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**MANAGERIAL COACHING TO IMPROVE ON ORGANIZATIONAL
PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF A MULTINATIONAL
COMPANY**

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ABSTRACT

BlastOne Malaysia Sdn Bhd, a multinational company incorporated in Malaysia is struggling to meet its organizational goals and objectives in the past few years; such as yearly sales target, profitability, staff turnover rate, product quality and customer satisfaction. This study aims to address the reasons behind the failure of the company in meeting its goals and objectives from the internal perspective focusing on its employees. Then, the study also aims to recommend the appropriate strategies and actions to be undertaken by the company in addressing these related issues. This study involves a detailed analysis of the business competitiveness of BlastOne Malaysia Sdn Bhd, based on the RBV Model (Resource-Based View), the I/O Model (Industrial Organization) and finally the SWOT Analysis. The findings revealed certain visible weaknesses in the competencies of the team members regarding their ability in goal setting and goal accomplishment. The findings also suggested that the team members are too focused on their daily problems and in doing so, failed to establish a positive behaviour to have a solution-focused mentality. As such, their inclinations toward the problem instead of the solution itself, has indirectly created a sense of demotivation amongst the employees. In countering the situation from the internal perspective and capabilities, this study adopted the GROW Coaching Model that has four main processes: namely Goal, Reality, Options and Will. The two key dimensions from the GROW Coaching Model, which are goal setting and solution-focused mentality, have the required elements in managing most of the internal weaknesses highlighted from the analysis done. The adoption of the GROW Coaching Model will prepare the company to be more competitive internally and at the same time, developing a strong coaching culture within the company.

Keywords: Managerial coaching, performance, GROW Coaching Model, competitiveness.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Definition of Coaching

Coaching is defined as a developmental process where a coach will coach another person (coachee/subordinate) to bring out the best performance in that person (Boak & Crabbe, 2019; Collazos et al., 2020; Dahling et al., 2016; Gan et al., 2020; Jones et al., 2018; Jones et al., 2019; McCarthy & Milner, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2019; Wijayati et al., 2020). The adoption of coaching as a leadership programme in the organization is important to train and develop the managers in the organization to be effective coaches that drive for better performance in their subordinates, which in turn will support the organization in achieving the organizational goals and objectives (Matsuo et al., 2020).

ICF (International Coaching Federation) defines coaching as partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential. Sir John Whitmore, a leading figure in the coaching field defines coaching as the process of unlocking people's potential to maximize their own performance. According to him, the best practitioners have mastered both parts of the process; which are imparting knowledge and helping others discover it themselves; and they can artfully do both in different situations.

It is known that leaders are at the core of organizations. However, shocking leadership development statistics show that 71% of companies do not feel their current leaders are able to lead their organization into the future effectively (Cooke, 2015). To combat these statistics, organizations are implementing coaching programs to increase leader effectiveness. Coaching leaders may sound strange, but in a study done on Fortune 1000 companies, 48% of leaders that underwent coaching exhibited an increase in work quality (Fedor, 2023). This led to higher engagement and productivity and improving their effectiveness in leadership roles. Coaching also provides the leaders a platform to motivate and inspire their team (Yuan et al., 2019).

Benefits of Managerial Coaching

There are five (5) key benefits of managerial coaching as described below (Insala, 2019):

Empowerment – Managerial coaching empowers employees to do exceptional work. Employees establish an advantageous relationship with their managers that uncovers hidden strengths and weaknesses within themselves. Goals will be created to enable employees to pinpoint their weaknesses and track their progress. Reflective sessions with a manager empower an employee to fully recognize their improvements and appreciate the work they have done to meet those goals.

New Insight – Employees gain new perspectives on everyday responsibilities from their manager. The manager influences them to step back and reflect when an employee is having a bad day or week, often uncovering a deeper problem. Together, they discover new insights into the employees' reaction by analysing the problem and creating a plan for similar situations in the future.

Free Thinking – Managerial coaching reduces narrow-minded thinking in employees. Managers encourage the employees to open their thought patterns and consider other points of view by asking questions. This benefits the employees by provoking free thoughts and encouraging flexible leadership. The Centre for Management and Organization Effectiveness calls flexible leadership a “business necessity” as it allows for quick, creative, and precise decision making under pressure.

Enhanced Performance – Targeting coaching to an employee’s problem area makes a huge difference in attitude and abilities. Coaching allows the employee to learn and implement new leadership techniques tailored to the employee’s weaknesses. Techniques include the employee avoiding the terms “but,” “no,” or “however” as they accidentally discourage ideas or answering questions with questions as they tend to supply all the ideas for their team. Individuals that were difficult to reach before will respond better to their colleague’s new approaches.

Improved Communication – Coaching enables employees to realize that their communication isn’t always as clear as they think. Employees will highlight areas of communication that need improvement and practice those areas with the manager. Managers also learn on how to communicate with individuals of different personality types, cultures, or ages using their past experiences as examples. Good communication skills allow people to connect with one another. A manager who can guide an individual to communicate effectively will improve their credibility and overall leadership abilities.

Preliminary Study

BlastOne Malaysia is facing challenges in both tangible and intangible expectations. From the tangible perspective, the company has failed to meet the yearly sales targets three (3) years consecutively (2020 to 2022). Further to that, the company has also incurred losses in the last three (3) years from 2020 to 2022.

From the intangible perspective, the company has few worrying problems that needs special attention with both short-term and long-term recovery plans to address all the challenges. Firstly, the staff turnover rate is rather alarming with employees resigning from the company at an average of 22% per year in 2022. Secondly, the incidents of customers dissatisfaction and complaints have also increased in the last two years. Besides encountering difficulty in following-up and meeting their individual key performance indicators consistently, employees are also seen to be incompetent in the decision-making process and problem-solving abilities. The team is not competent and confident in developing their own solutions to most of their daily challenges.

Coaching is now the latest leadership development program for organizations as part of their strategic plan to develop and increase the internal competitiveness of their resources that can support the organizations to be competitive in the marketplace. By creating a coaching culture within the company (leaders and managers as coaches), BlastOne Malaysia can develop a holistic development plan by improving the skillsets and competencies of the employees in the areas of goal setting and to be solution focused. The goal is to improve on the overall individual performance which will drive for better organizational performance.

2.0 BACKGROUND OF THE COMPANY

BlastOne International (parent company of BlastOne Malaysia Sdn. Bhd.) which is a multinational company with its HQ based in US, has been a leading specialist consultant and supplier to the protective coating and corrosion control industry for over 40 years. Their global experience, combined with continual research enable them to provide knowledgeable technical advice with successful outcomes. Their focus is on heavy industry – for example: pipelines, refineries, chemical plants, power plants, storage tank farms, steel fabricators, water towers, waste-water plants, bridges, heavy infrastructure, offshore, shipyards/marine, just to mention a few.

BlastOne International stand behind their brand claim of Superior Performance. It is something that they define as ‘Performance3’ – the result of combining superior equipment with superior abrasives and superior know-how. In short, it is something that delivers greater cost-efficiencies for their customers. With locations in the USA (HQ), Australia, New Zealand, and Malaysia, BlastOne International strives

to provide excellent advice, the best products and incredible service to its clients globally, with a local touch. Further details on the company are as below:

Website : <http://www.BlastOne.com>
 Industry : Machinery
 Company size : 201-500 employees
 Headquarters : Columbus, Ohio, US
 Type : Privately Held
 Founded : 1975
 Specialties : Corrosion Consultant, Abrasive Blasting Consultant, Coating Consultant, Painting Project Management, Coating Inspection Equipment, Abrasive Blasting Equipment, Blast Rooms, Spray Painting Equipment, Sandblasting Abrasive Supplier, Rental Equipment, and Spray Booths.

The core values and corporate values of BlastOne are as below:

Core Values

“At BlastOne, we do what it takes, but we only hire the best.
 We hire people who will live and breathe our core values in everyday life.”

Corporate Values

BlastOne’s corporate values include Humility and Passion.
 These are employed to not only make us a better business – but also better neighbours.
 Outside the goal of being the most referred corrosion control organizational, we strive to improve the lives of our employees and those in the greater community.

Our internal Employee Engagement Committee identifies, plans, and executes charitable events in and around the areas where we have locations. We assist those in need through financial donations, distribution of materials, employee volunteer events, and assistance with fundraising.

The main competitors of BlastOne International and their revenues (in USD) are shown on **Table 1**.
 (Source: <https://www.owler.com/organizational/blastone#overview>)

Table 1:

BlastOne International (Worldwide) and Competitors

No	Organization	HQ	# of Employees	2015 Revenue (USD)
1	BlastOne International	US	150	\$ 10M
2	AVM Industries	US	80	\$ 23.5M
3	US Coating	US	40	\$ 12M
4	Graco	US	3,700	\$ 1.9M
5	Engineered Abrasives	US	243	\$ 32.7M
6	Clenco	US	135	\$ 39M
7	Burwood Group	US	270	\$ 124M
8	Jad Equipment	US	35	\$ 6M
9	Northern Tool & Equipment	US	1,500	\$ 1.2B
10	Cesco	US	31	\$ 4.2M

In Malaysia, BlastOne Malaysia is proud to be partnering with GMA Garnet’s Malaysian distributor Syawaja, a company which has served the Malaysian market with distinction for more than 25 years. Together, they can blend innovative technologies with local knowledge and service to deliver greater results for their customers. BlastOne Malaysia is providing blasting-related products and services to the oil and gas sector in Malaysia.

The Organizational Chart for BlastOne Malaysia is shown on **Figure 1**.

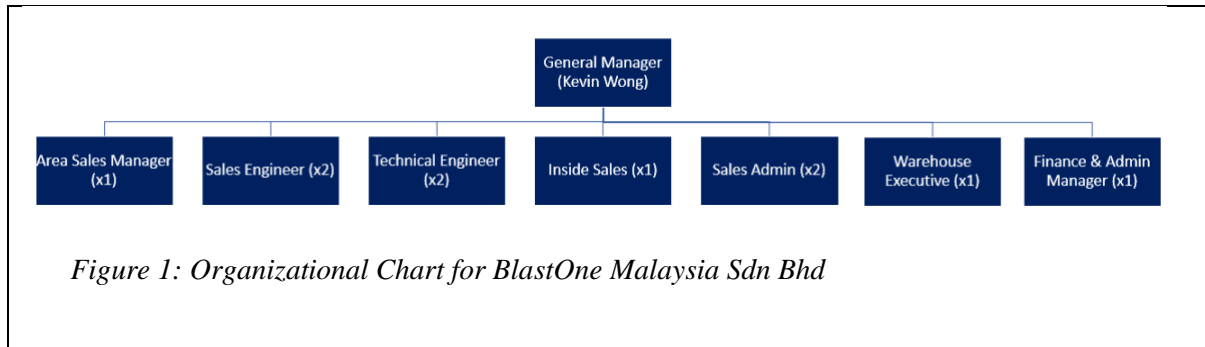


Figure 1 shows the Organizational Chart for BlastOne Malaysia, spearheaded by their General Manager, Mr. Kevin Wong (KW). KW is reporting directly to his boss, MR who is the CEO for Asia Pacific based in Melbourne, Australia. Besides reporting to his CEO, KW is also working together with the founder of their local distributor, Syawaja, led by their President, DYM (Dato Ya Mahmud). KW is managing a lean and flat team of about 10 employees, consisting of sales, technical, warehouse, accounts, and administration. KW has been leading the team for close to three years now and carries along a wealth of industry experience. Being a sales-driven leader, KW himself is taking up the sales leader role as well; apart from managing other functional personnel.

KW understands the philosophy of effective leadership where any business or development plans are better to be shared, discussed, and evaluated with the team members as well. This is important for him to drive for a common vision, set common goals and the expected contributions from the team. The common buy-in is so important for the successful implementation of the desired developmental plan that drives for higher organizational performance.

For this important process, a fact-finding session with KW and the entire team was organized for the purpose to brainstorm and understand on the possible actions needed to achieve what is expected. From this session, feedback was gathered from the ground and was studied and analysed, and ultimately certain common challenges are identified for improvement purposes. With the information obtained on some of these common challenges, then the long-term developmental plan can be developed and formulated based on certain common characteristics and methodologies.

3.0 BUSINESS ISSUES

During the facts-finding and brainstorming session, it is discovered that there are few visible key issues behind the company’s regular failures in meeting its objectives. With all the inputs taken in from the session with KW and his team, combined with some observations, views, past data, further discussions with the Finance team, reference to the yearly management reports, conversations with some of their customers, partners and suppliers, a summary of what they are lacking off is prepared. The objective is to seriously look at the sets of internal capabilities which are missing for them to work on them rigorously. The followings are the key issues discovered within the company.

Key Issues

- i) Lack of goal setting abilities by team members.
- ii) Lack of problem-solving skills.
- iii) Missing of solution-focused competencies amongst team members.
- iv) No proper talent development and retention program in place.
- v) Staff spends too much time trying to attend to repeated problem.
- vi) Lack of creativeness in coming out with alternative solutions.
- vii) Lack of empowerment.
- viii) Ambiguous goal-setting methodology.
- ix) Unclear KPI
- x) Staff overly dependent on KW, lack of decision-making ability.

Impacts to Organizational Performance

Below is the summary of the impacts to the organizational performance because of the key issues discovered as above.

- i) Organization missed out on Sales Targets in the last 3 years; 2020 (-20%), 2021 (-18%) and 2022 (-21%).
- ii) Losses After Tax in the last 3 years; 2020 (-41%), 2021 (-14%) and 2022 (-13%).
- iii) All the sales staff did not hit their individual sales targets in 2022.
- iv) High staff turnover rate in 2022 (average of 22% per year).
- v) Low customer satisfaction level.
- vi) Quality issue (many returned goods).
- vii) Increase in customer complaints.
- viii) Slow in technical response time.

However, below are also some ‘**distinctive capabilities**’ that the team can continue to capitalize on them such as the followings:

- i) Conducive working environment.
- ii) Friendly staff.
- iii) Financially stable organization.
- iv) Innovative products.
- v) Quality and reliable products.
- vi) Local presence with sales and technical support.
- vii) Young and energetic team
- viii) Lean organization

Financial Information

Below are the actual figures for BlastOne Malaysia Sdn Bhd.

Table 2:*Revenue and Profitability (2020-2022)*

	2020	2021	2022
Revenue (Target) - RM	8,000,000	11,500,000	18,000,000
Revenue (Actual) - RM	6,436,755	9,436,888	14,226,798
Revenue Variance (Actual vs Target) - %	-20%	-18%	-21%
Profit/(Loss) After Tax (PAT) - RM	-2,647,753	-1,365,570	-1,886,550
Profit/(Loss) After Tax (PAT) - %	-41%	-14%	-13%

(Source: Suruhanjaya Syarikat Malaysia, SSM)

4.0 PROBLEM STATEMENT

BlastOne Malaysia has failed to meet the organizational performance in the last few years; both in tangible and intangible key performance indicators (KPIs). In tangible performance, the company has struggled to achieve its sales and profitability targets (at company level as well as at individual level for most of the sales team members); where else in intangible performance, the company has performed badly in customer retention rate, employee attrition rate as well as customer satisfaction level.

From the perspective of customers, the company is having difficulty in maintaining some of their key customers because of poor customer relationship management. As for the internal employees, due to the low motivation level as well as the lack of development opportunities, employees are leaving the company at an alarming rate. At the same time, customer complaints are also escalating due to poor technical support and quality issues.

Based on the above issues, the purpose of this case study is to identify the implementation of coaching programs that is based on the issues that have been identified. Specifically, this case study will also identify coaching programs that improve on the overall organizational performance of the studied company. Below are the key issues that the company is facing. Within each issue, a detailed explanation on how coaching can mitigate or even counter on the weaknesses that caused the company in failing to achieve its goals and objectives are also provided.

Issue 1: Lack of goal setting abilities by team members.
Countermeasure: Coaching emphasizes a lot on individual goal-setting practices. As such, with the adoption of coaching, team members can be empowered with the decision-making process in setting, implementing, following up as well as achieving their own goals being set.

Issue 2 : Lack of problem-solving skills.
Countermeasure : Coaching enables team members to shift their paradigm and mindset from focusing solely on the problem, to looking for the alternative solutions and opportunities.

Issue 3 :	Missing of solution-focused competencies amongst team members.
Countermeasure :	Coaching will further develop and strengthen on the competencies of the team members to be more solution-focused in their day-to-day operations; while at the same time, encouraging them not to be looking at the problem as an obstacle all the time.
Issue 4 :	No proper talent development and retention program in place.
Countermeasure :	Coaching itself is a very strong and powerful personal development program for the team members to experience in their own development both at personal as well as professional level; and this is a very strong motivation factor for them to be loyal and grow together with the company in the future.
Issue 5 :	Staff spends too much time trying to attend to repeated problem.
Countermeasure :	Again, coaching will further develop the team members in the critical thinking skills. Instead of repeating the same measures on the same problem, coaching will train the team members to look for an alternative and better solution; so that the same problem could be avoided altogether if possible.
Issue 6 :	Lack of creativeness in coming out with alternative solutions.
Countermeasure :	One of the key ingredients in the coaching process is the intensive practices by team members in their development of innovativeness and creative thinking skills.
Issue 7 :	Lack of empowerment.
Countermeasure :	As coaching is not the same as training, consulting, counselling or mentoring, it provides true flexibility to the team members to be fully empowered in their own actions and decision making.
Issue 8 :	Ambiguous goal-setting methodology.
Countermeasure :	With coaching, as goal setting and solution-focused mentality being the two key elements, the goal-setting methodology will be clear, consistent, and straight-forward.
Issue 9 :	Unclear KPI.
Countermeasure :	Since coaching will develop and drive for clearer, consistent and straight-forward goals, individual key performance indicators (KPIs) will be properly defined, documented, and reviewed accordingly.
Issue 10 :	Staff overly dependent on KW (GM), lack of decision-making ability.
Countermeasure :	With coaching in place, team members will be further developed to be more prepared and empowered in their decision-making process, thus, relieving KW from supporting them in their daily decision making requirements.

5.0 ANALYSIS

For the business consultation on BlastOne Malaysia, the findings revealed two glaring competencies lack. The first area is the lack of capabilities and competencies of the team members in developing, executing, and following through their goals systematically and effectively. The consequences of this

shortfall result in failure of a proper goal setting, failure in tasks prioritization and time management, failures in proper follow-ups, failure in tasks completion and at the end, failure in achieving the desired goals.

The second area is the mentality of the majority team members that focus more on the problem rather than the solution. The consequences of this shortfall result in wrong focus, time wastage, lack of creativeness and ultimately facing the same repetitive pattern of unproductive work cycles. For this case study, three strategic planning models are being adopted, namely the RBV Model (Resource-Based View), the I/O Model (Industry Organization) and finally the SWOT Analysis.

The adoption of both the RBV Model (Resource-Based View) and I/O Model (Industry Organization) in the strategic planning model enables BlastOne Malaysia to study and evaluate on the competitiveness of both facets; internal as well as external. By understanding on the competitiveness of these two facets, the company can understand on its overall competitiveness and from this information, to further develop and adopt for additional resources, skills, tools, or competencies so that the company can be more competitive as a whole and in turn, able to achieve and sustain on the overall organizational performance and objectives.

The RBV Model (Resource-Based View) is a strategic planning model that can help the company to understand better about their current internal resources within the company and at the same time, to enable the company to identify the resources-gap that needs to be looked upon for further improvement for the company to be more competitive internally (Clulow et al., 2007; Nagano, 2020; Ortega et al., 2010; Zubac et al., 2010). This model will identify the available internal strengths and capabilities as well as highlighting the internal weaknesses of the company. From there, resources-gap can be identified and subsequently, the proper development plans can be put in place to meet the organization's objectives (Chung et al., 2019).

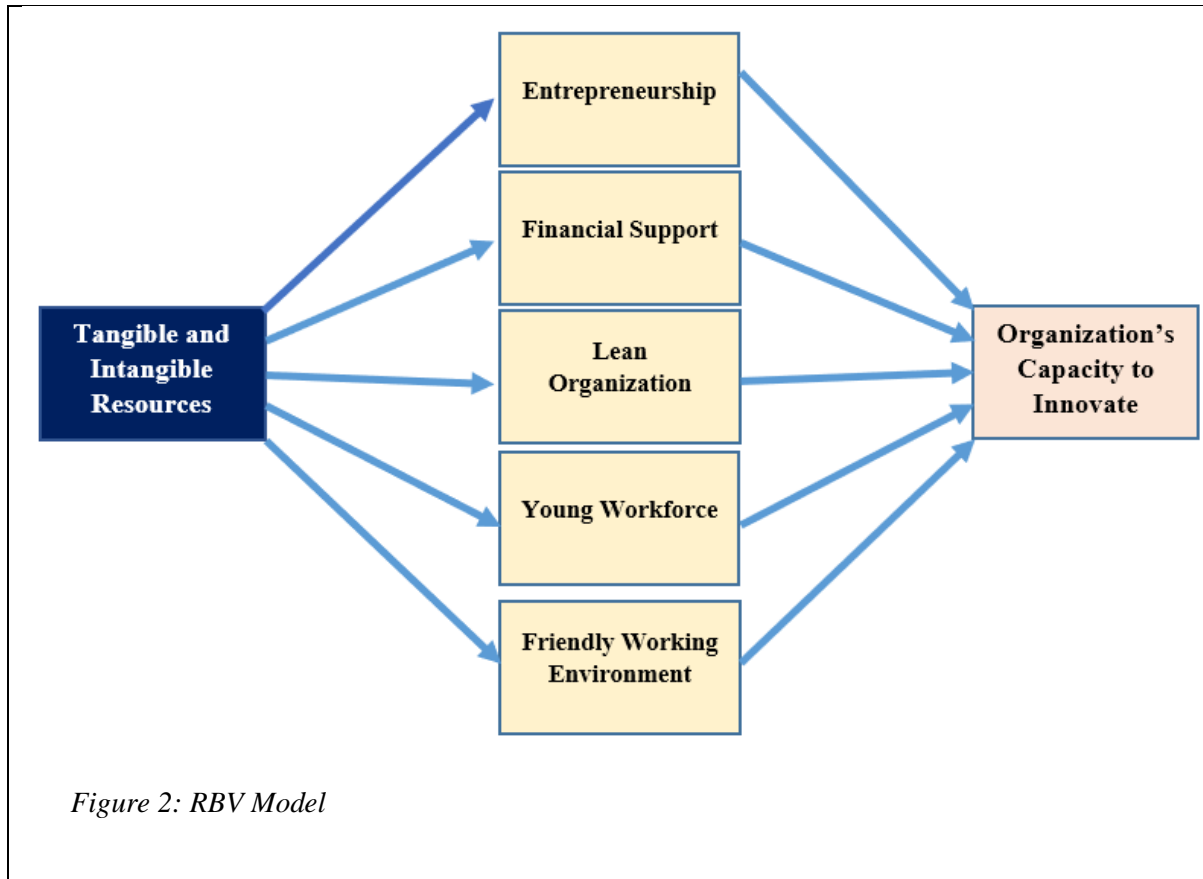
Where else, the I/O Model (Industry Organization) can help the company to study and understand better on the overall market competitiveness of the company within the specific industry they served (Ekelund & Hebert, 1990), and how competitive that BlastOne Malaysia is operating within that specific industry externally. From this study, the company will then be able to evaluate on the internal capabilities needed to be built upon internally to make the company to be more competitive in competing in that industry. Capabilities-gap will then be identified internally that needs to be looked upon and subsequently, the required internal capabilities that is needed to be further developed internally so that the company will ultimately be more competitive in the market.

Finally, with information gathered from both models (RBV Model and I/O Model), the company can utilize this information to study in detailed on the overall organization's competitiveness by adopting the SWOT Analysis Model. SWOT Analysis can help the company to understand better on the internal strengths and weaknesses, while at the same time, to be able to look from the external perspective in relation to opportunities and threats which are important elements for the company to customize and adopt in their internal capability's development initiatives (Vlados, 2019). The company can then put in place and develop on the required internal capabilities that the company desires for them to be more competitive in the marketplace externally.

RBV Model (Resource-Based View)

The RBV Model (Resource-Based View) of the company starts from the concept that a company's performance is determined by the resources it has at its disposal. The way these resources are used and configured enable the company to perform and can provide a distinct competitive advantage. RBV Model is a capability-driven approach in strategic management, and it has a long history.

Figure 2 illustrate the RBV Model that uses capability approach to strategic management. In the process, the distinctive capabilities and strategic thinking derives the strategy formulation, while the synergized capabilities and strategic action derives the strategy implementation. In the Analysis, the RBV Model has supported the findings based on the tangible and intangible resources that the company can leverage on to build on their capacity to innovate as illustrated under **Figure 2**.



Based on the RBV Model Analysis as illustrated above, under the tangible and intangible resources at disposal by the company, the finding is categorized based on five (5) key areas which will provide a competitive edge for the company to innovate and excel in the marketplace. These distinctive capabilities and strengths found within the internal organization are entrepreneurship, financial support, lean organization, young workforce and friendly working environment. BlastOne Malaysia practiced the culture of entrepreneurship in their leadership. This gives KW the authority and flexibility in deciding how best to lead and manage the local team in meeting the organizational objectives.

Secondly, BlastOne as a group, are financially stable and strong. This provides the opportunity to their local outfit in Malaysia to make certain investments in bringing up the internal strengths and capabilities to compete in the market effectively. Thirdly, as the local office is having a very lean and flat structure, it is easier for KW to implement what is needed in improving the internal capabilities further; such as coaching in this aspect. Fourthly, as majority of the team members are young and considered as Gen Y workforce, any initiatives in the introduction of coaching culture within the organization will be easily accepted and adopted by the team. Finally, the conducive working environment will definitely support the adoption of coaching culture within the organization.

Kash et al. (2014) suggested that RBV becomes very relevant especially during the process of resource deployment for the purpose of strategy implementation. Chung et al. (2019) also commented that the

internal RBV-prior-current performance paradigm is positively moderated by the delegated decision-making approach. Toms (2010) agreed that the RBV Model offers a more complete and integrated view of an organization's behaviour. Johnson (2008) concurred that the RBV Model is a potentially powerful tool for analysing the notion of intangible assets and for providing a theory of the growth of the organization.

I/O Model (Industrial Organization)

The case study needs to cover the external factors as well. The I/O Model states that the conditions and competitiveness of the external environment will drive the strategic development and implementation towards the internal requirements of the organization. It basically derives its own internal resources based on the intelligence and information obtained from the external factors (Ekelund & Hebert, 1990).

In comparison with the RBV Model, the I/O Model will identify the external environment and the attractiveness of the industry first, then only will formulate the organization's strategy. The formulation of the strategy will result in the identification of the internal assets and assessment of the internal skills. The implementation of the strategy will then be carried out with the objective to make the organization to be more competitive in the industry. Based on the I/O Model Analysis done, the finding is based on the five (5) key areas:

i) External Environment

The I/O Model (Industrial Organization) view of strategy assumes that the external environment determines the actions a firm can deploy. The implication of the I/O Model for strategic management is that firms identify and seek to operate in environments that provide the best opportunities for competitiveness and profitability. The main concerns of the I/O Model are the four industry structures of perfect competition, monopoly, monopolistic competition, and oligopoly.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the local market has been badly affected where investment on new projects, operations intensity and the overall supply chain activities have seen tremendous drop in the last 24 months. With the announcement by the Malaysian government that the international borders to be opened in early 2023, the company can foresee more activities related to its business and that it will be ramped up gradually. This presents a good opportunity for BlastOne Malaysia to improve in its competitiveness for the fact that BlastOne Malaysia is one of the trusted brands in the local market and the company will leverage on this aspect.

ii) Industry Attractiveness

Industry attractiveness refers to the attractiveness of the selected industry where BlastOne Malaysia is operating at with in-depth information regarding the market opportunity, market sustainability, competitions, profitability, products and services available, future trends, technological advancement as well as the attractiveness of its industry towards the availability of the required resources.

With the stabilization of the crude oil pricing around the world, the oil and gas industry are seen to be gearing up for more projects with further investments to expand on their new projects and at the same time, to focus back on the safety and maintenance aspects of the oil and gas industry. All these activities will drive for more opportunities for BlastOne Malaysia as the company has been very active and focused with the oil and gas industry and its opportunities.

iii) **Strategy Formulation**

The strategic conduct of the firm revolves around policies (such as maximization or optimization of profit levels, growth, sales, and marginal utility), pricing objectives (e.g., cost-plus, marginal cost, entry-detering price, price leadership, and price discrimination), marketing strategies and advertising, and the extent of innovation and technical change. When measuring performance, strategists and economists focus on profitability, efficiency, product quality, and technical progress.

The overall organizational strategy will be based on the findings from the analysis done earlier. In adopting the I/O Model Analysis, the overall perspective of the external environment will be studied and to draw out the required internal skills and distinctive capabilities that the company needs to have internally.

iv) **Skills Assessment**

From the I/O Model Analysis, the internal skills, and strengths that the company possess are being assessed, in comparing with the required capabilities that are needed for the company to be competitive in the market it serves. From there, a gap analysis will need to be carried out to identify on the areas that need improvements. The gap analysis enables the company to identify on the critical skills for the company to develop further so that these new skills can support the company to be more competitive and attractive in the selected industry.

v) **Implementation**

Finally, with all the findings done in identifying the strengths that the company possesses from both the internal and external perspectives, the company will then develop plans to continue in capitalizing on the available strengths. Separately, as for the weaknesses and shortfalls identified from both internally and externally, the company will formulate the overall improvement plan to address on all these weaknesses and shortfalls objectively, systematically and effectively.

SWOT Analysis

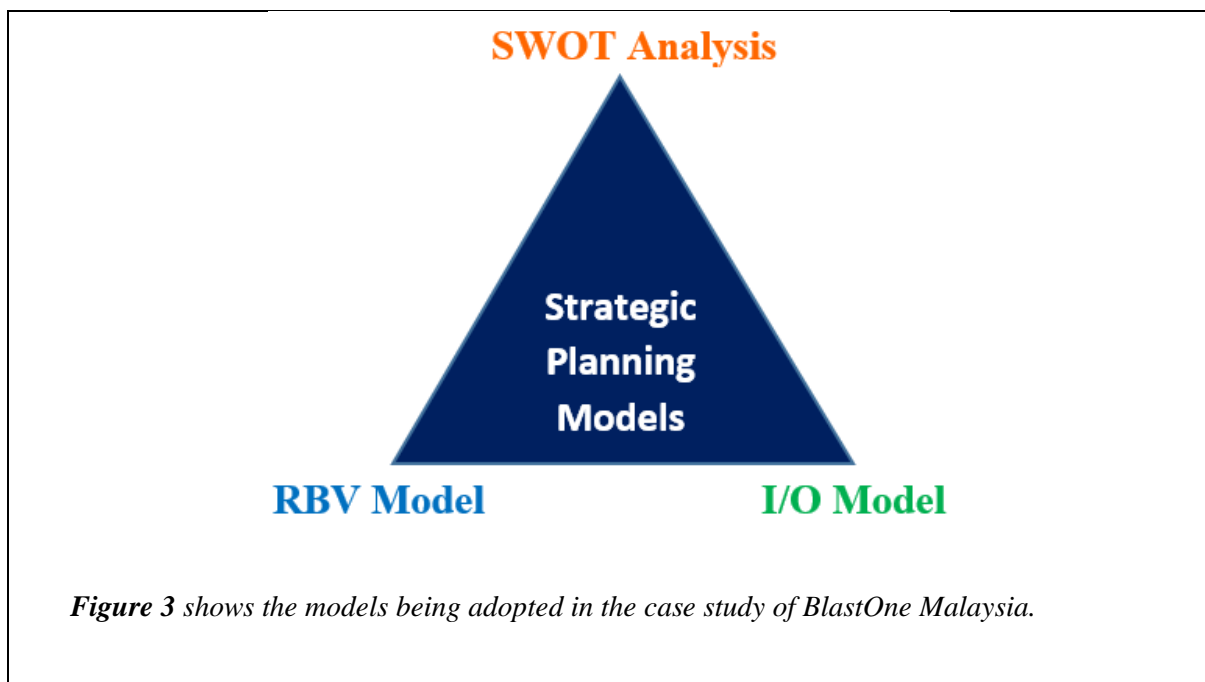


Figure 3 shows the models being adopted in the case study of BlastOne Malaysia.

SWOT analysis is being adopted, which is a framework for identifying and analysing an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats - which is what makes up the SWOT acronym. The primary goal of SWOT analysis is to aid organizations in increasing awareness of the factors in making a business decision. SWOT accomplishes this by analysing the internal and external factors that can impact the viability of a decision. SWOT analysis is mostly used by business entities, but it is also used by non-profit organizations. In supporting the work, some academic resources based on SWOT analysis are being referred. Below are just some of the findings and observations about SWOT analysis by few researchers.

Helms & Nixon (2010) concurred that past research mostly agreed that SWOT analysis has been widely adopted for the purposes of business planning, organizations analysis and formulation of recommended strategic actions. They also claim that SWOT analysis is a common methodology for strategic positioning purpose for countries, industries as well as a common analysis tool for the business students. In fact, they claim that SWOT analysis is also being used extensively as a teaching tool for the trainers, educators, and consultants. Likewise, Vladoš (2019) suggested that SWOT analysis provides a very holistic view to conceptualize the opportunities and threats from the external environment perspective; and at the same time, to define the strengths and weaknesses from the internal environment perspective.

From the facts-finding session with the team and coupled with some observations, the SWOT Analysis for BlastOne Malaysia is highlighted as below. **Figure 4** illustrates the findings from the SWOT Analysis for BlastOne Malaysia.

<u>Strengths:</u>	<u>Weaknesses:</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Very established organizational with close to 50 years in the industry. 2. Local sales and support presence. 3. Lean organization that enables quicker decision making on business-related and administrative matters. 4. Holding certain key petrochemical accounts such as Petronas and Shell. 5. Well accepted products in the market. 6. Staff are young and eager to learn. 7. Conducive working environment. 8. Practice of entrepreneurship in the leadership. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of goal setting abilities by team members. 2. Lack of problem-solving skills. 3. Missing of solution-focused competencies amongst team members. 4. No proper talent development and retention program in place. 5. Staff spends too much time trying to attend to repeated problem. 6. Lack of creativeness in coming out with alternative solutions. 7. Lack of empowerment. 8. Ambiguous goal-setting methodology. 9. Unclear KPI 10. Staff overly dependent on KW, lack of decision-making ability.

<u>Opportunities:</u>	<u>Threats:</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gradual recovery from the post Covid-19 pandemic is causing increased in spending for PPE products. 2. New refinery projects in Petronas Pengerang area. 3. Increase awareness in safety and regular maintenance. 4. A lot of old facilities that needs refurbishment. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highly volatile industry that depends a lot on the maintenance and refurbishment of the oil and gas related equipment and facilities. 2. More products are coming in from China which are at least 20% cheaper. 3. At least 5 other strong competitors based on US origin.

Figure 4: SWOT Analysis for BlastOne Malaysia

Issues brought up by the team members during the facts-finding session such as not meeting sales targets, difficulty in meeting datelines, weak in tasks prioritization, work disruptions, etc are some of the examples that correlates well with the weakness in ‘**goal setting**’.

Where else, consistently focusing on the problems from the external and internal stakeholders also correlates well with the weakness in ‘**solution-focused**’ mentality. The team seems to be struggling to resolve problems all the time instead of exploring for possible options or alternatives or solutions. In fact, these two factors are the exact important elements in the coaching perspective.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon further reviews on the different literatures pertaining to the different strategic planning models such as the RBV Model, I/O Model and SWOT Analysis, a reflection is done on the information received from the team during the facts-finding session. To capitalize on the strengths that BlastOne Malaysia possesses, and the opportunities arise from the external environment, BlastOne Malaysia will continue to practice the spirits of entrepreneurship, empowerment, and work delegation, promoting for positive working culture and work environment, encouraging ideas contribution from the young workforce, fair and competitive reward scheme as well as cultivating a strong teamwork environment.

To overcome on the weaknesses discovered from both the internal and external environments, the company will need to develop a sustainable long-term plan to address all these weaknesses that come from both internally as well as externally. In addressing the threats that come from the external environment, KW will need to work very closely with the HQ to obtain the required funding to support the initiatives in increasing the company’s awareness and branding in the market as well as to invest further in the product quality and reliability. To overcome on the internal weaknesses and shortfalls, KW will also need to focus on the root cause and develop a comprehensive and focused long-term development plan that can address most of the problems and shortfalls that the company displayed.

Managerial coaching is something that can address most of the internal weaknesses found in the company. In fact, coaching is a very powerful tool to develop the company further and to produce visible distinctive capabilities of the company. Also, from preliminary studies and observations, it seems that organizations that instil coaching culture will tend to perform much better than those who do not instil coaching culture within the organization. With all this information, different literatures pertaining to coaching are studied. From the overall studies of the strategic planning models of the RBV Model, I/O Model and SWOT Analysis, the findings indicate five (5) key areas that the company can

adopt in its efforts to address the related issues. In this study, more focus will be placed on the findings of the RBV Model (Resource-Based View).

Firstly, based on the RBV Model (Resource-based View), the culture of entrepreneurship within the company has been discovered to be an intangible resource that can allow the company to innovate and excel in the industry. As coaching has the important element in goal setting, the culture of entrepreneurship will drive towards the successful implementation in the coaching culture as it promotes the employees to be more accountable and responsible in their own goal settings and follow-ups that can lead to the achievement of individual key performance indicators. Achievement of the collective performance of all the employees will naturally drive for better organizational performance.

Secondly, the availability of the strong financial support as the tangible resources from the headquarters and local office in Malaysia presents a good opportunity for BlastOne Malaysia to make an investment in the efforts to promote a strong coaching culture within the company. The investment can involve in the appointment of an external certified coach in coaching the leadership in Malaysia, who is KW himself, as well as in coaching some of the managerial staff or supervisors within the company. This combination of efforts will gradually drive for a stronger coaching culture within the company and will result in better individual work performance which in turn delivering better organizational performance.

Thirdly, by having a lean and flat organization as the intangible resources, the acceptance in the promotion of coaching culture will be better and quicker as besides managerial coaching (manager coaching a subordinate), peer coaching is also possible as the company is not very big and complex. This environment is very encouraging for the adoption of coaching as more and more employees can get into the coaching culture, improve on their individual performance and finally to support the company in the overall organizational performance.

Fourthly, with the young workforce within the company that is considered as an intangible resource, coaching will be easily accepted and understood by this young generation of workers who are hungry for new knowledge and their constant quest for self-development. The key element of solution-focused mentality in coaching suits well with the employees who have been very much bogged down with the mentality of always looking at the problem. By training them to be solution-focused, this young workforce will be in a better position to accept and absorb all the learning in coaching that eventually will improve in their decision-making skills, and ultimately will improve their overall performance individually.

Finally, the fact that BlastOne Malaysia has a very friendly working environment that is considered a valuable intangible resources, managers, employees, and colleagues are more prepared to accept the changes within the company. With the introduction of a coaching culture and the practice of coaching conversations within the company, everyone will be receptive to take on this new change within the company that will drive for better organizational performance at the end.

For BlastOne Malaysia to achieve greater organizational performance, a collective effort from all the individual team members is required in driving for better individual work performance. Based on the **GROW** Coaching Model, two important elements, goal setting and solution-focused mentality are critical factors in driving for better work performance. However, it is also paramount to understand that job satisfaction is so important for the successful adoption of organizational coaching.

The overall increase in the individual work performance will naturally drive for better organizational performance collectively. In this case, coaching is defined as the predictor of work performance. As such, both the goal setting and solution-focused mentality elements which are also mentioned in the **GROW** Coaching Model developed by Sir John Whitmore in the 80s serve as the important factors in enabling the full effect of effective coaching in organizations.

In the context of coaching, a coach is a person who coaches another person; where else a coachee is a person who is being coached. There are many areas within the context of coaching that can be adopted to achieve its objectives. However, for the purpose of this case study, the focus will be given to the **GROW** Coaching Model developed by Sir John Whitmore in the 1980s and the key processes within this model will be used as the reference extensively. The **GROW** Coaching Model is a coaching framework used in conversations, meetings, and everyday leadership to unlock potential and possibilities. It has since become the world's most popular coaching model for problem solving, goal setting, and performance improvement. The **GROW** Coaching Model has four main processes: namely Goal, Reality, Options and Way Forward.

- **Goal** - Where you want to go? (The desired outcomes)
- **Reality** - Where are you now? (The current situation)
- **Option** - What can you do? (The options available)
- **Will** - What will you do? (The way to move forward)

For the element of goal setting, one of the theoretical frameworks to be adopted is based on the Goal Setting Theory of Motivation developed by Edwin A. Locke which has five key dimensions: namely Clarity, Challenge, Commitment, Feedback and Task Complexity. In the late 1960s, Locke's pioneering research into goal setting and motivation gave us our modern understanding of goal setting. In his 1968 article "Toward a Theory of Task Motivation and Incentives," he showed that clear goals and appropriate feedback motivate employees. He went on to highlight that working towards a goal is also a major source of motivation – which, in turn, improves performance. Locke's research showed that the more difficult and specific a goal is, the harder people tend to work to achieve it. In one study, Locke reviewed a decade's worth of laboratory and field studies on the effects of goal setting and performance. He found that, for 90 percent of the time, specific and challenging (but not too challenging) goals led to higher performance than easy, or "do your best," goals.

The second element is the Solution-Focused Brief Therapy Theory (SFBT) which was developed by Steve de Shazer in the late 1970s. Solution-Focused Brief Therapy Theory (SFBT) places focus on a person's present and future circumstances and goals rather than past experiences. In this goal-oriented therapy, the symptoms or issues bringing a person to therapy are typically not targeted. SFBT, which aims to help people experiencing difficulty to find tools they can use immediately to manage symptoms and cope with challenges and it is grounded in the belief that although individuals may already have the skills to create change in their lives, they often need help in identifying and developing those skills. Similarly, SFBT recognizes that people already know, on some level, what change is needed in their lives, and SFBT practitioners work to help the people in their care to clarify and crystalize their goals.

Practitioners of SFBT encourage individuals to imagine the future they desire and then work to collaboratively develop a series of steps that will help them achieve those goals. Therapists can help those in treatment identify a time in life when a current issue was either less detrimental or more manageable and evaluate what factors were different or what solutions may have been present in the past. This form of therapy involves first developing a vision of one's future and then determining how internal abilities can be enhanced to attain the desired outcome. Therapists who practice SFBT attempt to guide people in therapy through the process of recognizing what is working for them, help them explore how best to continue practicing those strategies, and encourage them to acknowledge and celebrate success. In addition, practitioners of SFBT support people in therapy as they experiment with new problem-solving approaches.

An important influencing factor in this **GROW** Coaching Model is the element of job satisfaction and one of the common theories is based on the Motivation-Hygiene Theory developed by Frederick I. Herzberg in 1959, which is also known as the Two-Factor Theory. Herzberg's motivation theory is one of the content theories of motivation. This attempt to explain the factors that motivate individuals

through identifying and satisfying their individual needs, desires and the aims pursued to satisfy these desires. This theory of motivation is known as a two-factor content theory. It is based upon the deceptively simple idea that motivation can be dichotomised into hygiene factors and motivation factors and is often referred to as a 'two need system'. These two separate 'needs' are the need to avoid unpleasantness and discomfort and, at the other end of the motivational scale, the need for personal development. A shortage of the factors that positively encourage employees (the motivating factors) will cause employees to focus on other, non-job related 'hygiene' factors.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The objective in driving for higher organizational performance from the internal capabilities as well as the external opportunities and threats available depends very much on the collective individual performance. With coaching culture in place, the expected results will be better performances by individual employees and as a result collectively, organizational performance will be improved significantly. Within the **GROW** Coaching Model, the two important elements, goal setting and solution-focused mentality are critical factors in driving for better work performance for individuals. However, it is also critical for the company to understand that for the successful implementation of the coaching culture within the company, it is also important that job satisfaction of the employees is well taken care. Without taking care of the soft side of the company, the practice of a strong coaching culture will not produce the expected results.

As such, for this case study, BlastOne Malaysia can adopt the well-established **GROW** Coaching Model that has the two important elements, which are goal setting and solution-focused mentality; coupled with the soft factor of job satisfaction of the employees. BlastOne Malaysia can expect a visible change with the introduction of a coaching culture within the organization, and as a result, overall individual performance will be improved collectively, which in turn will drive for higher organizational performance.

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