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PROTON
INSPIRING CONNECTIONS

INDUSTRIAL TRAINING REPORT

PERUSAHAAN OTOMOBIL NASIONAL SDN. BHD. (PROTON)

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Tanjung Malim



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Part 1: Preliminary Pages

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

All students who took the Bachelor of Business Administration (Hons.) Finance (BA242) course are required to complete subject MGT666, the code for Internship subject, in order to graduate. Regarding to that subject, I took my industrial training at Proton Sdn. Bhd., Tanjong Malim, Perak. The internship training began on March 1, 2023, and ended on August 15, 2023, for a period of 24 weeks.

Start with the student's profile, followed by the company's profile, which includes name, location, background, vision, mission, objectives, and goals, organizational structure, and product or service. Then continue with Training's reflection in Part 4, followed by SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis with discussion and recommendation on SWOT. Then I closed with a conclusion and a summary of the report I made.

This report focused on the SWOT Analysis that I acquired during my training. For strength, I elaborate on producing an affordable car and a great working environment. For weaknesses, I discuss losing experienced workers and a shortage of manpower. For opportunity, I elaborate on the topic of Penjana Tax Relief and the development of Proton's home-grown Electric Vehicle. Lastly, for threat, I discuss the increase in vehicle prices and the intense rivalry between car brands.

All the observations and any recommendations to the organization are discussed in detail. I have elaborated on Part 6, discussion and recommendation, by discussing how I observe the situation in the company, how it impacts the business, and giving recommendations on how the organization can sustain itself, what action is needed, how to take advantage of opportunities, and ways to deal with threats.

Part 3: Company's Profile

3.1 Name, Location and Background



Figure 1: Proton's Logo

Proton is an abbreviation for Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional in Malay. It is a Malaysian automobile based in Subang Jaya and Shah Alam, Selangor, with its manufacturing factory in Tanjong Malim, Perak.

It all started in 1979, when former Malaysian Prime Minister, Tun Dr. Mahathir had a plan to build a national car. Proton was founded in 1983, and became the nation's pride in the automotive industry. 1985 was a memorable moment in Malaysia's history. The Proton Saga, the country's first national car, was released to the public, and it became Malaysia's favourite. Continuing on their prior success, Proton introduced the Proton Saga Aeroback hatchback model in 1987. Proton became bigger as demand for their automobiles increased, and they were starting to sell vehicles in Brunei, Bangladesh, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and Malta.

Moving forward, Proton decided to go into the European market and promote their vehicles in the United Kingdom. Proton revealed the Saga at the British International Motor Show in 1988, where it received three important awards, two golds and one silver for quality, coachwork, and ergonomics. These vehicles set the record for the "fastest selling new car model ever to enter the United Kingdom". In the 1990s, located in Shah Alam, Malaysia, Proton established a Transmission Assembly plant as they were constantly striving to improve their technological capabilities.

Driving into the twenty-first century, in 2003, Proton built the 1,280-acre Tanjong Malim Manufacturing Plant and started the production of the next generation of Proton. Proton also presented its newly developed prototype CamPro engine at the Lotus Factory in Norwich, England, around the same time. This Proton's CamPro engine marked its formal introduction in 2004, when it was launched in the PROTON Gen-2 vehicles.

With the launch of the Proton Exora in 2009, Proton garnered even more recognition and curiosity for their vehicles. It was their first attempt at the Multi-Purpose Vehicle (MVP) market. The Exora, Malaysia's first seven-seater car, quickly became a consumer favourite due to its excellent value and functionality. Continuing its history in 2013, Proton released the Proton Preve and received a 5-star safety rating by the Australian New Car Assessment Programme (ANCAP). By 2014, PROTON was progressively becoming renowned as the vehicle manufacturer supporting the move to safer vehicles after they received two more 5 stars for safety rating for the Proton Suprima S and Proton Iriz. Because of their recent success in obtaining 5-star safety ratings for their automobiles, Proton formed partnerships and cooperation with Honda and Suzuki Motor Corporation Japan. This allowed them to introduce four new vehicles in 2016 and reclaim a sizable portion of their market share.

With Proton seeking a worldwide automobile partner to help develop Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamed's vision and carry Proton to new heights, Geely (Zhejiang Geely Holding Group Co., Ltd.) won the bid to acquire a 49.9% interest in PROTON in 2017. This collaboration heralded a new era for Proton and their vehicles, with the company's first SUV debuting in Malaysia in 2018. Proton decided to launch a new eye-catching logo in 2019, which is shown in figure 1 and can be seen on our Proton vehicles. This logo represents the pride and positive traits that have become synonymous with Proton over the years. After the Proton X50 and X70, Proton X90, the company's long-awaited mild-hybrid electric vehicle (MHEV) model, was revealed today to Malaysian media at the company's modelling studio in Shah Alam.

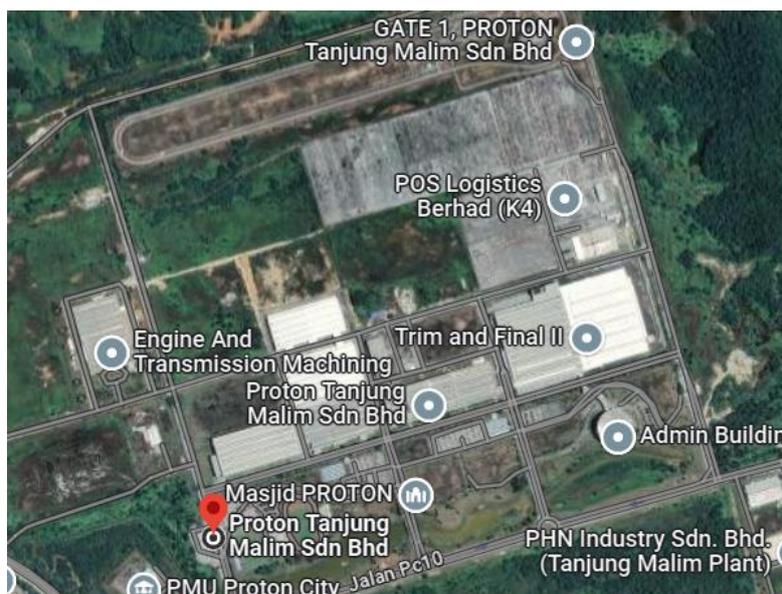


Figure 2: Location of Proton Tanjung Malim.

3.2 Vision and Mission, Objective, Goal

3.2.1 Vision

“Inspiring Lifestyle Experiences”

Offering new experiences and enhancing lifestyle through intelligent technologies.

3.2.2 Mission

“Providing Intelligent and Competitive Automotive Solutions”

Creating user friendly technologies to enhance our automotive solutions that exceed customers’ expectations.

3.2.3 Objective and Goals

At its beginnings, the primary objective of Proton was to bring Malaysia into the 21st century as a nation with advanced industries. Proton has steadfastly pursued building indigenous R&D (Research and Development) and design capabilities while pursuing world-class manufacturing and production standards. Today, they are unquestionably at the vanguard of the automotive industry as a result of their never-ending pursuit of improvement.

Proton has invested billions of ringgits and numerous hours in R&D to stay ahead of the competition. They continually invest in and create unique design and engineering technologies in order to deliver cutting-edge facilities and something new to the industry. Proton now proudly designs and manufactures their very own car platforms, bodies, and engines with comprehensive R&D efforts from conception and development to prototyping, testing and production.

Proton also works on their work culture based on the values of TARI (Teamwork, Achiever, Respect and Integrity) for the company to learn best practices applied since they have aggressively recruited more talent from outside Malaysia. T stands for teamwork, which requires individual strength and empowers teamwork. A stand for Achiever, where Proton strives for excellence through determination and ambition. R stands for respect, which values people for who they are and the ideas and perspectives they bring. I stand for integrity, which means actions that inspire trust and confidence.

3.3 Organizational Structure

The organization structure of HRBP (Human Resource Business Partner) Manufacturing, PONSB (Proton Sdn. Bhd.), and Tanjong Malim is drawn on stages that have a structure compromising well-defined jobs. Each level in the hierarchy carries a different measure of authority and responsibility. Figure 3 below shows a chart of organizational structure in HRBP Manufacturing PONSB Tanjong Malim for the year 2023.

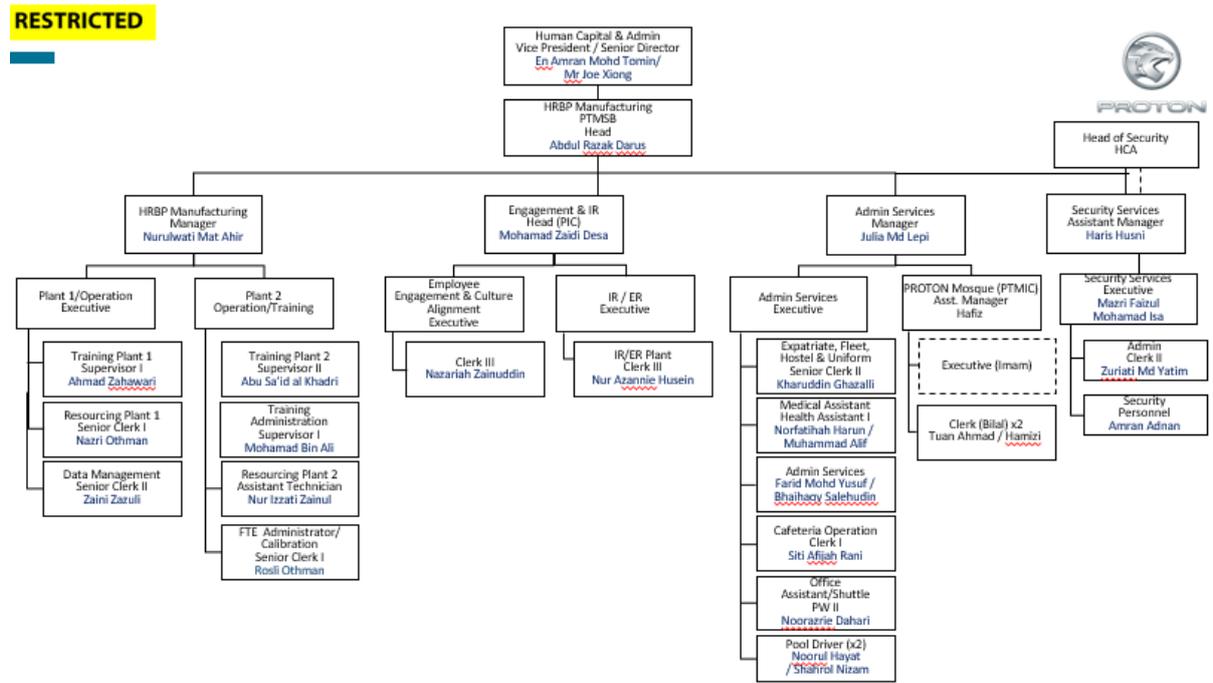


Figure 3: Organization Structure of HRBP Manufacturing PONSB Tanjong Malim for year 2023

Mr. Amran Mohd Tomin, along with Mr. Joe Xiong, the Vice President/Senior Director of HCA (Human Capital and Administration), holds the highest position within the organization. Their leadership oversees various units, each of which plays a vital role in ensuring the efficient functioning of PONSB Tanjong Malim and its employees.

3.4 Product or Services

Proton is a widely recognized Malaysian automaker that is actively engaged in many aspects of the auto industry, including the design, sales, and production of cars. More than 10 models have been produced by Proton. Some of the models are upgraded versions of the previous models. Current models that are still being produced by Proton are shown in Table 1 below.

Product	Details
1. Proton X90 	Launched on : 2023 - Current Body Type : D-segment SUV Capacity : 1.5-litre Horsepower : 177 PS Seats : 6 - 7
2. Proton X50 	Launched on : 2020 - Current Body Type : B-segment SUV Capacity : 1.5-litre Horsepower : 150-177 PS Seats : 5
3. Proton X70 	Launched on : 2018 - Current Body Type : C-segment SUV Capacity : 1.5 – 1.8-litre Horsepower : 177-184 PS Seats : 5
4. Proton Iriz 	Launched on : 2014 - Current Body Type : B-segment hatchback Capacity : 1.3 – 1.6-litre Horsepower : 95 – 109 PS Seats : 5

<p>5. Proton Exora</p> 	<p>Launched on : 2009 - Current</p> <p>Body Type : C-segment MPV</p> <p>Capacity : 1.6-litre</p> <p>Horsepower : 140 PS</p> <p>Seats : 7</p>
<p>6. Proton Persona</p> 	<p>Launched on : 2016 - Current</p> <p>Body Type : B-segment sedan</p> <p>Capacity : 1.6-litre</p> <p>Horsepower : 109 PS</p> <p>Seats : 4 - 5</p>
<p>7. Proton Saga</p> 	<p>Launched on : 2016 - Current</p> <p>Body Type : A-segment sedan</p> <p>Capacity : 1.3-litre</p> <p>Horsepower : 95 PS</p> <p>Seats : 4 - 5</p>

Table 1: Product description

Proton also provides service technicians and advisors with well-trained and qualified certificates for the customer. Customers can walk in or schedule an appointment at a service center nearby. Service to pick up the car at the customer's place is also provided.

Part 4: Training's Reflection

4.1 Training's Duration

Each student enrolled in this Bachelor of Business Administration (Honors) Finance program is required to carry out an internship in the last semester before graduating. In this particular situation, I was able to complete my training within the timeframe specified by UiTM Arau Perlis, which was between 1 March 2023 to 15 August 2023. My training lasted for a total of six months, or twenty-four weeks.

During my internship at Proton Tanjung Malim, working days starts from Monday to Sunday with working hours from 8 am to 5.30 pm. The break time was from 1 pm to 1.45 pm, except on Fridays, when the break time extended from 12:45 to 2:45 p.m.

4.2 Training's Details

During my interview session with Mrs. Nurulwati, she informed me that I would be placed in the Human Capital Administration department, and I am glad to accept the position. On the first day of report duty, I was introduced to the team at HCA (Human Capital Administration) at Proton Tanjong Malim, beginning with the head of the department, manager, Operation Executive team, Operation/Training team, Engagement and IR team, Admin Services Manager team, and Security Services team.

After the introduction session, Mrs. Nurulwati, my supervisor, informed me that I did not have a clear scope of work. I was placed near my supervisor, which is the recruitment team. At first, I did receive any task given by the staff there to help them, and it was great since I learned the job scope from all the HCA team members. Then I got a task from the recruitment team to help them at Stadium Proton Tanjung Malim handle the open interview for the job of production worker. It was challenging since I had to face many people and handle their documents for the interview session. After the interview session, we had to organize the document and separate it for those who qualified and those who did not qualify, before storing the document.

My second task was to work with Mr. Zaidi, and he did ask me to design posters for the upcoming events handled by HCA, such as counter service by Tabung Haji, ASNBN, a briefing on Staff purchasing, and more. I enjoyed assisting Mr. Zaidi because I like creating posters. In addition to designing the poster, I participated in the event organized by Mr. Zaidi's team members. It was a pleasure to work outside the office.

Now, in addition to designing a poster and managing non-executive level recruitment, Mrs. Nurulwati has assigned me to handle executive level recruitment under the guidance of Mrs. Izzati. I had to find the resume and make a summary from it to send to Mrs. Nurulwati. After she screens the resume, I have to send the resume to the respective department, set up the interview session with the candidate, and email them to prepare certain documents needed by Human Resources Proton Tanjung Malim. The first interview went well, but the second interview was difficult to schedule because it involved a higher-level position for the panel position, and I had to accommodate both their time and the time of the other panel.

Another minor task that I have received aside from the ones mentioned above is:

- Filing personal files for new staff documents accordingly.
- Receiving calls.
- Calling staff for a wellness and wellbeing survey.
- Calling a new production worker to report duty.
- Calling the candidate to set a time for the interview session.
- Create an online form using Microsoft Forms or any other necessary form that the training team will use as their report for participant feedback or complaints.

4.3 Training's Gains

Having the opportunity to complete my internship training in a national automotive manufacturing factory was like a dream come true and a valuable experience for me. Working with nice teams also makes me feel grateful. First, through this internship, I was able to develop my soft skills because I was required to communicate with many individuals, especially when answering the phone, where they mostly asked about any vacancy at Proton. At first, it was difficult to give a spontaneous response to the question from the callers, but with guidance from the staff, I can communicate better than on my first day at Proton. Staff at HCA, especially Mrs. Nurulwati, did give me a lot of advice to keep progressing and leaving my comfort zone.

Next, I was instructed to learn on the requirements process. It seemed easy at first, but the more I got involved with it, the more I realized that the recruitment process at Proton has so many phases to go through, especially for the executive position. I have learned to be more cautious when writing emails to candidates and panel of the interview to avoid any miscommunication. In addition, I was taught by Mrs. Izzati about gred, the required experience for each position, the salary range that Proton can negotiate with an employee who passes the interview, and more about the recruiting process, in which I did not participate because it is confidential.

For the external benefits, Proton gave an allowance of RM700 per month to a degree student who was doing an internship here. In addition, Proton also gives RM4 per day for food coupons. That was a great benefit for us interns since we did not have to think about what to eat during lunch. I just spent the coupon at the cafeteria downstairs.

Being in the HCA department was a great experience for me. Aside from the HCA department, I also had the chance to get to know other staff in the manufacturing department and the procurement department. I did realize that many people think human resources does not really have many jobs. However, during my internship here, I got exposure to how hard the HCA team works handling employee issues, recruiting, events, cafeterias for every department in manufacturing, food issues, staff data systems for any medical claims, handling mosques, handling overtime allowance, and more. I was grateful to gain knowledge and more experience in the HCA department at Proton Tanjung Malim.

Part 5: Swot Analysis

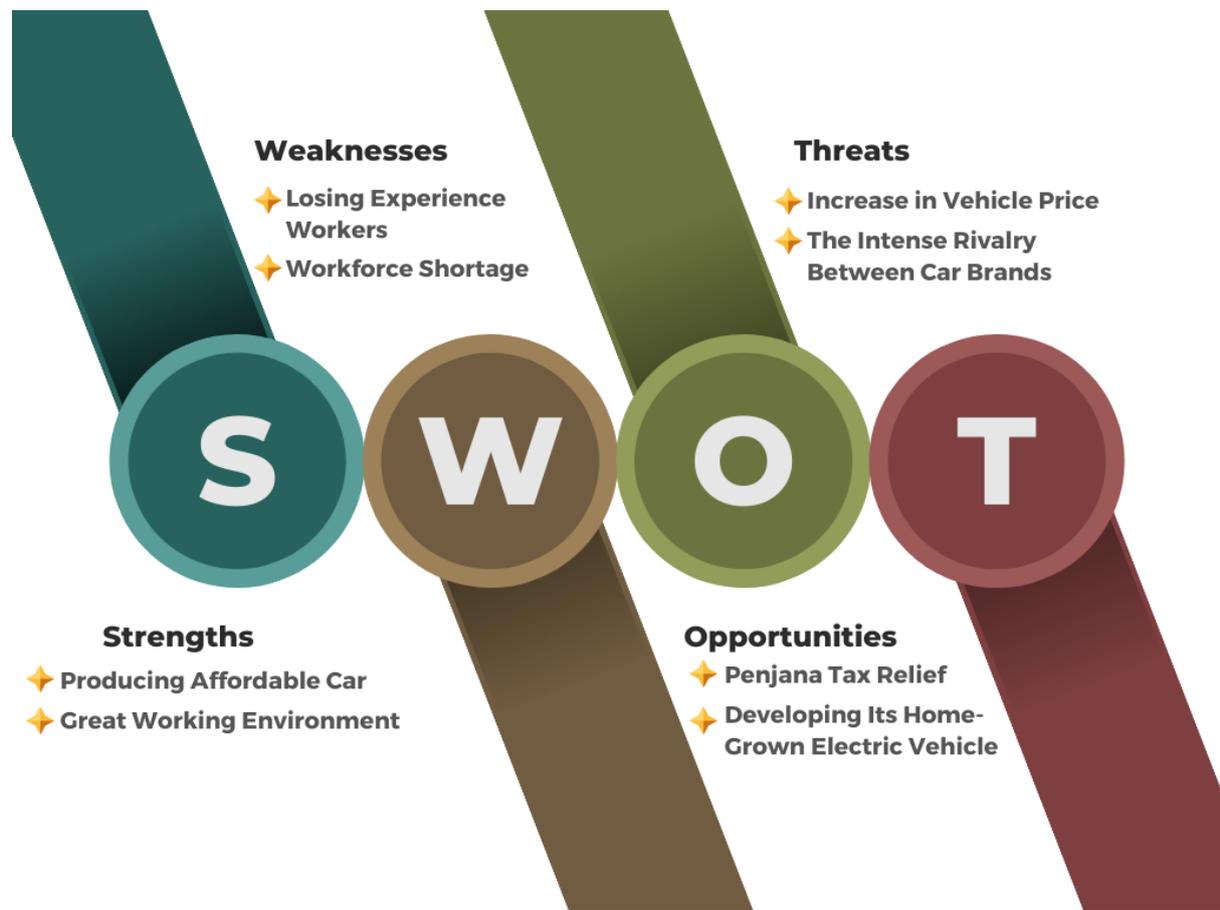


Figure 4: SWOT Analysis

5.1 Strengths

5.1.1 Strengths 1: Producing Affordable Car

Today, it is undeniable that cars are a necessity for individuals, married and families particularly those working in urban areas. Finding an affordable, safe and comfortable car can be a challenge with so many cars on the market. Trusted in Malaysia for decades, Proton is known for building superior vehicles that win the hearts and minds of drivers across the country. Proton continues to revolutionize the automotive industry with its commitment to quality and affordability. Attractively priced, Proton vehicle represent a value for money investment whether you are a first-time purchaser or a seasoned driver looking for a reliable upgrade. One of the famous models for its affordability is Proton Saga.

The Proton Saga was a popular icon as Malaysia's first national car. After many updates over the years, the Saga remains an affordable sedan suitable for those who are single, married and have a family. Even in 2023, the Proton Saga's starting price of RM35,000 makes it one of the most affordable cars in Malaysia. With an outstanding style of design that can attract many buyers, it performs admirably by providing a broad array of color options, such as Ruby Red, Rosewood Maroon, Armour Silver, Jet Grey, and Snow White. Recently, Proton reported that the Proton Saga is the company's bestseller model in terms of specific sales figures, continuing its position as the company's best-selling model. The sedan sold 5,913 units last month, bringing the total sales for the year to 55,880 units in 2022 (Lim, 2023). The sale price mentioned, shows that the Proton Saga is an option for those who look for an affordable price. A Proton user shared his experience using 2019 Proton Saga variants 1.3 VVT car for commuting and daily use. He has made a comparison between Perodua Bezza, Proton Iriz, and Saga before choosing Proton Saga. The justification for his decision is reasonable. Proton Saga, he said, it is within his price range and affordable than another A-segment vehicle. He took out a 5-year installment loan with a 30% down payment and spent just under RM400 per month, but he noted that the interest rate and total amount due are subject to change based on the bank's agreement. Beside the price of the car, Saga has a lower maintenance cost compared to Bezza, according on their official website. As a recent college graduate with a limited budget, an A-segment sedan would be his best option, despite his thought of a B-segment vehicle. Taking the maintenance cost and the reliability of the car into account, he also thought that it was still relevant for him to use if he wanted to get married and have kids later (Liang, 2022).

5.1.2 Strength 2: Great Working Environment

Proton Tanjung Malim Sdn Bhd is one of the biggest local automotive manufacturers in Malaysia. Employees can number in thousands; for now, estimates are that there are about 6,000 workers only at Proton Tanjung Malim. So here, human resources play a vital role in keeping any issue from arising and creating a great working environment. This issue can arise at any time since manufacturing workers confront unique challenges every day. Some of these challenges will make the workers feel unmotivated in the long run, so they started comparing the benefits and work environment they had to face with other manufacturing companies that provide better allowances and employee benefits, like Honda. Thus, the work culture must be revised to maintain harmony among employees and employers.

For Proton to maintain a great working environment, a CA (Collective Agreement) has been established and reexamined every three years with a new amendment or benefits that are suitable for the current year. The agreement was made between the Kesatuan Pekerja Pekerja Proton Tanjung Malim Sdn Bhd and Proton Tanjung Malim. The purpose of this agreement was to achieve an effective and fair industrial relationship between the company and its employees, to establish and maintain mechanisms for the prompt and fair settlement of grievances, to establish and maintain satisfactory terms and conditions of employment, and generally, to promote and protect the mutual interests of both parties. The current CA provides for arrangement with a new minimum wage order, working hours for shift and non-shift employee, employee personal accident, term life, medical benefits, allowance, annual leave, education assistance, and retirement. As for the current CA, it has 48 articles that are valid from 2022 until 2023 (Proton Tanjung Malim Sdn. Bhd. & Kesatuan Pekerja Pekerja Proton Tanjung Malim Sdn. Bhd., 2022). This CA is important especially for human resources team to handle the complaint and issue of the workers. This demonstrates how much Proton has always valued employee welfare and benefits. Proton do recognize that in order to achieve greater success for its business, it must collaborate closely with its employees to deliver excellent service to the customer. This CA is important, especially for the human resources team, to handle the complaints and issues of the workers. As an example, the two most popular issues that the human resources team always has to check on the CA are the employee's allowance benefit (fixed and not fixed) and the acting allowance paid when an employee is required to act in a higher-graded position than his actual role for a minimum of three consecutive workdays.

5.2 Weaknesses

5.2.1 Weaknesses 1: Losing Experience Workers

In Malaysia, workers will start to retire in 60 years old or may be early. So, when these workers start to depart, the company may lose its valuable asset. By meaning, the company loses the experience workers since these workers had more knowledge in the automotive sector. When it comes to experience and skills, senior employees possess a level of critical thinking and specialized knowledge that can only be acquired through years of working and keeping valuable information. With their years of expertise, older employees are likely to analyze job duties from a more objective or rational perspective instead of being emotionally invested in the task at hand, which enables them to maintain focus throughout the day. Simply put, businesses are afraid about losing their top staff to retirement and had a difficulty to fill in the roles. This matter is not really addressed in Malaysia, but it happens, especially in the United States. According to Chad Moutray, director of the Center for Manufacturing Research at the Manufacturing Institute and principal economist for the National Association of Manufacturers, the manufacturing industry is confronting a demographic sea change. A lot of industry leaders are actively adjusting to this reality. Companies are extremely worried about losing their most skilled workers to retirement (NAM News Room, 2019).

Proton is currently dealing with this issue, and they are preparing to find a solution to lessen the impact when these older workers leave. It is estimated that about 23 percent of workers from all the departments in Proton Tanjung Malim, with a total around 8,000 staff, are older workers. This data covers a range from 54 to 65 years. In general, older workers start at the age of 60 and above. However, as a preliminary step, Proton has taken into account the age of 55 and above (Proton Tanjung Malim Sdn Bhd, 2023). 23 percent is a huge amount; nearly 2,000 of the workers are older, and they have started to apply for retirement. It will affect the organization as they start to lose experienced workers since no preparation has been made. Of course, the job can be done by another person, but we must acknowledge that experience is something irreplaceable that cannot be obtained only through knowledge, especially in the automotive industry, which requires both experience and knowledge in certain areas to deliver a quality product.

5.2.2 Weaknesses 2: Workforce Shortage

As much as previous generation entering the manufacturing industry, the younger generation nowadays are not the same. Instead, they are shifting to other industries such as technology and healthcare. Manufacturing faced a disciplinary issue which led to shortage of manpower. To add to that, some of them also receive a better opportunity than what Proton Tanjong Malim offers. Wang Mohammed Wan Enbon, President of Proton Vendor Association, said the National Automotive Manufacturing (NAM) ecosystem will lose more than 500,000 jobs and up to 4.5 percent of its gross domestic product if the industry's workforce problem is not resolved and need to deal with manpower issue immediately. Regarding this issue, he urges the employment of foreign employees to solve the workforce shortage. He emphasized that the hiring of foreign employees doesn't rob employment opportunities of locals, as the industry has made great efforts to hire locals, despite being aware that most of them quit within six to twelve months after being hired (Bernama, 2022).

As I mentioned before about the factor of a workforce shortage, I can assure you that these are some of the issues faced by human resources to deal with the shortage of manpower. A few of them, just a week after their employment as production workers, have already asked for their resignation as they cannot stand the pressure. The most popular reason is that they felt the work was not equal to the pay and benefits they received. They started to compare the benefits of working with other international brands. Although there are people who resign as they receive better opportunities, there is also a case where, after years of working, they start to have discipline issues like being absent from work so many times without an appropriate reason. We must know is that the automotive manufacturing sector must run at 100 percent to assemble a vehicle with 20,000 to 25,000 parts. With this issue, people in the other lines may need to cover the empty spot and at the same time do their work. This caused a delay in production, which made many car buyers wait longer after orders were placed, with a maximum waiting period of four months. This is a significant problem facing Proton Tanjong Malim.

5.3 Opportunities

5.3.1 Opportunities 1: Penjana Tax Relief

In 2018, SST (Sales and Service Tax) was reestablished to replace GST (Goods and Service Tax). SST refers to the Malaysian sales and service tax, where a sales tax is forced on manufacturers and consumers who use taxable services pay a service tax. Compared to other regions, Malaysia's tax regulations are relatively flexible, which can make compliance difficult to carry out. However, in June 2022, the government declared a 100 percent sales tax relief on local assembled (CKD) models and a 50 percent sales tax relief on entirely imported (CBU) models from June 15 to December 31, 2020 under Pelan Jana Semula Ekonomi Negara, or PENJANA (Lye, 2023). PENJANA was one of the previous government initiatives for economic recovery. Actually, the deadline has been delayed three times due to issue with global supply chain and production, caused many consumers were unable to get their vehicles on time. As a result, a provision was made for the sales tax relief to be extended to any vehicle booked prior to July 1 and with a completed sales invoice and registration prior to March 31, 2023.

As it being said 100 percent sales tax relief on local assembled, it includes Proton. Proton has begun modifying the selling prices of its products in response to the expiration of the exemption from SST on 30 June 2022 (it continued until March 2023). New pricing for the X50, Persona, and Iriz, and the X70, Saga, and Exora. The price difference is up to RM500 until RM8,000 from its original price depends on the model. For example, with SST exemption, the X70 1.5 TGDI Standard 2WD variants price is RM93,900.00, compared with RM98,800.00 without SST exemption. The difference is RM4,900.00, which is a huge difference (Lye, 2022). In order to meet the March 2023 deadline for the PENJANA Incentive Period, the first quarter of 2023 see an increase in Proton sales, as consumers desire tax savings. Persona, Proton X50, and Proton Saga are three popular models. It is believed that sales for the first three months were artificially inflated because manufacturers rushed to deliver automobiles for reservations made during the PENJANA incentive period, thereby boosting Proton's sales. This is especially true for this month, as the deadline for delivering these reservations was March 31, 2023, which helps to explain the record-breaking TIV estimate of 78,000 units (Proton, 2023). Due to the difference in price, this tax relief has increased proton sales.

5.3.2 Opportunities 2: Developing Its Home-Grown Electric Vehicle

The second opportunity that Proton can use as an advantage in the automotive industry was the developing its home-grown electric vehicle. An electric vehicle is an automobile that is powered by electricity rather than gasoline or diesel. The acceptance of electric vehicles by the automotive industry would be unavoidable nowadays. EVs (electric vehicles) will ultimately become less expensive globally due to its growing popularity and mass production, and the government should begin preparing the two national automakers, Proton and Perodua, for this transition. Now, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) stated that the government is encouraging local car manufacturers to produce affordable EV by 2027 and expect that Proton and Perodua to present the proposal to government soon (Tamrin, 2023). It is not impossible for Proton to make its own EV since they already announced a launch by 2025 rather than their original plan of 2027. Roslan Abdullah, deputy chief executive officer of Proton, stated that the decision was made to match with the government's commitment to encourage the growth and development of the local EV sector. He added that Proton was in the process of identifying a market-appropriate model that satisfied consumer needs without affecting the car's price or quality. He highlighted that the Proton EV must have important elements, including an affordable price, and it must be practical (Zainuddin, 2023). We have a limited information regarding Protons' electronic vehicle development, but they will ensure that upcoming EV products match the utilization profile of Malaysian EV buyers.

With a strong relationship with Geely, China, Proton Tanjung Malim is already planning to recruit their engineer to China to learn the operation there. Proton also already start their plan to recruit engineer experience in electric vehicle. Although the production of EVs requires a significant amount of energy, EVs are still the greener option. The greatest benefit of EV is their ability to improve air quality in urban areas. Without a tailpipe, pure electric vehicles generate no carbon dioxide while traveling and this is greatly reducing air pollution. Simply put, electric vehicles provide cleaner streets, thereby improving the environment for pedestrians and cyclists in our towns and cities. The development of the local EV helps Proton moves towards being environmentally friendly to help Malaysia achieve its carbon neutrality target by 2050. In addition, Proton also can achieve government's desire to support the growth and development of local EV.

5.4 Threats

5.4.1 Threats 1: Increase in Vehicle Price

A common complaint among new-car purchasers around the world, not just in Malaysia, was being on a waiting list for three to six months. It is not the automotive manufacturers' fault. Automotive and industrial industries were among the most severely affected by the global semiconductor chip shortage. These semiconductor chips are used for managing everything from emissions systems to driver assistance systems, making them a vital component of vehicle assembly. Due to an absence of manufacturing equipment, Intel Corp., the world's largest manufacturer of semiconductor chips, expects the shortage to last until the end of 2024. Locally, the chip scarcity in Malaysia had an influence on the automotive industry's supply and demand chain. It had an unfavorable effect on the output of the production and TIV (Total Industry Volume) resulting increase in a price, a prolonged waiting period, and a postponement in the delivery of new automobiles. According to the MAA (Malaysian Automotive Association) report that January 2022, TIV numbers were impacted by the ongoing computer processor shortage and supply chain disruption that caused by the flood in December 2021. It may take some time for Malaysia's production and supply return to normal. In addition, MAA anticipates a rise in the price of new vehicles in Malaysia because of the increasing cost of raw materials and logistics, which will worsen as the semiconductor shortage continues (Cheah, 2022).

Malaysian manufacturers have not yet decided whether to raise vehicle prices or resume enduring the rising costs. Same as with the other automobile manufacturer, Proton has been affected by the global shortage of semiconductors. Chip prices have skyrocketed due to increased demand and limited supply, forcing the company to shut down its Tanjung Malim plant for two weeks. As a consequence, April sales have suffered (Lee J. , 2022). Roslan Abdullah, the deputy CEO of Proton Holdings Bhd, stated that the automaker is attempting to deal with the increasing cost of raw materials in order to maintain prices. He added that if the situation worsens, Proton may be forced to pass on some of the cost increases to customers (Foong, 2022). The shortage of semiconductors has also caused the 2022 launch of the Proton X90 to be pushed back to 2023. Obviously, a rise in vehicle prices could affect the demand for Proton automobiles. However, this chip problem has impacted the global economy and created inflation in many countries, making a price increase unavoidable.

5.4.2 Threats 2: The Intense Rivalry Between Car Brands

The first generation of Proton Saga, based on the 1983 Mitsubishi Lancer Fiore, was a quick success among Malaysians. After 20 to 30 years, Malaysians became less fond of the national automaker due to numerous models' quality problems. Despite the protective laws put in place by the Malaysian government, the Proton brand began to lose popularity among Malaysians due to reliability problems, and safety concerns. As a result, the sales of foreign vehicles began to surpass those of the national carmaker. It no longer considered owning a Proton an act of patriotism. At the time, it was considered an inexpensive option rather than a desirable automobile. Result of the negative perceptions surrounding the quality of Proton automobiles, the Malaysian public has shifted to superior, more affordable Japanese brands such as Honda and Toyota.

Danial, a Proton user, shares his experience using his first Proton car, the Satria Neo, in an article from Mashable SE Asia. In the two years he used the vehicle, there were simply a lot of problems with the quality. In fact, these problems had been present in previous versions which are the Wira, Waja and include Preve. Brake lights were one of the several issues that affected his car (Danial, 2020). Another criticism was received by individual who presently works as a full-time Grab driver. In a Twitter, he vented his dissatisfaction over the numerous issues he experienced with Proton-made vehicles. Other than issues with money he had spent at Proton's service center, he more irritated with the continual occurrence of the problems. The issue became more serious when he encouraged people to buy other international cars, and it was supported by many people who claimed a defect in Proton cars (Lee, 2022). Poor quality that has been mentioned may affect new buyer who are looking out to buy product from Proton. Now, people are more encouraged to purchase foreign automobiles. A local university graduate survey reveals that 70% of respondents prefer to purchase a foreign vehicle over a domestic one. Although they have never driven the national vehicle, they believe it cannot compete with foreign brands (Lim, 2017). Move forward, indeed, Proton had a lot of problems before, but they changed after Geely came in. Hezeri Samsuri, the editor of the automotive news website Careta.my, stated that the joint venture with Geely had rescued Proton from the turmoil it had experienced before to the deal. However, he stated that it was still unable to rival on the international market with well-known companies such as Honda or Toyota. He compared Proton to other brands with their own technology like Honda had the Value Timing Electronically Controlled (VTEC) system. It is essential for Proton to have its own technology in order to alter public perception and compete with other foreign brands (Jamal, 2022).

Part 6: Discussion and Recommendation

6.1 Strengths

Without a doubt, Proton is known for producing affordable cars and has been a choice among families who need a four- or five-seater. In addition to its affordability, the Proton Saga is also famous among users for being the safest sedan in the category of sedans, as the model has a rare ASEAN 4-Star NCAP (New Car Assessment Program) Rating (Daily Times, 2022). NCAP has used a crash test to see how safe the car is by examining the volumes of its durability and the materials used to make it. Proton Saga is also more stable and has a minimal probability of an accident on a slippery road. I do recommend that Proton continue to introduce its Rahmah Campaign Service, not just for the Hari Raya celebration, but hopefully continuing until the economy of Malaysia recovers, to help those who are in need. This is due to the fact that it is common for the majority of Proton's car owners to express their concern that the service and maintenance cost are higher than the other brands. Although the car price is affordable, the service fee can exceed more than 500 ringgits at the service center. That is why most people have second thoughts about buying a Proton automobile, despite the reasonable price. Due to the rising cost of living, programs like the Rahmah Service Campaign can help minimize the burden of Proton's vehicle ownership by introducing an affordable service package. With the continuous support from the government, I hope Proton will continue more programs like Rahmah Campaign Service to help Proton vehicle ownership by providing a more affordable service package.

The next discussion will be on the second strengths, a great working environment. A good working culture is one of the factors in Proton's success. With so many employees that work in manufacturing, finding a solution for any issue that arises is a must. That is why CA is important to maintain harmony between company and workers and has been readjusted every three years to fit the current situation. To improve more on the great working environment, I suggest putting one counter service at Proton Tanjung Malim for the worker who has any complaint or question regarding their work. This is because most of the time, workers will go directly to email or meet their admin or human resources department, which affects their time to do other work. It is true that some of the discussion must involve human resources, but not all problems need human resources to be solved. Some of the issues have already been mentioned in CA. Perhaps with the establishment of counter service at Proton Tanjung Malim, it will reduce the burden of human resources to help with worker problems.

6.2 Weaknesses

Losing an experienced worker is indeed a weakness for the company, and it may be a cost for the company to provide knowledge from external sources to teach the younger employees. The knowledge gained by these experienced workers is valuable and difficult to replace, especially in the automotive industry, which requires skills. To lessen the impact, Proton can start a program of mentor and mentee by choosing a suitable candidate who can bear the responsibility. Mentoring programs allow people to learn from one another by providing a path for skill and knowledge transfer. A mentor is someone who provides guidance to a mentee, while a mentee is someone who learns and absorbs as much information as he can from the mentor. Formal mentoring and coaching can help these experienced workers share their knowledge with mentees or younger workers. Working together can increase communication, and the mentor can demonstrate more details on how to handle the machine, solve problems, and more to its mentee when these programs are established. The candidate chosen for the mentee position must have no discipline problems and plan to stay for a long time at Proton. For mentors, it can be those who have more than ten years of service or any individuals who are recognized as having so much knowledge in automotive manufacturing that they are nearing retirement. Perhaps with this program, it can ease the worries about the impact of losing experienced workers and avoid the cost of hiring external sources to teach younger employees.

The next discussion will be on the workforce shortage. We know that manufacturing has one of the highest rates of employee turnover in the industry. The most popular reason is that the benefits they get do not meet their expectations. A workforce shortage affects the company, causing delays in delivery times and a decline in quality. To solve this workforce shortage, I do recommend that Proton give an extra bonus after the launch of a new model, like they did before with Proton Wira, to make it more competitive in terms of benefits than the other company. The basic salary starts at RM1,500 with a fixed allowance of RM66 per month. So, to increase employee motivation that the company can offer, Proton may increase the bonus after the launch of new model or give two bonuses in a year so they can retain the interest of workers to stay for a long time. With a new release of the Proton X90 that received good acceptance by Malaysians, it is hoped that with the upcoming Proton SS11, the company can afford to give an extra bonus to the workers. It is not impossible since they received a great bonus a long time ago after Proton Wira launched.

6.3 Opportunities

The first discussion starts with the opportunities of Penjana Tax Relief. Penjana is one of the initiatives taken by the government for economic recovery due to the impact of COVID-19. Proton was also involved in this Penjana initiative, where the government announced 100 percent sales tax relief on locally assembled models. This initiative has increased Proton sales during the first quarter of 2023 because the price is more affordable and attractive enough for buyers to purchase the car. With this opportunity, Proton can increase their relationship with people through brand perception. Since Proton has participated in the tax relief program, they can enhance their image as a customer-oriented and value-driven automotive brand. People will see Proton as a company that is actively taking steps to make their product more affordable and accessible to customers, aligning with their financial interests. By adjusting the pricing strategies and offering reduced prices in line, it shows Proton's commitment to providing value to customers without compromising on quality, features, or performance. In addition, trust and loyalty are built between the company and customers because the company recognizes and genuinely looks out for their best interests while offering competitive prices.

Next is discussion on developing its own home-grown electric vehicle. Many governments are offering various incentives and subsidies to promote electric vehicle adoption. It includes Malaysia, where the government expects local car manufacturers to produce affordable EVs by 2027. EVs have an impact on Proton by being a greener option that is environmentally friendly. Proton can take advantage of this situation by using technology and sharing knowledge. Proton's partner, Geely Global, will start introducing their new electric products in the fourth quarter of 2023. This means Proton can team up and start a training program to collaborate with Geely. This training program is to ensure the successful implementation and operation of electric vehicles by sharing Geely's expertise in electric vehicle production, maintenance, and charging infrastructure setup. These training programs and educational initiatives can also be established to build local expertise in EV technologies and promote the use of clean energy for charging electric vehicles. By focusing on affordability, accessibility, localized manufacturing, partnerships, knowledge sharing, and sustainable energy integration, Proton can seize opportunities in Malaysia and position themselves as leaders in the transition to greener transportation solutions.

6.4 Threat

The first discussion starts with an increase in vehicle prices. The increase in vehicle prices is influenced by a shortage of semiconductor chips, which are a vital component in vehicle assembly. This shortage is impacted by the Malaysian floods in 2021, where several semiconductor companies, especially in Shah Alam, need to stop their production. Due to high demand but limited supply, the price can rise because it is hard to get the chips, which also causes a prolonged waiting period and postponement in the delivery of new automobiles. Most of the country is facing this issue and trying hard to find a solution to lessen the impact, not only in Malaysia. I do recommend Proton lessen the impact by diversifying its chip sourcing to reduce its reliance on a single source. Proton might explore dual sourcing, reviewing its semiconductor suppliers and finding other backup suppliers to support the supply of semiconductors. By finding a suitable supplier, they might keep the supply for the upcoming months to decrease the shortage in the future. It is important to engage with chip manufacturers located in different locations to avoid concentration in a single geographic area that might be susceptible to specific risks such as flooding or political instability. By diversifying the sourcing region, Proton can reduce the impact of the semiconductor shortage.

The next discussion will be on the intense rivalry between car brands. Proton, a Malaysian automotive manufacturer, has faced rivalry from various car brands, especially foreign brands. In addition, Proton also receives criticism for its quality, despite their efforts to shift the negative public perception. In my recommendation, to stay competitive and address these rivalries, Proton needs to focus on improving its product offerings, enhancing its quality, and adopting advanced technologies to shift the negative perception. With its partnership with Geely, Proton has already started to operate better, and there is nothing wrong with the quality of Proton cars. However, it is important to note that changing perception takes time and consistent effort. Proton and Geely need to demonstrate a sustained commitment to quality, innovation, customer satisfaction, and market competitiveness to overcome any negative perceptions that may exist in the market. For example, Proton can collaborate with Geely to produce its own technology that is different from that of other brands to deliver high-quality vehicles that can change negative perceptions. Proton can also overcome this issue by seeking customer feedback, addressing concerns, and being open about the steps taken to address negative perceptions. Demonstrating a proactive approach to addressing issues can help rebuild trust.

Part 7: Conclusion

This industrial training has served several purposes for me as a degree student. In a nutshell, this internship has given me the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills I gained during my studies in a real-world work setting. This enables me to see how education can relate to industry practices. In addition, this training allows students to gain exposure to the industry in which they are interested in pursuing a career. It provides me with firsthand experience of the workplace culture, industry practices, and professional norms. Besides that, this training improves my communication skills and helps me build new networks with professionals in certain fields, which will benefit my future job prospects. Among the training gains I list in Chapter 4, the most important advantage I got from this training that can be used forever is an improvement in my communication skills. Being in Proton, you need to be able to communicate in Malay and English. When you are not used to communicating in English, although you have the basics, this can be an awkward and nerve-wracking situation at first. However, with confidence and courage from the team's members, you can start to speak.

In this report, I have described in detail the SWOT analysis and hope it can serve as a source of knowledge for Proton's strategic decision-making. Every item in SWOT has two issues that enable companies to align their strengths with market opportunities, address weaknesses, and mitigate threats to achieve long-term success. For strengths, I elaborate on producing an affordable car and a great working environment. For weaknesses, I discuss losing experienced workers and a shortage of manpower. For opportunity, I elaborate on the topic of Penjana Tax Relief and the development of Proton's home-grown Electric Vehicle. Lastly, for threats, I discuss the increase in vehicle prices and the intense rivalry between car brands. In my opinion, the most relevant aspect of this analysis that can enhance Proton's work is its great working environment. In Proton Sdn. Bhd., Tanjong Malim, there are estimated to be around 6,000 workers. More workers mean more responsibilities for Proton to manage them to create a better working environment. Perhaps, before the relocation of Proton Shah Alam, Proton Tanjong Malim is already working to enhance its working culture. Five years from now, Proton may already have launched its electric vehicle and dominate this market in Southeast Asian countries, competing with Thailand, which has the largest market share of electric vehicles in Southeast Asia now. This is due to the fact that Proton has already started to invest in EV manufacturing, battery technology, and charging infrastructure to align with global trends and meet customer demand. Also, Proton has already started to implement MHEV (Mild-Hybrid Electric Vehicle) in the Proton X90.

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Part 9: Appendices



Figure 1

Fold and put the letter of appointment into Proton's envelope to give to new workers who report for duty.

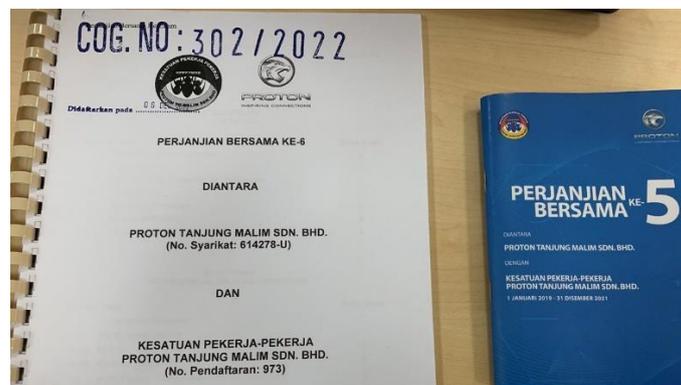


Figure 2

I got the soft copy in Word and the hard copy of the Collective Agreement for me to review any mistakes in spelling or other mistakes in the agreement.

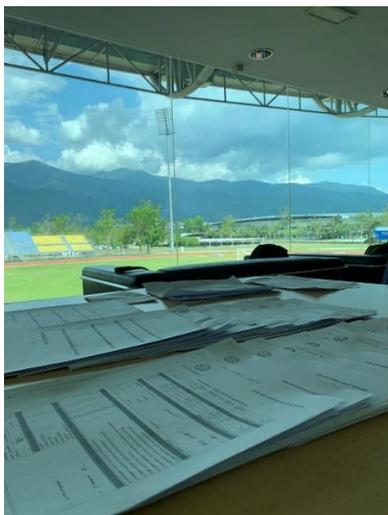


Figure 3



Figure 4

Participate as a staff member in handling open interviews made by the Human Capital department.



Figure 5

Participate in helping the Human Capital department distribute Bubur Lambak during Ramadhan.



Figure 6

Participate as a photographer during Proton with Geely, a Bahasa Melayu Conversational Program for Beginners.



Figure 7



Figure 8

Decorating the office and making a prop for Riang Raya Proton's competition



Figure 9

Participate registration members during Employee Excellence Award 2022.



Figure 10

Joining the Netball game with the Proton Tanjung Malim team for the Proton Games 2023.

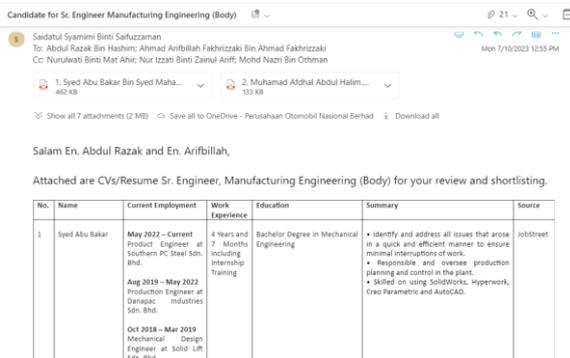


Figure 11

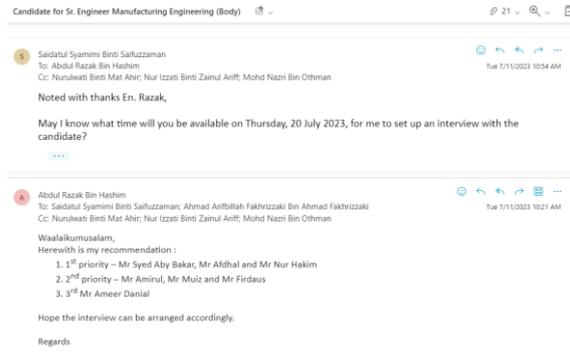


Figure 12

Screenshot from some of my conversation with the Head of Manufacturing Planning, Manufacturing Engineering, to find a suitable candidate for the position of Senior Engineer, Manufacturing Engineering (Body).

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Prepared by: Saidatul Syamimi Binti Saifuzzaman 2021178635 | RBA2426B Bachelor of Business Administration (Hons.)
Finance Prepared for: Dr. Fadli Fizari Abu Hassan Asari TABLE OF CONTENTS Part 1: Preliminary Pages i