



Implementation of a Soft Skills Strengthening Program to Improve Employee Performance at BMT UGT Sidogiri Kediri

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Article Info

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Submitted: 2025-08-06

In Reviewed: 2025-08-07

Accepted: 2025-08-12

Available Online : 2025-08-17

Keywords:

work discipline; employee performance; performance-based management, reward and punishment

 <https://doi.org/>

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Cite this as:

Saputra, RH, Djunaedi, I, Marwanto, IH, & Utami, S. (2025). Implementation of a soft skills strengthening program to improve employee performance at BMT UGT Sidogiri Kediri. Multidisciplinary Collaborative Journal for Society, 1(1), 32-41.

Abstract

This community service aims to improve employee performance at BMT UGT Sidogiri Kediri Branch by strengthening a more effective and measurable performance-based management system. The approach used in this community service prioritizes participatory aspects, involving all members of BMT UGT Sidogiri in the decision-making process. This aims to ensure that their needs and aspirations are well accommodated, so they can play a more active role in organizational development. One of the key steps implemented is the integration of employee performance indicators connected to a digital monitoring system. With the implementation of this system, it is expected to increase accuracy and efficiency in the supervisory process, as well as provide more objective and reliable data for more appropriate decision-making. This community service also emphasizes the importance of strengthening a fair and transparent reward and punishment system. With this system, employees will be more motivated to improve their performance, because there are rewards for those who excel and sanctions for those who violate. In addition, leadership training for heads of work units is expected to improve the quality of supervision. Heads of work units who are trained to have empathy-based supervision skills and two-way communication will be able to build more harmonious and productive relationships with team members, as well as improve the supervisory process to be more humane. By implementing these various strategies, BMT UGT Sidogiri, Kediri Branch, can optimize cost management within its cost structure and increase revenue streams. With a more efficient management system, operational errors and omissions can be minimized, allowing for better cost control. At the same time, improved service quality will increase customer satisfaction and increase opportunities for generating higher revenue.

1. Introduction

National development is a continuous process that touches all aspects of national and state life. The main goal of national development, as stated in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution, is to create a just and prosperous society, both materially and spiritually, based on the values of Pancasila. To achieve this goal, real contributions are needed from various sectors, including institutional sectors that manage community economic activities, such as cooperatives, microfinance institutions, and Community-Owned Enterprises. One important instrument in supporting this development is human resources (HR), especially professional and competent workers who are a strategic asset of an institution.(Comedy & Ferianto, 2023)In this competitive modern era, the presence of competent, dedicated employees who are able to keep up with current developments is crucial to the operational success of an institution. Without superior



human resources, an institution's activities will not run effectively and efficiently. Employees are not only task implementers but also the spearhead in maintaining the institution's performance and image in the eyes of the public.(Simamora, 2006)Therefore, increasing capacity and strengthening work discipline values are non-negotiable. Disciplined, effective, and professional employees will create high productivity and drive the achievement of the organization's vision and mission.(Margareta & Desi, 2020; Muliya & Pratiwi, 2024).

One institution that plays a role in community economic development is the BMT (Baitul Maal wat Tamwil) UGT Sidogiri, Kediri Branch. BMT UGT Sidogiri is a sharia financial services cooperative that focuses on empowering the community's economy based on sharia principles. This BMT has a strong national network and is trusted by many micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in managing sharia-based finances. The Kediri Branch itself is located in a strategic area close to the economic centers of the lower-middle class, making it a financial institution that plays a vital role in supporting local economic activity. However, based on observations and initial data obtained internally, BMT UGT Sidogiri, Kediri Branch still faces several challenges, particularly in aspects of work effectiveness and employee discipline. Although most employees demonstrate good awareness and responsibility in carrying out their duties, there are indications of irregularity in terms of time discipline, use of work tools, and compliance with standard work procedures. Several cases show that employees are less consistent in using working time optimally, and technical errors occur in the use of office equipment that can affect the quality of service to members and customers (Komedi & Ferianto, 2023).

2. Problems and Solutions

This problem is not solely due to a lack of individual commitment or ability, but also to a weak monitoring and control system and the suboptimal implementation of performance coaching based on measurable indicators. The current control process is not fully capable of anticipating various forms of deviation or minor violations that can have a cumulative impact on productivity. Furthermore, work procedures are not supported by a robust and consistent documentation and performance evaluation system. Given the importance of work effectiveness and efficiency in supporting Sharia-compliant cooperative services, improvements in human resources are an urgent need.

Geographically, the Kediri Branch of BMT UGT Sidogiri is located in a densely populated urban area with a high level of economic mobility. Socially, the surrounding community has a growing level of Islamic financial literacy, making the institution's presence crucial in assisting and educating the community in managing their finances in accordance with Islamic law. However, from an economic perspective, the challenges of inflation, intense competition between

financial institutions, and the ups and downs of the MSMEs it fosters require this institution to have a solid and professional work team to provide superior and reliable services. Given these conditions, strategic interventions are necessary in the form of mentoring activities focused on improving work effectiveness and strengthening employee discipline. This mentoring can be realized through short training sessions on time management, familiarization with the use of work tools and standard work procedures, and strengthening performance-based control systems. These activities can also be integrated with coaching and mentoring approaches to build a more productive and accountable work culture. Furthermore, regular evaluations of work results and awards for high-performing employees can also be part of a motivational strategy.(Sudiyanto, 2020).

With appropriate intervention, it is hoped that the Kediri Branch of BMT UGT Sidogiri will not only improve the internal quality of the organization but also strengthen its role as a resilient, trustworthy, and professional community economic institution. Improving human resource capacity will provide a strong foundation for facing current economic challenges, while also supporting the grand vision of national development to create just and equitable social welfare..

3. Methods

3.1. Method of Implementation

The program's implementation approach is empowerment-based, prioritizing human resource (HR) capacity development through ongoing training, seminars, and mentoring. The program will utilize participatory methods involving BMT UGT Sidogiri members at every stage to ensure their needs are met and to increase their involvement in decision-making.

3.2. Location and Duration Activity

This activity will be implemented at the BMT UGT Sidogiri Kediri Branch, which serves as the program's implementation center. The program is expected to last six months, beginning in January 2024 and ending in June 2024. Each phase of the program will be implemented in stages, beginning with the development of training materials, followed by training implementation, and evaluation and follow-up.

3.3. Partner Group

The program's partner group includes the management of BMT UGT Sidogiri, Kediri Branch, which will serve as the primary implementer and beneficiary of the training. Additionally, there will be community economic activists and external mentors, consisting of sharia economic practitioners and professionals in organizational management.

3.4. Tools and Media

The tools and media used in this activity include: Training modules developed according to participant needs and covering topics related to organizational management, financial

management, and good governance. A digital platform to support distance learning activities and communication between facilitators and participants. Evaluation tools in the form of questionnaires and surveys to measure changes in members' knowledge and skills after the training.

3.5. Implementation Procedures

The implementation process begins with collecting initial data on the conditions and needs of BMT UGT Sidogiri Kediri Branch members through interviews and surveys. The training program will then be developed based on the identified needs. The training will be conducted through workshops and face-to-face sessions, with ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

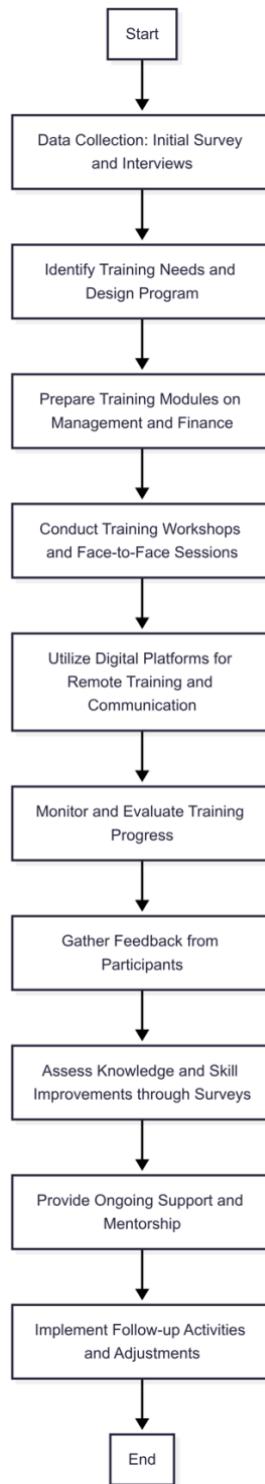


Figure 1 Activity Flow Chart

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Result

4.4.1. Overview of Implemented Activities

This training activity was designed as part of community service aimed at improving the capacity of human resources in the work environment of Bank Jatim Tbk. Tulungagung Branch. The activity focused on understanding and strengthening two main aspects, namely work discipline and controlling, both of which have been proven to contribute significantly to improving employee performance. The series of activities were carried out in a structured manner, starting with data collection through questionnaires and observations, followed by face-to-face training sessions that focused on understanding concepts, case studies, decision-making simulations, and reflection on daily work practices. This activity also became part of the training process as a concrete step in employee career development, in line with strategic efforts to improve human resource quality.

4.4.2. Community Participation and Engagement

All seven members of the relevant work unit population were actively involved in the entire activity process. Participants' enthusiasm was evident in their active participation in completing questionnaires, group discussions, and engaging in interactive sessions. Participants understood that this activity was not merely a research data collection activity, but rather part of a training program to improve their capabilities and prepare them for future work demands. This participatory spirit demonstrated an awareness that training and self-evaluation are key to long-term career development.

4.4.3. Outcomes and Impacts

Both work discipline and control significantly influence employee performance, indicating that nearly half of the variation in employee performance can be explained by these two variables. This finding reinforces the importance of improving discipline and internal control systems as part of career training. Participants demonstrated an increased understanding of performance indicators and recognized the importance of discipline as a foundation for professionalism. Furthermore, this activity encouraged participants to be more open to data-driven and systematic work practices, creating behavioral changes toward more structured and responsible work.

4.4.4. Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

During the implementation of the program, the main challenge was time constraints due to participants' busy daily schedules. To address this, the program was designed in a modular and flexible format and implemented during any available work hours. Another strategy used was a

short, personalized coaching approach during daily activities to ensure the training material was delivered effectively without disrupting employees' core activities.

4.4.5. Community Feedback and Evaluations

Feedback obtained through interviews and open discussions indicated that participants found the training helpful in understanding the importance of integrating discipline and control into their daily work. Several participants stated that the training improved their ability to objectively measure work results and increased accountability for work targets. Evaluations showed that all items in the three variables (discipline, controlling, and performance) were valid and reliable, strengthening participants' confidence in the training's credibility. The training also served as a direct reflection of the importance of key resources within the Business Model Canvas elements.

4.2. Discussion

4.2.1. Discussion and Interpretation

The results of the study indicate that both work discipline and controlling have a significant impact on improving employee performance at BMT UGT Sidogiri Branch Kediri, both simultaneously and partially. These findings suggest that a strong emphasis on discipline and effective controlling systems can drive performance improvements. However, it is important to note that these factors alone are not sufficient. A proactive work culture that encourages employee involvement and initiative must also be fostered. Therefore, integrating performance indicators into a digital monitoring system could enhance the accuracy and efficiency of controlling, making it more transparent and data-driven. Additionally, a balanced system of reward and punishment, alongside leadership training for unit heads to develop empathetic supervision and two-way communication, is essential for creating a more engaged and high-performing workforce.

4.2.2. Sustainability and Follow-Up Plan

The results of the research suggest that the implementation of a performance-based management system requires continuous monitoring and adaptation to remain effective. To ensure sustainability, it is critical to establish a feedback loop for performance data, enabling ongoing improvements and adjustments to strategies. The follow-up plan will include periodic evaluations of the implemented strategies, with a focus on fine-tuning the digital monitoring system and reinforcing leadership development programs(Lidiawan et al., 2023). Banks and fintechs are essential in improving the financial management and risk capabilities of MSMEs. Providing training and guidance on risk management, coupled with the development of effective monitoring systems, will help detect and mitigate potential financial risks.

Strengthening collaborations with MSMEs to develop environmentally friendly products, such as recycled and bio-based items, will also be a critical factor in achieving sustainable economic growth. Adopting climate change strategies and addressing financial system risks in the banking industry can significantly reduce the adverse effects of climate change and create a more sustainable financial system(Lidiawan et al., 2024). The commitment of banks and fintechs to these strategies, along with the efficient use of resources and technology, will help foster a prosperous, low-carbon economy. Public awareness campaigns are essential in encouraging sustainable consumption and saving practices, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable future. With strong cooperation between banks, fintechs, and MSMEs, there is a real opportunity to create a sustainable economic ecosystem that not only promotes product innovation but also strengthens financial stability, addresses climate change challenges, and fosters a more sustainable economy in East Java(Laely & Lidiawan, 2024). Additionally, the rewards and punishments system should be revisited regularly to maintain fairness and motivate employees effectively. A clear communication plan will be introduced to ensure that all staff are informed and engaged with the evolving performance management system. This will be supported by regular workshops and training sessions, which will empower employees at all levels to contribute to the organization's success.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Summary of Key Activities and Achievements

The study successfully identified key factors influencing employee performance at BMT UGT Sidogiri Branch Kediri, including work discipline and controlling. It highlighted the need for a performance-based management system that incorporates both monitoring and proactive cultural development. The integration of digital tools for performance tracking and the emphasis on leadership training were key recommendations derived from the research.

5.2. Impact on the Community or Target Group

This study has the potential to positively impact both employees and the organization as a whole. By improving employee performance through better work discipline and controlling systems, BMT UGT Sidogiri Kediri Branch can improve its service delivery and operational efficiency, which will ultimately benefit the community it serves. In the long term, these improvements will help achieve the organization's strategic goals and foster a more sustainable and productive work environment.

5.3. Challenges and Lessons Learned

The main challenge faced during this study was the need to balance monitoring and controlling with fostering a positive and proactive work culture. While discipline and controlling

are crucial for performance, they must be implemented in a way that does not negatively impact employee morale. A key lesson learned was the importance of integrating both technical systems (digital tools) and human elements (leadership and communication) to create a more holistic approach to performance improvement.

5.4. Recommendations and Follow-Up Plans

Continuously refine the digital monitoring system and performance indicators to ensure accurate tracking and analysis. Provide ongoing training for unit heads to improve their supervisory skills, focusing on empathy and two-way communication. Regularly review and update the reward system to ensure it remains fair and motivating for employees.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None

Acknowledgment

Thanks are also extended to the Master of Management Postgraduate Program, Kadiri University, for the support and facilitation provided during the implementation process of activities which are part of the thesis output.

Credit authorship contribution statement

Rachmad Hendrawan Saputra contributed to the conceptualization and design of the study, data collection, and analysis. Djunaedi was involved in the development of the methodology and made significant contributions to the interpretation of the results. IGG Heru Marwanto assisted with data collection and statistical analysis, provided input on the discussion and conclusion sections, and contributed to the preparation of the final manuscript. Sasi Utami contributed to the research design, supervised the project, and provided insights into the theoretical framework.

Data Availability Statement

None.

Funding

There is no funding to report for this paper.

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