

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents (1) a summary of the study, (2) a summary/discussion of the findings, (3) conclusions, and (4) recommendations for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to find out the strategies for coping with stressful situations caused by the supervisors, colleagues, and customers of Canon Marketing (Thailand)'s employees, to explore the level of stress caused by each group (supervisors, colleagues, and customers), and to find out which group causes the most stress.

The respondents in this survey were 101 Canon Marketing (Thailand)'s employees (23 males and 78 females), consisting of employees from 4 positions (temporary staff, officer, senior officer, and manager). All respondents were asked to complete the questionnaires and return them to the researcher within one week.

The research instrument used in the survey was a questionnaire comprising 58 open-ended and closed-ended questions. The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts: (1) general background information (2) measurement of stress level and (3) stress coping strategies.

The questionnaires were distributed on December 15, 2008 and the respondents were asked to complete and return the questionnaires by December 22, 2008. The data derived from the questionnaire were analyzed by using the SPSS Program (Version 16).

5.2 SUMMARY/DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

The results of the findings can be summarized as follows:

5.2.1 Factors of Stress Caused by 3 Groups of People at Work (Supervisors, Colleagues, and Customers) and Stress level

The findings revealed that the factors from the supervisors caused stress to the employees of Canon Marketing (Thailand) the most, followed by factors from

customers, and factors from colleagues, respectively. From seven factors of stress caused by the supervisors, not receiving recognition when doing a good job and unfair distribution of work were the major causes of stress by the supervisors since 32.7 percent of the employees had severe stress and 33.7 percent had moderate stress from these two factors. As an employee at Canon Marketing (Thailand), the researcher has the opinion that the management team in the organization has to solve these problems as fast as possible because these two factors can destroy job motivation and satisfaction of the employees if they feel that they are unfairly treated. Therefore, the organization should redesign the job performance evaluation process to eliminate stressors and properly match job requirements with the employees' abilities to prevent work underload or overload as suggested by Hellriegel, Slocun, and Woodman (1995) and Schultz (1998) in Chapter Two.

Also, the results indicated that most of the employees had no stress level by the supervisors from harassment/discrimination and had mild stress level from poor management of consultation at 30.7 percent and 35.6 percent, respectively.

In terms of factors of stress caused by the customers, which was ranked second of stressors in the workplace, the employees experienced moderate stress levels from 3 out of seven factors which consisted of contact with unreasonable customers (37.6 percent), giving incomplete details of product, making a mistake (34.7 percent), and dealing with rude customers (40.6 percent). Moreover, always wanting urgent orders, refusing to accept lead time of production, not following the rules and regulations of the company, and not accepting after-sales conditions of the company were factors of stress caused by customers that caused employees mild stress levels at 31.7 percent, 32.7 percent, and 37.6 percent, respectively. The results also indicated that the majority of the employees experienced no stress from customers from not consenting to price adjustment at 31.7 percent.

According to the findings of factors of stress caused by colleagues, for which employees had stress level the least, it was found that most employees experienced mild stress level from five of seven factors as follows:

- Mistakes that always happen and have never been corrected (35.6 percent)
- Involving personal discontent with work issues (38.6 percent)

- Too serious to follow the work process (must follow the work flow step by step) (40.6 percent)
- Poor management of planning, making an overdue problem (35.6 percent)
- No cooperation when urgent orders made (37.6 percent)

The researcher agrees with these results because all employees are dedicated to meet customer's satisfaction which is the company's objectives. Consequently, the staff has to be responsible for the job they are assigned the best they can and help other departments within the organization to achieve the company's goals. Furthermore, this finding had the same results with those of an Independent Study on Strategies for Coping with Stressful Situations Involving People at Work of Thai Airways International Departures and Arrival Staff at Bangkok International Airport conducted by Pornthep Chaimongkol (2004) which revealed that colleagues caused the least stress.

5.2.2 Stress Coping Strategies

The findings showed that the employees of Canon Marketing (Thailand) used problem-focused coping strategy and social support coping strategy **sometimes** to cope with stressful situations caused by their superiors. However, they **rarely** used avoidance coping strategy when encountering stressful situations caused by the superiors.

Similarly, when facing stressful situations caused by the colleagues, most employees used problem-focused coping strategy **sometimes**. In terms of social support coping strategy, they **sometimes** used seeking social support for instrumental reasons strategy (39.6 percent), while 42.6 percent of the respondents **rarely** used seeking social support for emotional reasons strategy. Also, they **rarely** used avoidance coping strategy to cope with stressful situations caused by their colleagues.

Therefore, the employees sometimes used effective ways; problem-focused coping strategy and social support coping strategy, to cope with stressful situations caused by superiors and colleagues. In contrast, they rarely used avoidance coping strategy which is an ineffective way to cope with their stress. The researcher has the

opinion that this is a satisfactory result because the employees used appropriate and effective ways to manage their stress.

The results also revealed that the employees **sometimes** used problem-focused coping strategy when encountering stressful situations caused by the customers. However, they **rarely** used social support coping strategy. In terms of avoidance coping strategy, they **never** used denial strategy and behavioral disengagement strategy at 54.5 percent and 60.4 percent, respectively, whereas 32.7 percent and 47.5 percent of the employees **rarely** used mental disengagement strategy and alcohol and/or drug use strategy to cope with stressful situations caused by customers.

In summary, the employees sometimes used effective ways; problem-focused coping strategy, when facing stressful situations caused by customers. Additionally, they never and rarely used ineffective ways; avoidance coping strategy, to cope with their stress. These are satisfactory results in the opinions of the researcher because the employees used appropriate strategies. However, the respondents rarely used social support coping strategy. Although the employees rarely used social support coping strategy which is effective ways to manage their stress when encountering stressful situations caused by the customers, the researcher has the opinion that these results are still satisfactory because the employees used problem-focused coping strategy instead to cope with their stress which is considered an appropriate strategy as well. Furthermore, using problem-focused coping strategy can directly solve the problems as mentioned by Fincham and Rhodes (1999) in Chapter Two

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

According to the research results, it was found that the supervisors caused stress to the employees of Canon Marketing (Thailand) the most, followed by customers and colleagues, respectively. Not receiving recognition when doing a good job is the only factor that the employees had severe stress level from seven factors of stress caused by the supervisors. To support the findings, as Canon Marketing (Thailand) is the traditional company, this means that the organization has a hierarchy system. Therefore, the supervisors are people responsible to assign jobs for their subordinates and evaluate their subordinates' performances. Consequently, all

employees within the organization realize that their career advancement depends on their supervisors' evaluation. This can create stress and anxiety among the staff.

However, the majority of employees are able to deal with stress properly. This could be confirmed by the research results that the employees used effective strategies; problem-focused coping strategy and social support coping strategy, to cope with stressful situations caused by supervisors, colleagues, and customers. On the contrary, they didn't use ineffective strategy; avoidance coping strategy, to manage their stress.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the followings recommendations are made for future research.

5.4.1 Further study should include background variables of the subjects such as sex, age, working years, and working position to compare the results.

5.4.2 The relationship between factors of stress caused by supervisors, colleagues, and customers and coping strategies should be examined in future studies to find out whether the coping strategies relate to stress level.

5.4.3 Further study on other factors of stress and stress coping strategies should be conducted in order to find out the effective ways to solve the employees' stressors and strategy to cope with their stress.