com>



I'm the newly hired human resource (HR) manager with a family-owned business, which is managed by an extremely paternalistic owner. Whenever a worker commits a violation, the 76-year-old chief executive officer (CEO) will not approve punishment, even for those committing major offenses like pilferage. The CEO believes in compassionate justice, preferring to demote violators to firing them. The middle managers, including the CEO's two sons, have no choice except to follow their father's dictates. About 30% of our workforce are the CEO's distant family members. How should I manage this situation? — Rainbow Connection.

You have no choice but to follow the CEO's "compassionate justice system." It's his business, unless you can prove that such a system is doing more harm than good to the organization. Take the pulse of all line leaders, supervisors and managers on their perceptions of the system's effectiveness.

Try using free survey software. You can ask questions about the compassionate justice system, and how effective it is in instilling employee discipline. Does the system produce

Adoption, from SI/1

"Not everyone can just decide to adopt," Ms. Fernandez said. "There are many presumptions on adoption. People think they can go to an adoption center and pick out a child. That's not how it works."

Parents must attend seminars and orientations and meet all qualifications. They must be at least 15 years older than the child.

One challenge faced by adopted children is being integrated into the new family unit.

"It can be as simple as adjusting to a new kind of cooking or a new room, or as complex as learning how to call the parents 'mom' and 'dad,'" Ms. Suson said. "For adoptees with biological children, their challenges may be in helping their children integrate as a family while celebrating the diversity of how they joined it."

"Despite stereotypes in local media that adoptees feel like outcasts in their adoptive families, they can and do feel loved, cared for and accepted depending on how well their parents and communities raise them," she added.

Older children are less likely to be adopted.

"In the Philippines, most parents want to adopt a younger child," Ms. Fernandez said. "It's hard when they're older. When the child is 16 years old, the chances of them being adopted are slim."

Paulo Roman A. Castro, Jr., an orthopedic surgeon and medical director at the Pasig City General Hospital, who is also Ms. Castro's husband, said the adoption process is extensive, especially amid a coronavirus pandemic.

"Due to the pandemic and with physical restrictions, the documents were presented as judicial affidavits, with an initial hearing via Zoom," he said in a Messenger chat. "The schedules for subsequent hearings were discussed at this meeting, which stretched to more than a year."

They hired a lawyer specializing in family law. They also had to meet financial and psychological requirements and pass national agency clearances. The documents were submitted to a regional trial court in Pasig City that specializes in family matters in 2021.

FOR SALE

Strict adoption measures are meant to prevent child trafficking and abuse. Last year, the Social Welfare department reported cases of illegal adoption on social media.

Ex-Senator Leila M. de Lima in 2019 sought an investigation of infants being sold both online and offline for as little as P300 each across Southeast Asia, including the Philippines.

In the Philippines, babies were being sold outside public hospitals and in slums, she said, citing news reports. Poverty remained to be one of the major drivers of child trafficking, she added.

Still, the government is trying to make the adoption process less taxing.

Last year, ex-President Rodrigo R. Duterte signed into law a measure that made domestic adoption an administrative process instead of a judicial one, making it more efficient.

Before this, adoption was separated into two phases — the pre-adoption administrative phase and finalization of adoption, the judicial phase, which is costly and lengthy, National Authority for Child Care (NACC) Social Welfare Officer Imelda R. Ronda said in an e-mail.

If all requirements are completed on time, the NACC could issue an adoption order in six to nine months.

"It is important that the processes for adopters are made simple, swift, and inexpensive," she said. "This is a significant progress because it encourages more adopters to go through the legal adoption process."

Carmela Andal-Castro, a child protection advocate, family lawyer and member of the NACC panel of



ZACHERY PERRY/UNSPASH

experts, said the law speeds up the domestic adoption process.

"It is a welcome development in the adoption and child protection space," she said in an e-mail. "Domestic adoptions are now administrative and therefore need not be filed and adjudicated in courts. This means that the steps and expected timelines are now made simpler and faster."

Prospective adoptive parents can save time and resources, she said, adding that it's also for the best interest of the child. "The sooner a child is matched to adoptive parents, the sooner the adjustment process can begin for both the child and their new family."

Ms. Fernandez said that the law would encourage more Filipinos to adopt locally. "Making the process administrative would mean encouraging more local families to adopt children in the Philippines, which would maintain the cultural background of the child. It will be an easier adjustment."

Ms. Suson said protection measures have not changed.

These are meant to protect the child from neglect and potentially abusive parents, Ms. Ronda said. "Otherwise, it would be excruciating and frustrating especially on the part of the child if the placement with the adopter is disrupted. We also would like to ensure that both the child and adoptive families are psychologically prepared as they navigate through this new life of having each other."

Ms. Fernandez said there are still many children who have been "illegally adopted" — those whose birth certificates were faked. "It's not fair to the child," she said, adding that the law now grants amnesty to parents guilty of faking their child's birth certificate.

Ms. Suson said the process of certifying children as available for adoption should be streamlined. "One reason many parents who have diligently completed all documentary requirements still face delays is because they wait for a match."

"The process needs to be fast-tracked. With so many documents to go through, the child usually has already grown up with us. The shorter the child's stay with us, the better," Ms. Fernandez said.

Ms. Castro, the foster parent, said social workers need to be better trained.

"A number of social workers were assigned to us through the years, and the experience becomes very subjective — based on the biases and mood of the social worker," she said. "Some had a heart for adoption, the adoptive parents and the adoptee; one had an arrogant and nonchalant approach."

She also said some documents, including the founding certificate, are "detached from describing human beings."

In the case of Paulo, who is turning eight in July, his founding certificate narrates the inhuman conditions of how he was abandoned.

"The founding certificate contained what looked like product specifications," Ms. Castro said. That's what I'm so heavy-hearted about because my son does not deserve a permanent document describing him that way because it was but a fleeting moment of his existence. The birth certificate with us as parents is the only document that should be existing."

M D W D.M. WENCESLAO AND ASSOCIATES, INCORPORATED

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of **D.M. WENCESLAO & ASSOCIATES, INCORPORATED ("DMWAI" or "Company")** will be conducted by remote communication on **June 23, 2023 at 9 o'clock in the morning** with the following agenda:

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Certification of Notice and Quorum
3. Approval of Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Stockholders held on June 23, 2022
4. Report of the Chief Executive Officer
5. Election of Directors
6. Appointment of the Company's External Auditor for the year 2023
7. Ratification of all Previous Acts and Resolutions of the Board of Directors, Management, and all Committees from June 24, 2022 up to June 23, 2023
8. Consideration of such other matters as may properly come during the meeting
9. Adjournment

Only stockholders of record at the close of business hours on May 12, 2023 are entitled to notice of, and to vote at this meeting.

There will be no physical meeting. Given the current circumstances, stockholders may only attend and participate in the meeting by remote communication or by voting through the Presiding Officer of the meeting as proxy. Fully accomplished proxies shall be submitted by email to the Office of the Corporate Secretary at asm2023registration@dmwai.com for inspection, validation, and recording at least seven (7) days before the opening of the annual stockholders' meeting, or on or before June 16, 2023, until 5:00 PM. The Proxy Verification Committee will inspect, examine, and validate the sufficiency of the proxy forms received. We enclose a sample proxy form for your convenience.

Stockholders who intend to attend by remote communication shall inform DMWAI by email to asm2023registration@dmwai.com on or before June 16, 2023, until 5:00 PM. The link to the live webcast of the meeting shall be sent to the email address of the registered stockholder.

Stockholders may vote electronically *in absentia*, subject to validation procedures.

The procedures for participating in the meeting through remote communication and for casting of votes *in absentia* are set forth in the Information Statement.

For the Board of Directors:

ATTY. PAUL MAR M. QUINTO
Corporate Secretary

EXPLANATION OF AGENDA ITEMS

Call to Order

The Chairman will formally open the meeting at approximately 9:00 o'clock in the morning.

Certification of Notice and Quorum (and Rules of Conduct and Procedure)

The Corporate Secretary will certify that written notice for the meeting was duly sent to stockholders and that a quorum exists for the transaction of business.

Pursuant to Sections 57 and 23 of the Revised Corporation Code which allow voting *in absentia* by the stockholders, DMWAI has set up a registration and voting mechanism, which may be availed by the stockholders to register and vote on the matters at the meeting *in absentia*. A stockholder who votes *in absentia* shall be deemed present for purposes of quorum.

Stockholders may attend and participate in the meeting by remote communication. Stockholders who intend to attend and participate by remote communication shall inform DMWAI by email to asm2023registration@dmwai.com on or before **June 16, 2023, until 5:00 PM**, subject to the procedure set in Item 18(b) of the Information Statement which is posted on DMWAI's website.

The following are the rules of conduct and procedures for the meeting:

1. Stockholders may vote by appointing the Presiding Officer of the meeting as proxy, or by electronic voting *in absentia*. Stockholders voting by appointing the Presiding Officer as proxy shall email the duly accomplished proxies for inspection, validation, and recording at least seven (7) days before the opening of the annual stockholders' meeting, or on or before **June 16, 2023 until 5:00pm** to the Office of the Corporate Secretary at asm2023registration@dmwai.com. Stockholders voting *in absentia*, who have previously registered through the registration and voting mechanism provided by DMWAI, may cast their votes electronically at the time provided for in the notice and mechanism.
2. The items in the Agenda for the approval by the stockholders will need the affirmative vote of stockholders representing at least

a majority of the issued and outstanding voting stock voting *in absentia* or voting through the Presiding Officer of the meeting as proxy.

3. Each of the proposed resolutions and/or items in the Agenda will be shown on the screen as the same is taken up at the meeting.
4. Election of directors will be by plurality of votes and every stockholder will be entitled to cumulate his votes.
5. The Proxy Verification Committee will tabulate all votes received and an independent third party will validate the results.
6. The Corporate Secretary shall report the results of voting during the meeting.
7. Stockholders may email to asm2023registration@dmwai.com questions or comments to matters that are relevant and of general concern to them on June 23, 2023 at the time of the Meeting.
8. A link to the recorded webcast of the meeting will be posted on DMWAI's website after the meeting. The recording shall be available for access on DMWAI's website for two (2) weeks after the meeting.
9. Stockholders shall have two weeks from posting of the recorded webcast to raise to DMWAI any issues, clarifications and concerns on the matters arising from meeting conducted.

Approval of Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Stockholders held on June 23, 2022

The minutes of the annual meeting of stockholders held on June 23, 2022 is posted at DMWAI's website, <http://dmwai.com>. Copies of the minutes will also be distributed to the stockholders before the meeting.

A resolution approving the minutes will be presented to the stockholders for approval by the vote of the stockholders representing at least a majority of the outstanding voting stock voting *in absentia* or voting through the Presiding Officer of the meeting as proxy.

Report of the Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Delfin Angelo C. Wenceslao, will deliver a report to the stockholders on the performance of DMWAI in 2022 and the outlook for 2023. The audited financial statements as of December 31, 2022 will be included in the Information Statement to be sent to the stockholders of record at least twenty-one (21) calendar days prior to the meeting.

A resolution noting the report and approving the 2022 audited financial statements will be presented to the stockholders for approval by the affirmative vote of the stockholders representing at least a majority of the outstanding voting stock voting *in absentia* or voting through the Presiding Officer of the meeting as proxy.

Election of Directors

Any stockholder may submit to the Nomination Committee nominations to the Board no later than May 12, 2023. The Nomination Committee will determine whether the nominees for directors, including the nominees for independent directors, have all the qualifications and none of the disqualifications to serve as members of the Board before submitting the nominees for election by the stockholders. The profiles of the nominees to the Board will be included in the Information Statement.

Appointment of External Auditors and Fixing of its Remuneration

The Audit Committee shall endorse to the stockholders the appointment of an external auditor for the ensuing year as well as its remuneration. The profile of the external auditor will be included in the Information Statement.

A resolution for the election of the external auditor and its remuneration will be presented to the stockholders for adoption by the affirmative vote of the stockholders representing a majority of the voting stock voting *in absentia* or voting through the Presiding Officer of the meeting as proxy.

Ratification of all Previous Acts and Resolutions of the Board of Directors, Management and All Committees from June 24, 2022 up to June 23, 2023

The acts and resolutions of the Board of Directors, Management and all Committees of DMWAI were those adopted from June 24, 2022 until June 23, 2023. They include the approval of agreements, projects, investments, treasury-related matters and other matters covered by disclosures to the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Philippine Stock Exchange. The acts of the officers were those taken to implement the resolutions of the Board or its Committees or in the general conduct of business.

A resolution on this agenda item will be presented to the stockholders for approval by the vote of the stockholders representing a majority of the voting stock voting *in absentia* or voting through the Presiding Officer of the meeting as proxy.

Other Matters

The Presiding Officer of the meeting will open the floor for comments and questions by the stockholders. Stockholders may raise other matters or issues that may be properly taken up at the meeting.