

Better skills the way to better wages

KUALA LUMPUR: Multiple-skilled workers are in demand as they are better equipped to boost a company's productivity.

Malaysian Employers Federation executive director Shamsuddin Bardan said these workers could command good salaries but, unfortunately, many workers were not acquiring additional skills as they felt that what they knew was enough.

Shamsuddin said whenever workers' issues were raised by trade unions it was always to demand higher wages, perks and allowances.

"There is more to this especially with the changes in the global economy. Competition is very stiff and we have to improve our competitiveness. It can be done only through an increase in productivity with the help of skilled workers."

He said productivity in Singapore was 4½ times higher than in Malaysia and productivity in the United States and Japan was six to seven times higher than in Malaysia.



Malaysian Employers Federation executive director Shamsuddin Bardan says many choose not to acquire more skills

"The workers' wages are high in these countries because of their high productivity and performance," said Shamsuddin, adding that workers in Malaysia would have to better their level of productivity to catch up.

He said everyone had to work towards making Malaysia a competitive nation with close co-operation between the government, employers and employees. "It must be the national agenda to improve productivity or else we will lose out."