

**Aluno de oportunidades de humanidades para desenvolver carreira em empresa de petróleo e gás**

**The opportunities of humanities alumnus to develop career in oil and gas company**

**El alumno de oportunidades de humanidades para desarrollar una carrera en la empresa de petróleo y gas**

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**Resumo**

Humanidades consideradas como campo do conhecimento que lida com cultura, linguagem e arte. As pessoas que estudam no campo das ciências humanas acreditam que será mais difícil conseguir um emprego depois de se formar, especialmente para trabalhar na Companhia de Petróleo e Gás. As dificuldades são devido ao conhecimento é um conhecimento aplicado. Esta pesquisa tem como objetivo saber se as chances de Humanidades competirem ou não na Companhia de Gás e Petróleo. O método aqui utilizado é qualitativo descritivo, utilizado para analisar o fato e a condição ocorridos. O resultado obtido com esta pesquisa é que ainda existem oportunidades para os alunos de ciências humanas competirem ou mesmo construir uma carreira na Companhia de Gás e Petróleo, mas o aluno deve ganhar mais experiência e conhecimento.

**Palavras-chave:** Carreira; Humanidades; Oportunidades de emprego; Companhia de Petróleo e Gás.

## **Abstract**

Humanities as considered as knowledge field dealing with culture, language, and art. People who are studying in the field of humanities believe that it will more difficult in getting job after stated to be graduated, especially to work in Oil and Gas Company. The difficulties are due to the knowledge is an applied knowledge. This research is aimed to know whether or not the chances for Humanities to compete in Gas and Oil Company. The method used here is descriptive qualitative in which used to analysed the fact and condition happened. The result obtained from this research is that there are still opportunities for humanities alumnus to compete or even build career in the Gas and Oil Company, yet the alumnus should gain more experience and knowledge.

**Keywords:** Career; Humanities; Job Opportunities; Oil and Gas Company.

## **Resumen**

Las humanidades consideradas como un campo de conocimiento sobre cultura, lenguaje y arte. Las personas que estudian en el campo de las humanidades creen que será más difícil conseguir trabajo después de graduarse, especialmente para trabajar en la Compañía de Petróleo y Gas. Las dificultades se deben a que el conocimiento es un conocimiento aplicado. El objetivo de esta investigación es saber si las oportunidades para que Humanities compita en Gas and Oil Company. El método utilizado aquí es descriptivo cualitativo en el que se analizó el hecho y la condición ocurrida. El resultado obtenido de esta investigación es que todavía hay oportunidades para que el alumno de humanidades compita o incluso forme una carrera en la Compañía de Gas y Petróleo, pero el alumno debería ganar más experiencia y conocimiento.

**Palabras clave:** carrera; Humanidades; Oportunidades de trabajo; Empresa de petróleo y gas.

## **1. Introduction**

The growth of knowledge has made sciences divided into several disciplines. Humanities as one branch of knowledge have a unique position due to their competencies which is not created to patch up directly with the business environment. In Indonesia, these disciplines, commonly include on Faculty of Letters, which includes Anthropology, Archaeology, History, Language and Philosophy.

However, there is an exception for Foreign Language disciplines. Besides having a

good understanding of cultural context, this study is also created to face the globalization environment including business activities.

The problem is, are there any bright futures for people who study Indonesian or Indigenous Languages such as, Batakese, Minangese, Sundanese, Javanese, Balinese, Old Javanese or Bugis to build a career in an industrial environment? This problem also arises in the field of Anthropology, Archaeology, History of Philosophy.

Another problem rise is that such knowledge is sound theoretical. It is different from Education or Art disciplines that produce their graduates with ability, so that the alumnus has a competitive advantage to compete with “premium” knowledge such as Law, Psychology, Communication, Administration, Economics or Exact sciences. This condition does not apply to Religion or Theology sciences that have purpose in “vertical” ways instead of secular ways such as other sciences. However, if the “vertical” graduates have the willingness to work in business activities, they will face the same problem with Humanities.

Moreover, industries’ demand also determines which one is “marketable” and not. Therefore, even the alumnus from Indonesian and Indigenous letters have language skill, still, they are difficult to compete due to the limited demand.

When Pertamina advertise the job opportunity for Public Relation (PR) position, the company requires only Communication and International Relation alumnus to apply. It means that this position does not provide Anthropology and other humanities alumnus to apply.

Besides, it also happens in Conoco Phillips (COPI) while the company release job vacancy for Business Ethics Specialist, the company just gives an opportunity for Law, Management or Engineering alumnus. Thus, even Ethics is directly related to Philosophy discipline, the philosopher cannot apply.

As humanities alumnus, the chances to work at Oil and Gas Company are considered only in limited positions. One of the reasons is that the industry has a close relationship with environmental issues. The people who can work at the company must manage the environment professionally, and operate the business properly according to the regulations and minimize negative externalities which can disturb the exploration or exploitation phase seriously.

According to regulation in Indonesia, Oil & Gas Company which has upstream activities, operates in the term of Production Sharing Contract (PSC) with the Indonesia government. The activities have monitored and evaluated by Government Executive Agency for Upstream Oil and Gas Business Activities (BP MIGAS). As a consequence, there are such regulations should be followed by PSC such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Operating Procedure Number 017/PTK/III/2005 concerning the Emergency Crisis Notification, Community Development (CD) and Public Relations (PR) Guideline for the PSC is one of the examples. By the existence of the regulation, PSC should conduct CD program to aware of the social environment. To implement a CD program as a part of PR activities, we need competency in social and cultural understanding.

In several PSC, the PR department has been established some positions represented by Vice President (VP) or Senior Manager who directly report to the President or General Manager (GM). Thus, they only have a responsibility to manage external or internal relation activities, such as Amerada Hess, Beyond Petroleum (BP), Chevron, COPI or Unocal (before acquisition with Chevron).

The various positions for PR Department in organization structure represent the way corporates view. The importance and sense of urgency of PR function is in purpose to support core business and maintain corporate image. Therefore, PR function develops properly in PSC which already aware of the importance of related activities.

In organization structure under VP Relation and Development of COPI, five managers have authority to develop PR functions in certain area. These functions are Security, CSR, Communication, Government relations, and Media Relation. As a consequence, in every department, there are many positions which are stressing in particular areas.

Under this condition, corporate awareness about social and cultural issues is arising. The effect is, although is limited, there are still many opportunities for Humanities to apply and build a career in Oil and Gas Company because this job position is closely related to their background. For example, as a part of CSR department, COPI needs a position for CSR Program Development Analyst and Social Assessment/Monitoring Specialist.

As another example, Santos Headquarter in Adelaide has a job title in Cultural Heritage. This is a unique fact besides this job is exceptional in industry activities especially in oil and gas, also this title states together with other 59 jobs and not all of the positions covered in the list. For example in the HR function, Santos just states HR Administrator, HR Advisor, and Training. Another function such as Compensation and Benefit, Industrial Relation or Organization Development is not mentioned on the list.

This is also evidence that Oil and Gas Company allows Humanities. Social Assessment required deep comprehension about the Anthropological perspective for mapping the social and cultural condition. Cultural Heritage required competency in conservation techniques, which covers in Archaeological method. Santos Australia also publishes Cultural Heritage Guideline, which can access by their entire employee in the world. Because this

guideline produces in Australia, besides an Archaeological knowledge, good comprehension about indigenous culture especially Aborigine issues is required. There is already an opportunity and they must compete to actualize their knowledge.

However, although those positions need deep knowledge about cultural issues, many applicants can apply for this position even they have no direct related background. The reason is to experience more valuable than theoretical.

In BP, the Senior CD officer is from the Procurement Department. In CNOOC, Community Relation Superintendent comes from the Finance Department. Exxon has a CD Coordinator for the Aceh area who has a background in Architecture. In Santos, Government Relation Superintendent is a Geologist from Unocal who do not have experience career position in PR. Star Energy has CD officer that has a background in engineering.

Moreover, Sub Section Head of CD in BP MIGAS who must control, evaluating and monitoring all of CD program in all of PSC in Indonesia is a drilling engineer from Pertamina. Besides, one of his staff is an Accounting graduate from Tri Sakti. In 2005, CD officer who has an Anthropology background from almost 100 PSC is only three people. There are from Unocal, Premier Oil, and Santos. Almost all of CD officer in PSC is come from “premium” disciplines such as Law, Management or Engineering. So, where are the Humanities? They still sleep on their habitat until rest in absurdity.

This is a classical problem, that a person who comes from a technical background can manage various job positions smoothly comparing to a person who has a social sciences background. In oil and gas with their unique characteristic industry, people who have long experience in this field has more opportunity to develop their career comparing than newcomer, although they have experience also but in other fields of business.

In another side, Humanities cannot fill other job position such as Drilling, Geologist, Procurement, Finance or HR because business expert thinks that this “fossil” do not have the competency to work in various position. Although there is job rotation in managing career development strategy, HR department seems to look at these graduates in their weakness instead of their potential factors. Take it or leave it, Humanities must realize that the competency is not suitable with job demand. Once upon a time, if there is a Pipeline Engineer, who have responsibility to create a tie in from Platform to Trans Java Gas Pipeline and she has a background in Ethnomusicology, perhaps this is a sign that countdown to the Doomsday is close enough.

According to the explanation above, this research objective is tried to analyze whether or not the chance for humanities alumnus to build a career in Oil and Gas Company.

## 2. Methodology

In this research, the method used is descriptive qualitative to reveal the condition, facts, phenomenon, variable occurred. The method used in this article is qualitative. Flick (2002) in Gunawan (2014: 81) states that descriptive qualitative is a specific interrelation in the social relationship study which is also related to the facts from life pluralism. Thus, the main purpose is to understand the phenomenon more and focusing on the whole description rather by detailing the related variables.

## 3. Analysis

From the fundamental perspective, it can be said that career development derivate from getting an occupation, developing a career path and ended with satisfaction retirement. Individuals have needed to occupy their existence as a human being and getting a job. According to Nadler, et al., (1979) there are some hierarchical of the need of human being, including:

1. Sex, hunger, and oxygen
2. Security
3. Social relations
4. Esteem and reputation
5. Autonomy, self-control and independence
6. Competence, achievement, and self-realization.

Several persons considered that the working environment in the oil and gas industry can provide all of these human needs properly. The problem is, to get a job in this industry is difficult for Humanities. To face a problem at this stage, Humanities must be increasing their competency. They must be expert on that field with a lot of experience in community facilitator, conduct a research or program implementation. They can get this experience with work in Local or International Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), various Consultants or Research Institutes. With this competency, they can compete with another discipline because they have added value. Besides, the alumnus also has to know about oil and gas activities properly, because having a deep knowledge of core business is an essential benefit if they want to get a job in this industry.

After the first problem is already solving, they must manage their career if they do not want to kick out in advance from the company. The career is the individually perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviors associated with work-related experiences and activities throughout the person's life (Hall, 1993). Individual competency is the main point to build a good career. Although external factors such as organization structure or working environment can influence a lot to personal career development, however, this is a kind of threat that must be facing to achieve successfulness. The last three needs (esteem - reputation, autonomy – self-control - independence and competence – achievement – self-realization) can be occupied properly if the employee can develop their career base on their competency.

Maintaining a career needs special effort instead of looking for a job because lay off can result from a big problem in individual life. It is like from “something to nothing” and their existence as a human being is questioned. An individual psychological barrier is a big problem that must be solved to reach this goal. They must be having a good commitment, adaptability, and flexibility to facing the change of work in various conditions such as team partners, corporate culture or organization structure.

In several PSC, the employee must be realizing that the company tends to give them a wider opportunity to build their competency. One of the reasons is, this industry is rather competitive and strategy to hijack the high potential employee from the competitors is common among them. HR meeting for PSC sometimes is using to give an approach to get deep understanding from each other. In private conversation, one company can explain that they still want the employee contribution and need goodwill from another company which already gives a special offer to do not continue their action. That is why many companies have the policy to give good compensation and benefit to retain their workers from the competitor. However, this is not an easy policy because many factors can influence a lot besides remuneration. Work satisfaction is an essential point for an employee to build a career and achieve successfulness.

Individual can said to be involved in their work when the following psychological states exist (Beer & Gibbs, 1993):

1. Work is seen as meaningful.
2. Responsibility for the outcomes of work is felt.
3. Knowledge of the actual results of work activities is provided.

Based on the points mentioned, the actualization of employee existence in the business

process is a key point for a company to build a commitment, loyalty and support its business effectively among the employee. If they can construct “esprit de corps” spirit, the employee will think a thousand times to quit although there are many job offers for them.

However, for Humanities, they should have deep personal introspection that accepted to work in oil and gas is an excellent gift from the business player and it is a good place to show their capabilities. The reasons are:

1. Their opportunity to get a job is very limited.
2. Their background is not marketable.
3. Their position can substitute from another background easily.

If they feel not satisfied with their work, for example, there are no bright career plans for them, they will facing a serious problem. They cannot quit easily because the job demand is limited. If they stay and do not show good performance, the company will kick out them cheerfully. It is not applicable for “ready to fly” group who are having high potential and high-performance result. They can hijack from the competitor even their company give a special offer to compete. Humanities should aware when the opportunity to actualize their knowledge is open, they must show their commitment, loyalty, and improvement to the company. Especially in oil and gas where the remuneration system is higher than another industry, they should focus on their job and not influence a lot by working environment. They must have the willingness to likes “foreign legion soldiers” to locate in the remote area following company operations such as Rombebai, Bangkanai or Matak, or international assignments such as Kazakhstan, Nigeria or Bolivia. When they enter the career with third party grade, it will be polite if they do not have big ambitions to be a direct contract or permanent status. They must remember that their job position is not in the key function. Their turn will come if they can show higher performance and the company will think to retain them with good remuneration and upgrading status.

Honestly, a job position in the PR Department, especially in CSR can perform by everyone who has deep experience in the industry. If they have a problem implementing a CD program, for example, “Fish Aggregating Device Project”, they can hire Universities, Research Institutes or NGOs to implement this. It means that the company can operate properly although they do not have good PR officers. Although this department is kind of support function with the same likes HR, Finance or EHS, however, another function is mandatory which is core business can influence a lot if this department cannot function



properly. PR is liked “supplement” function which has the purpose of maintaining between company interest and external stakeholders. PR will be important if there are conflicts among them which can result in an emergency condition and will disturb the operation seriously. That is the reason, why PR function just takes a small part in almost all of PSC.

To get a better job result from their subordinates, from the management point of view, there is a strategy to make a successful initial attempt at upgrading expectations and obtaining a response and then to use this achievement as the foundation for increasingly ambitious steps (Schaffer, 1974).

- a. Select the goal.
- b. Specify the minimum expectations of results.
- c. Communicate the expectations.
- d. Monitor the project and delegate responsibility.

With this strategy, the manager can monitor, controlling and evaluating the effectiveness of their subordinates. For example, if the PR manager hires Humanities graduate to implement a CD program which is a new position in this PSC and the manager does not have much experience in this field, he can allow the CD officer to show her knowledge about CD program and they can discuss the goal-oriented together. Plant of Development (POD) and BP MIGAS CD SOP can be a guideline to execute the project. CD officer should also have deep knowledge about the supply chain management system in their company and BP MIGAS SOP. If the manager can allow the CD officer to learn about oil and gas operation, the specific minimum result can determine. When the project implementation is running, the manager can realize the channel of communication to explain the expectation and monitoring the project effectively because his subordinate already has an adequate “arsenal” to survive.

Career development also needs career management from the company besides individual career planning. With a lot of limitations, a new employee from a Humanities background can use HR policy to build their career. However, this needs special attention from management to understanding employee career paths from untraditional background. If the company can accommodate them, it will result in a win-win solution that gives positive feedback in the working environment.

It is not a big problem if the organization structure is vertical which is contains a lot of layers and the company has a wide structure in the PR Department. They can promote or rotate in their function without difficulties because the company already provides any position to support their career path. The problem is rising when the company rather small or has a flat organization structure and the PR function is just like a compliment. Although career

development is important for satisfaction and to prepare when the time to retirement comes, Humanities must aware to build their flexibility to learn various functions to adapt to the working environment.

If they still want to stay because there are no job opportunities out there, they can take an initiative to propose another new position in their department or creative to make job enrichment to show that their position is important. For example, if the company just have a PR Manager and one officer, the subordinate can take initiative to show that PR function is can develop into five functions such as Security, Government Relation, Media Relation, Communication or CSR. With an appointment from the manager, she can rotate to another function and develop this new job position to establish in the company after her last position can substitute by another person. With this strategy, the employee can show that they have sound deep knowledge about the oil and gas industry in a certain area, although their background is not applicable.

In a big company, individual career planning for Humanities can apply effectively. While they can show their high potentiality, this company perhaps will give any bright opportunities for them. For example, if Humanities commonly given the job position in CSR area, with a huge of PR function, they can rotate to another close function such as Security, Government Relation, Communication or Media Relation. Business Ethics or Sustainable Development Department also can accept them happily, if they can show that their capability is meaningful for the corporate strategy. If the PSC has goodwill and thinks that this “fossil” has good knowledge about business service, they will give General Affairs, Formalities or Industrial / Employee Relations position which is included in the HR Department. When they have the experience to implement various CD projects so they have sound deep understanding about Supply Chain Management including BP MIGAS Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) 007/PTK/VI/2004, experience in tender process with conduct owner estimate (OE) and evaluating the project, perhaps they will be assigned in Procurement Department. Moreover, when oil prices decrease until \$1 per barrel, maybe they can assist as Corrosion Engineer, Geophysicist or Subsurface because there are no engineers who want to pay only Rp 4.852.650 per month base on third party contract.

Willingness to learn about various functions in the oil and gas industry is an important point for Humanities to build their careers. With flat organization structure, when only limited person can fulfill managerial level, ability to work in various positions is mandatory when many functions integrated into one department. Good interpersonal communication is a competitive advantage to learn from another employee who has already deep experience.

They can also use any opportunity, for example, if there are Economic Valuation Technique Training from Ditjen Migas which is mandatory for all of PSC and the company do not have Environment officer yet so they send CD officer to attend the training, although, in the limited capacity, this officer can using the environment knowledge to prepare for her career plan, perhaps someday she will be assigned in the environment department.

According to Schein, individuals who move horizontally into second careers change their type of work but do not necessarily change the amount of their responsibilities, for example, a person may move from accounting to marketing or from engineering to human resources management and he refers to such career moves as horizontal or lateral career growth instead of vertical and radial moves (Feldman, 1987)

Horizontal movement or job rotation is an excellent strategy for Humanities to build a career in oil and gas, remembering that their background is not applicable directly with job demand and PSC commonly has a flat organization structure. Specialist level is one choice to provide personal career development if the managerial level is very limited. With this stage, they can improve their skills in a certain area and will reach a key position in the organizational structure. When the time is left and with a lot of experience, they can show their professionalism. Perhaps, someday there is an Archaeologist graduate who starts her career as a CSR officer and twenty years after that, she becomes a Procurement Manager and will retire happily.

#### **4. Conclusion**

As a graduate from not marketable discipline, Humanities must be realized to upgrade their competency to facing unemployment problem and accepted in industry demand.

As an industry which has a lot of impact with environment issues, oil and gas should improve their commitment to implement externalities policy more seriously, for an example recruit new employees from Humanities background to execute corporate engagement project in social and cultural aspects.

When they accepted as an employee, Humanities must develop their career seriously to prepare for the worst if they kicked out in advance from the company and learn of various functions in oil and gas industry is mandatory.

Horizontal movement is one strategy to develop career in imperfect condition, at this point is lack of background that is not directly applied with industry demand.

Last but not least, the opportunity to get a job is a special reward from oil and gas bourgeois for Humanities graduate, and they must answer this request with full of

commitment, loyalty and continuously upgrading their competency.

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