

Companies’ role critical in upskilling — DoLE

THE DEPARTMENT of Labor and Employment (DoLE) said on Thursday that it is looking to the private sector to up-skill job seekers.

“It’s important that we see the private sector’s role in ensuring that we have interventions for our workforce, especially for upskilling and reskilling initiatives,” Labor Assistant Secretary Patrick P. Patriwirawan, Jr. told reporters on the sidelines of the National Skills Summit 2025.

He added that current job seekers lack the soft skills as well as communication, teamwork, and time management skills needed to effectively navigate the workplace.

Yu Ming Chin, executive director of Viventis Search Asia, said that the private sector must invest in the skills of its hires.

“You work in a company and the company has to manage the training,” he told reporters. “If we become too dependent on the government their abilities could be lacking.”

He cited the need for analytical skills in the workplace, to improve problem-solving capacity.

Mr. Patriwirawan added: “Hard skills are also something that the DoLE is monitoring because (of the demand for) hard to fill technical skills.”

“This is an important aspect of the labor market. If they are not readily available, it is important that we have interventions and skills training ready,” he said.

The government currently conducts skill and development training through

the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.

“We have an ongoing collaboration with DepEd. We have upcoming job fairs with the senior high school (graduates) to ensure that our K-12 graduates are employable,” he added.

The K-12 (Kindergarten to Grade 12) program added two more years to basic education with the intent of making graduates employable and globally competitive.

Education Secretary Juan Edgardo M. Angara said that DepEd (Department of Education) needs to adjust the curriculum of schools to match the needs of employers, especially in Senior High School programs.



PHILIPPINE STAR/NOEL B. PABALATE

“The tendency is the curriculum won’t match or won’t help a students get a job,” Mr. Angara told reporters.

He added that schools must also integrate digital literacy in the newer curricula so graduates are at home with artificial intelligence (AI).

“Digital literacy is a crucial part of the curriculum and digital literacy is not the only skill for AI. It is important that a student not only knows how to read and write. It is important that he understands what he reads and writes,” Mr. Angara said.

The DepEd is set to implement a new K-12 curriculum in the upcoming school year, featuring the reduction of educational tracks for senior high school to two — academic and technical-professional.

It also cut the number of core subjects to five from 15. The five subjects are Effective Communications, Life Skills, General Mathematics, General Science, and the study of Philippine History and Society. — **Adrian H. Halili**

OPINION

An unhappy worker’s exit interview

I’m resigning due to my poor work relations with my boss. If the human resource (HR) department conducts the exit interview, how should I manage the difficult questions? Should I choose not to participate? Please advise. — Lonely Heart.

A resigning employee may not have an option, especially when the organization makes the exit interview a condition prior to the release of terminal pay, clearance, quit claim, and employment certificate, among other documents. You need to check management policies on that as different organizations have different approaches.

Indeed, when an employee decides to leave, the exit interview often feels like a test — just another company requirement before handing in the ID, laptop, and other documents. But for a resigning worker who is unhappy with their employer, the exit interview presents both a challenge and an opportunity:

My advice would raise some eyebrows. Don’t attempt to burn the bridge with anyone, with HR or management, including your boss. Handle the exit interview professionally without besmirching the reputation of your boss

IN THE WORKPLACE REY ELBO

even if they’re the reason for your departure. This is for your own good.

Badmouthing your boss could cause delay or stop the release of your accrued salary and benefits. Even after your resignation, your boss could attempt to destroy your reputation with prospective employers, assuming that you use the organization as a reference.

Conversely, when handled well, an exit interview can be a platform for meaningful feedback and a dignified conclusion to a difficult chapter. Handled poorly, it can reinforce the very issues that drove your resignation in the first place.

CONSTRUCTIVE MOVES

It’s tempting to let it all out with a vengeance. You’re already leaving, so what’s there to lose? But the goal of an exit interview isn’t to unload frustrations; it’s to provide useful insights professionally. Sharing your experiences can be valuable, but only if done with clarity and composure using the following approach:

One, reframe positively and reasonably. Instead of saying, “My boss was a micromanager” give it a positive twist: “I felt I was over-directed, which limited my ability to take the initiative or solve problems independently.” Hold back; such a statement could boomerang due to your poor performance.

If your silence could be interpreted as a threat, then tell a white lie. Pretend that you’re planning to attend graduate school or attend to an ailing child, spouse, or parent. Of course, your white lie must not contradict the letter and spirit of your resignation letter.

Two, focus on systemic problems. Exit interviews are better appreciated when you help an organization understand its widespread systemic and procedural issues. It’s better than emphasizing the boss’s negative style. It’s better than focusing on isolated incidents like an interpersonal conflict with your boss, which can end up being ignored.

If you want to zero in on the toxic style of your boss, paint a picture that points to a broader trend involving other workers within the same department. Rather than recounting a one-time disagreement, highlight a recurring challenge: “I observed the boss’s indecisive

action in many of standard decisions and special projects.”

Three, offer suggestions, not just criticism. It’s easy to point out what’s broken. It’s difficult, but more valuable if you focus on how, it might be fixed. Constructive suggestions demonstrate goodwill and signal that, despite your frustrations, you want to see the organization succeed.

For example: If you’re seeing lack of coordination among departments, suggest weekly, brief, 15-minute departmental standup meetings following an e-mail to all concerned. It could create better alignment. Even if your suggestions aren’t implemented, you will have successfully shown maturity and professionalism.

Four, define the long-term perspectives. Framing your feedback in terms of what could help the organization or your colleagues in the future makes it easier for HR or top management to listen without becoming defensive. Try saying, “Looking ahead, I believe investing in clearer career progression paths could help retain top talent.”

This shift in tone can make a major difference. It moves the conversation from personal dissatisfaction to

constructive foresight — something decision-makers tend to respect.

CONTINUE TO HOLD BACK

As I said earlier, there are times when giving feedback may not feel safe, productive, or worth the emotional effort. If your trust in your boss is very low, then don’t expect HR to support your concerns. It’s better to limit what you can share. Even a simple, “I prefer not to go into detail,” can raise eyebrows.

Anyway, you are not obligated to share more than you’re comfortable with. An exit interview is not your final judgment of a work relationship. Your priority is securing an honorable discharge and early release of your terminal pay and important documents.

By being tactful and keeping the conversation forward-looking, you maximize your impact while preserving your professional integrity. That’s the best way to close a chapter — with clarity, not regret.

Share your workplace story with REY ELBO for his insights. E-mail elbonomics@gmail.com or DM him on Facebook, LinkedIn, X, or via <https://reyelbo.com>. Anonymity is guaranteed.



Inflation,
from SI/1

“The latest inflation outturn is consistent with the BSP’s assessment of a manageable inflation environment over the policy horizon with a downward revision in baseline inflation forecasts,” the central bank said, noting the continued easing of commodity price pressures.

National Statistician Claire Dennis S. Mapa said the deceleration in the May print was mainly due to the slower annual increment in the index of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels.

The index, which accounted for a 68.4% share to the downtrend during the month, eased to 2.3% in May from 2.9% in April. It was also the top index contributing to May inflation, accounting for a 37.1% share.

Electricity inflation slowed to 2.8% in May from 5.4% a month ago.

After three months of straight hikes, Manila Electric Co. lowered the overall rate for May by P0.7499 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to P12.2628 per kWh from P13.0127 per kWh in April.

Water costs also eased to 5.7% in May from 6.3% in the previous month.

The transport index declined at a faster pace to 2.4% in May from the 2.1% drop a month prior. This as the inflation of passenger transport by sea slowed to 42.4% from 68.8%.

Gasoline prices also slid to 13.2% in May from the 12.4% drop in April, while diesel slipped to 9.3% from the 8.3% drop a month ago.

The restaurants and accommodation services index also decelerated to 2% in May from 2.3% in April.

Meanwhile, the heavily weighted food and nonalcoholic beverages index continued to be a major contributor to inflation during the month, with a 25.7% share of the overall print.

The index was steady at 0.9% in May from April, with food inflation also remaining the same at 0.7%.

Prices of pig meat quickened to 11.9% in May from 10.3% in April. This was the top contributor to the May CPI, contributing 25% or 0.3 percentage point.

Rice inflation remained negative, falling to 12.8% in May from the 10.9% decline a month prior.

“The average (rice) inflation from January to May is -7.7%. So, for the first five months of 2025, it has been negative and there are expectations that it will continue to be negative in the coming months because we see the prices of rice are declining per kilo,” Mr. Mapa added.

Meanwhile, inflation in the National Capital Region (NCR) eased to 1.7% in May

from 2.4% in April. Outside NCR, inflation remained steady at 1.2% in May.

ZERO INFLATION

Meanwhile, inflation for the bottom 30% of income households posted 0.0% inflation in May from 0.1% in April and 5.3% a year ago.

This brought the year-to-date inflation for the bottom 30% to 1%.

Food and nonalcoholic beverages for the bottom 30% dropped to 1.6%, accounting for an 83.6% share. Transport inflation also registered a decline of 1.9%, with an 11.6% share.

“A major contributor was food items, particularly cereals. Rice for the bottom 30% is at -14.7%. So, it was a significant decline,” Mr. Mapa said.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort noted that rice prices comprise the bulk of the bottom 30%’s CPI.

“Since the poorest Filipinos have a bigger budget allocation for rice and other basic necessities, they are the biggest beneficiaries of lower rice prices that they are eligible to avail,” he said.

INFLATION OUTLOOK

At the same time, the BSP said risks to the inflation outlook continue to remain broadly balanced from this year to 2027.

“Upside pressures come from possible increases in transport charges, meat prices, and utility rates,” it said.

“Meanwhile, downside risks are linked to the continuing effects of lower tariffs on rice imports and the expected impact of weaker global demand.”

Department of Economy, Planning, and Development Undersecretary for Policy and Planning Rosemarie G. Edillon is optimistic that inflation will remain within the 2-4% band for the year.

“We remain committed to executing the necessary measures to keep prices low and stable,” she said in a statement.

The government will implement “targeted policies aimed at mitigating inflationary pressures and safeguarding the purchasing power of Filipino families,” she added.

For his part, Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. has said they are working to ensure rice prices remain contained.

“We are expanding the reach of the P20 rice program and are studying a reduction in the suggested retail price for imported rice — the national staple that dominates Filipino tables, especially among the poor,” he said in a statement.

Inflation, SI/9

Jollibee Group

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Stockholders’ Meeting of JOLLIBEE FOODS CORPORATION shall be conducted virtually through <https://asm.jollibeeigroup.com/> on **Friday, June 27, 2025 at 2:00 pm.**

The agenda for the meeting shall be as follows:

- Call to Order;
- Certification by the Corporate Secretary on Notice and Quorum;
- Approval of Minutes of the Annual Stockholders’ Meeting held on June 28, 2024
- Approval of the Annual Report and the Audited Financial Statements as of 31 December 2024;
- Approval and Ratification of Actions by the Board of Directors and Officers of the Corporation since the last Annual Stockholders’ Meeting held on June 28, 2024;
- Election of Board of Directors;
- Appointment of External Auditors;
- Other Matters; and
- Adjournment.

Only stockholders of record as of **May 28, 2025** are entitled to notice of, and to attend and vote at, the meeting.

The Corporation shall conduct the meeting virtually, and stockholders may only attend and participate via remote communication and by voting *in absentia*, electronically or by proxy.

The procedures for participating in the meeting through remote communication and for voting *in absentia* are set forth in the Information Statement and shall also be published in the Corporation’s website at <https://asm.jollibeeigroup.com/>. The deadline for registration to vote *in absentia* shall be on **June 20, 2025.**

Stockholders who will join by proxy shall download and complete the proxy form found in the Corporation’s website at <https://asm.jollibeeigroup.com/> and submit the duly accomplished proxy form via email to corporatesecretary@jollibeeigroup.com no later than 5:00 pm of **June 17, 2025**. Proxies received thereafter shall not be recognized in and for the meeting. **We are not soliciting your proxy.**

Pasig City, Philippines, **May 15, 2025.**

(SGD)

WILLIAM TAN UNTIONG
Corporate Secretary