



# The Unwritten Rules You Must Understand Before Engaging With Government *Seminar*



**8-9 JULY 2026**

WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY  
9.00 AM - 5.00 PM



**MINES BEACH  
RESORT**

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~~RM 2999~~

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# INTRODUCTION

## 1 Understand How Government Really Works

Stop guessing. Learn how authority, mandates, and decision-making structures actually operate—so you engage with clarity, not assumptions.

## 2 Find the Real Decision Door

It's not about access—it's about accuracy. Identify where authority truly sits and how to approach it the right way.

## 3 Communicate in Government Language

Government doesn't act on urgency—it acts on alignment. Learn to frame proposals within mandates, roles, and measurable responsibilities.

## 4 Make the Right First Impression

First meetings aren't about pitching—they're about credibility. Signal that you understand their system, constraints, and risks.

## 5 Think Like Government Thinks

Decisions are driven by accountability, compliance, and audit defensibility—not preference. Position your value accordingly.

## 6 Influence Without Forcing

Real influence comes from trust and alignment—not persuasion. Learn how to build credibility within institutional environments.

## 7 Build Relationships That Last

Engagement doesn't end at "yes." Stay relevant by consistently aligning with priorities and reducing institutional risk.



# WHY YOUR COMPANY MUST ATTEND

In today's environment, engaging government effectively is no longer optional—it directly impacts your ability to **secure opportunities, navigate regulation, and grow sustainably**. Most organisations struggle not because of policy barriers, but because they misunderstand how government actually works. This often results in missed access, stalled proposals, and silent rejections that are difficult to diagnose.

This seminar provides a **practical, insider understanding of how government decisions are truly made**, going beyond formal procedures to reveal how authority, priorities, and internal expectations shape outcomes.

Participants will learn how to **identify the right entry points and decision-makers, position proposals** in ways that officers can act on, and **navigate institutional structures** with greater clarity and confidence. The program also addresses the common missteps that frequently delay or block progress, helping organisations engage more effectively from the outset.

More importantly, this seminar offers direct insight into how government officers **think, prioritise, and evaluate decisions** within their operating environment. This enables organisations to shift from **reactive engagement to a more structured and strategic approach**.

Grounded in real experience rather than theory, the session equips participants with **practical frameworks** they can apply immediately to build trust, **gain traction**, and achieve **more consistent outcomes** when working with government.



# PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

## 1 Build Real Understanding of Government Systems

Move beyond surface-level knowledge. Understand how structures, authority, and decision-making actually function inside government.

## 2 Enable Effective Public-Private Engagement

Learn how to engage government officers in a way that is strategic, ethical, and aligned with institutional expectations.

## 3 Demystify Policy and Decision Processes

Break down how policies are shaped, enforced, and coordinated across agencies—so you can navigate them with clarity.

## 4 Create Meaningful and Constructive Dialogue

Gain the ability to engage in discussions that reflect government priorities, administrative realities, and stakeholder expectations.

## 5 Strengthen Your Strategic Engagement Capability

Develop the skills to influence, collaborate, and align effectively with government—turning complexity into opportunity.



# AGENDA

## DAY 1 (8 JULY 2026)

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### Session Topic

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#### Session 1 & Session 2

### HOW THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT REALLY WORKS

Effective engagement with government starts with understanding where authority and decision power sit within organisational structures. Different government entities operate with distinct roles and priorities, and should never be approached in the same way. Government decisions follow structured processes shaped by mandate, delegation, and accountability.



**Datuk Dr Leow Chee Seng**  
*Senior Advisor,  
Humanology Sdn Bhd*

### FINDING THE DECISION DOOR

Finding the decision door is not about access alone, but about understanding where authority truly sits. Knowing how to knock on the right door means engaging the right institution, at the right level, with proposals aligned to what the system allows, requires, and prioritises. When engagement is aligned, decisions move. When it is not, even good ideas stall.



# AGENDA

## DAY 1 (8 JULY 2026)

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### Session      Topic

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#### Session 3

### WRITING LETTERS THAT MOVE GOVERNMENT



#### **Ms. Najihah Abas**

*Former Executive Director, MIDA*

*Independent Director, YBS International Bhd*

Government rarely acts on passion or urgency alone. It responds to clarity, mandate, and alignment. The secret to drafting letters that trigger action lies in framing the request within the recipient's legal authority, organisational role, and measurable responsibilities. A well-crafted letter speaks the language of policy, references the correct function, and makes it easy for the officer to act without risk or escalation. When a letter helps the reader justify action within their system, it stops being correspondence and starts becoming a decision tool.

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#### Session 4

### FIRST MEETING, LASTING IMPRESSION



#### **Dato Zainal Azman**

*Former Secretary General, MOA*

*Anti-Corruption Advisory Board, MACC*

First impressions matter more in government than many realise. The first meeting is not about selling ideas but about signalling credibility, respect for process, and an understanding of how the system works. Government officers read behaviour quickly. How you prepare, how you speak, and what you choose not to say all indicate whether you are a risk or a reliable partner. When the first interaction shows alignment with their role, constraints, and responsibilities, trust forms early and doors remain open for future engagement.

# AGENDA

## DAY 2 (9 JULY 2026)

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### Session Topic

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#### Session 1

### GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT MINDSET



#### **Dato' Seri Dr. Chen Chaw Min**

*Former Secretary-General, MOH*

*Chairman, IJN*

*Non-Executive Chairman, Optimax*

Government purchasing decisions are driven less by preference and more by mandate, accountability, and risk management. Understanding this mindset means recognising how compliance requirements, budget cycles, delegated authority, and audit defensibility shape every procurement decision. Effective positioning therefore focuses on alignment with scope, value-for-money justification, and ease of justification within the system, rather than on persuasion or pricing alone.

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#### Session 2

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF INFLUENCE



#### **Datuk Seri Dr. Mohd Azhar Hj. Yahaya**

*Former Secretary-General, MOSTI*

*Former Deputy Secretary-General, JPA*

Influence in government settings is built through trust, credibility, and alignment rather than persuasion. Understanding behavioural patterns within public institutions helps professionals build rapport by respecting roles, processes, and risk sensitivities. When psychological principles are applied with empathy and institutional awareness, engagement becomes collaborative, enabling smoother navigation of formal procedures and everyday administrative behaviour.

# AGENDA

## DAY 2 (9 JULY 2026)

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### Session Topic

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#### Session 3

### STAYING RELEVANT AFTER THE FIRST MEETING



#### **Dato' Sivasuriyamoorthy Sundara Raja**

*Former Deputy CEO, MIDA  
Advisor, NCT Group*

Maintaining relationships with government is less about constant engagement and more about consistent value. Trust is built when follow-through matches promises, communication respects hierarchy, and interactions continue to align with institutional priorities rather than personal requests. Strong relationships are sustained by being dependable, discreet, and useful over time. When government sees you as someone who reduces risk, supports their objectives, and understands their constraints, the relationship endures even as officers, policies, and leadership change.

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#### Session 4

### STRATEGIC PREPARATION



#### **Mr. Shakib Ahmad Shakir**

*Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Digital*

Effective engagement with high-ranking officials begins long before the meeting itself. Strategic preparation requires understanding the institution's mandate, the official's scope of authority, and the decision context in which they operate. When preparation is grounded in clarity and respect for the system, discussions become focused, relevant, and more likely to lead to constructive outcomes.

# 7 POWERFUL REASONS YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS THIS SEMINAR

## 1 Understand Where Decisions Actually Happen

Most engagements fail because people approach the wrong level. Learn how authority is structured—and where real decisions are made.

## 2 Stop Wasting Time on the Wrong Channels

Delays often come from misalignment, not rejection. Know exactly which institution, level, and pathway to engage from the start.

## 3 Turn Your Proposals into Decision-Ready Submissions

Government acts on clarity and alignment. Learn how to frame requests so officers can move them forward without friction.

## 4 Master the First Meeting That Opens Doors

Your first interaction signals whether you are a risk or a credible partner. Learn how to position yourself correctly from the start.

## 5 Align with How Government Evaluates Risk and Value

Decisions are shaped by compliance, accountability, and audit defensibility. Understand how to position your offering within that reality.

## 6 Avoid the Mistakes That Lead to Silence or Rejection

Most proposals don't fail—they stall. Learn the common missteps that cause delays, and how to avoid them entirely.

## 7 Stay Relevant Beyond the First Engagement

Getting a “yes” is only the beginning. Learn how to maintain trust, stay aligned with priorities, and remain valuable over time.



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## Datuk Seri Dr. Mohd Azhar Hj. Yahaya

*Former Secretary-General, MOSTI  
Former Deputy Secretary-General, JPA*

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Datuk Seri Dr. Mohd Azhar Bin Hj. Yahaya is a distinguished expert in psychology testing and personality assessments, with a profound background in industrial and organizational psychology. His academic journey includes a Master of Arts in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from the University of New Haven, Connecticut (1993), and a Ph.D. in the same field from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (2004). He further honed his leadership and strategic management skills through the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School (2009).

With over 35 years of experience in the public sector, Datuk Seri Dr. Mohd Azhar has been instrumental in driving psychological services and human resource management initiatives. As the former Director of the Psychological Service Division at the Public Service Department of Malaysia, he played a pivotal role in advancing the use of psychology testing to enhance organizational performance, employee well-being, and leadership development within government institutions.

Throughout his illustrious career, Datuk Seri Dr. Mohd Azhar has served in key leadership roles, including as Deputy Secretary-General at the Ministry of Health and Secretary-General at the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (MOSTI). His expertise in personality testing and behavioral insights has been integral to decision-making processes, particularly in talent management and organizational transformation.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mohd Azhar's contributions extend beyond the public sector. As the Chairman of Kumpulan Modal Perdana Sdn. Bhd., a government-linked technology venture capital company under MOSTI, he continues to emphasize the importance of psychological assessments in fostering innovative leadership and dynamic work environments.



## Dato' Seri Dr. Chen Chaw Min

*Former Secretary-General, MOH  
Chairman, IJN  
Non-Executive Chairman, Optimax*

Dato' Seri Dr. Chen Chaw Min received his Bachelor in Surveying (Second Upper) from University of Technology, Malaysia in 1985 and Masters in Business Administration (Finance) from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA in 1997. He subsequently went on to obtain his PhD in Finance from University Putra Malaysia in 2005.

Dato' Seri Dr. Chen started his career with the Malaysian Civil Service in 1988 and has held many posts in the government. His first posting was in the Ministry of Rural Development and from 1990 onwards; he has served in various divisions in the Ministry of Finance such as the Budget Division, Investment Division, Housing Loan Division, Finance Division and Fiscal and Economy Division of the Ministry. On 25th April 2014 he joined the Ministry of Health as Deputy Secretary General (Finance). On 4th July 2015, Dr. Chen was appointed as the Secretary General of the Ministry of Health Malaysia.

During his tenure as Secretary General of the Ministry of Health and until his retirement, he was actively involved in several National Policy Task Forces and Health-related Councils. He also played a pivotal role in spearheading the fight against Covid-19. He was appointed as the Chairman of Protect Health Malaysia and a board member of several government companies such as National Heart Institute (IJN), National Kenaf & Tobacco, Clinical Research Malaysia (CRM), Malaysia Health Tourism Council (MHTC) and Protect Health Corporation.

He has published in international and local journals and was invited to present papers at international conferences and seminars. Dato' Seri Dr. Chen has also attended several prestigious short courses, namely in Harvard Business School USA and Oxford University Said School of Business UK. He is also an alumnus of Razak School of Government. Dr. Chen retired officially from civil service on 4th February 2021.



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## Datuk Dr Leow Chee Seng

Senior Advisor, Humanology Sdn Bhd

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Datuk Dr. Leow is widely acclaimed for his stature as an esteemed researcher, consultant, and trainer of distinction. His professional journey has encompassed noteworthy roles, including that of a consultant for the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and a dedicated instructor and lecturer at the esteemed National Academy of Public Administration and Politics in Vietnam. Dr. Leow's remarkable influence extends to his membership on more than ten editorial boards for diverse academic journals, attesting to his profound scholarly insights.

Furthermore, he has successfully undertaken a comprehensive consultancy initiative. Datuk Dr. Leow has led and contributed to high-impact consultancy initiatives across major government agencies and institutions, including the Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia (LHDN), MIDA, PERODUA, CIDB, FAMA, and the Department of Fisheries Malaysia.

His work spans critical areas such as institutional restructuring, policy research, customer experience transformation, and strategic realignment, including involvement in initiatives related to the Petroleum Income Tax Act (PITA), succession planning, and organisational redesign within LHDN. He played a key role in national-level efforts such as the Malaysia Rationalisation Project, including the integration of InvestKL into MIDA, as well as restructuring projects across multiple agencies including Jabatan Kimia, PKNS, MYSA, and Jabatan Perhilitan—aligning institutional frameworks with national priorities.

Beyond restructuring, he has led strategic and operational initiatives for MIDA, including the development of sustainable revenue generation strategies through industrial park co-development, the creation of an AI-driven industrial talent database, and the strategic review and repositioning of MIDA as a champion for domestic investment.

His contributions also extend to stakeholder engagement strategies, national-level data systems to measure economic impact from tax incentives, and advisory roles in income generation initiatives, including for ASWARA. Today, he continues to support organisations in monetisation, commercialisation, and institutional transformation, with a strong focus on aligning business strategies with government priorities and decision frameworks.



## Dato' Zainal Azman Abu Seman

Former Secretary General, MOA  
Anti-Corruption Advisory Board, MACC

Dato' Zainal Azman bin Abu Seman is a distinguished Malaysian figure whose career spans decades of exemplary service in the public sector, culminating in his transition into politics. Hailing from Sungai Bayor, Selama, Perak, he has held several pivotal roles in Malaysia's civil service, including Deputy Director-General of the Public Service Department (JPA), Secretary-General of the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry, and State Secretary of Perak.

His academic journey began at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), followed by advanced studies at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and the National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN). Further enhancing his expertise, Dato' Zainal Azman completed professional programs at esteemed institutions such as Columbia University in the USA, the National University of Singapore (NUS), and the University of Wollongong in Australia. These educational experiences equipped him with a global perspective and deepened his proficiency in governance, digital transformation, and maritime enforcement. Throughout his civil service tenure, Dato' Zainal Azman was instrumental in modernizing public administration and promoting digital initiatives. Notably, in 2022, he played a key role in the MyDIGITAL GovTech Innovation partnership between the Malaysian government and Microsoft, aiming to enhance digital skills among civil servants and advance the nation's digital economy.

In 2022, Dato' Zainal Azman transitioned into the political arena, contesting the Kuala Sepetang state seat (N13) under the Pakatan Harapan (PH) coalition during Malaysia's 15th General Election (GE15). His candidacy was marked by his extensive administrative experience and deep understanding of governance, positioning him as a strong contender for the role of Menteri Besar of Perak should PH secure victory in the state.



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## Dato' Sivasuriyamoorthy Sundara Raja

*Former Deputy CEO, MIDA  
Advisor, NCT Group*

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Dato' Sivasuriyamoorthy Sundara Raja is a seasoned investment promotion leader with over 36 years of distinguished service at the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA), where he last served as Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Investment Promotion & Facilitation).

Throughout his career, he played a central role in shaping Malaysia's investment landscape, contributing to key national initiatives including the Industrial Master Plans, Malaysia Plans, and the formulation of investment policies and incentives. His experience spans strategic planning, policy advocacy, investment promotion, and cross-agency coordination.

He also led Malaysia's investment promotion efforts internationally, heading MIDA's offices in Germany (Cologne and Frankfurt), where he was responsible for attracting foreign direct investment from Europe and the Benelux region, and establishing MIDA's second office in Munich.

At the national level, he was instrumental in major initiatives such as the Domestic Investment Strategic Fund (DISF), the One Stop Centre (OSC) and Business Travellers Centre (BTC) during the COVID-19 period, as well as policy development related to industrial transformation and investment facilitation. He was appointed Deputy Chief Executive Officer in 2021, where he oversaw investment promotion and facilitation efforts during a period of significant national investment growth, before completing his tenure in 2025.

With deep, hands-on experience across policy, international investment, and government facilitation, Dato' Siva brings a rare and practical perspective on how investment decisions are shaped, evaluated, and executed within government systems.



## Mr. Shakib Ahmad Shakir

*Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Digital*

Shakib Ahmad Shakir is a veteran Malaysian civil servant with over 28 years of experience, currently serving as the Deputy Secretary-General (Strategic & Management) at the Ministry of Digital Malaysia. His career began in 1995 as a Diplomatic and Administrative Officer, with early postings in the Prime Minister's Department and the Prime Minister's Office. He later served as Principal Private Secretary to former Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Shakib has held various leadership roles, including Deputy Secretary-General (Strategic Communications & Creative Industry) at the Ministry of Communications and Multimedia Malaysia. In October 2018, he was appointed Acting Director-General of the National Film Development Corporation Malaysia (FINAS), where he oversaw efforts to strengthen the local film industry. In February 2021, he became Director-General of the Department of Manpower, focusing on workforce development and vocational training.

At the Ministry of Digital Malaysia, established in December 2023, Shakib plays a key role in advancing the nation's digital transformation. He represents Malaysia in regional forums, such as the ASEAN Economic Community meetings, advocating for initiatives like the ASEAN Artificial Intelligence Safe Network to harmonize AI safety standards across member states. Domestically, he supports programs like "Saya Digital," aimed at enhancing digital literacy and inclusivity among Malaysians.

Academically, Shakib holds a law degree from the United Kingdom and a master's degree with distinction in maritime policy from Australia. He also serves in the Royal Malaysian Navy Volunteer Reserve with the rank of Commander, reflecting his commitment to national service. Throughout his career, Shakib Ahmad Shakir has demonstrated dedicated public service and visionary leadership, significantly contributing to Malaysia's digital advancement and public administration.



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## Ms. Najihah Abas

Former Executive Director, MIDA  
Independent Director, YBS International Bhd

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Ms. Najihah Abas is an experienced leader with more than 30 years in Malaysia's investment, industrial development, and organisational transformation landscape. She has served in key national institutions such as the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA) and the Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPC), where she contributed to strengthening Malaysia's economic competitiveness and attracting high-value investments.

At MIDA, she held several senior leadership roles, including Executive Director of Corporate Management Services, Executive Director of Investment Promotion, and Executive Director of Manufacturing Development (Non-Resource), where she oversaw investment strategy, industry development, and internal corporate functions including human capital, finance, IT, and government relations. She also represented Malaysia internationally as Director of MIDA London, leading investment promotion efforts across the United Kingdom and Ireland, and engaging directly with multinational corporations.

Throughout her career, she has been actively involved in national-level initiatives and cross-agency coordination, including contributing to investment promotion strategies aligned with the National Investment Aspirations (NIA) and New Industrial Master Plan 2030 (NIMP 2030), as well as supporting initiatives such as the Electric Vehicle (EV) Taskforce under MITI. She has also played a key role in enhancing investor experience through her involvement in the Project Implementation Coordination Unit (PICU) and in facilitating cross-agency integration efforts, including the operational alignment of InvestKL into MIDA.

Her leadership extends beyond the public sector. She currently serves as Strategic Advisor to CZR Consulting Sdn Bhd and as an Independent Non-Executive Director of YBS International Berhad, contributing to corporate governance through the Audit, Nomination, and Remuneration Committees.

With deep experience in government relations, investment facilitation, and policy-driven development, combined with international exposure and board-level leadership, Ms. Najihah brings a rare perspective on how government and industry intersect—making her highly credible in guiding organisations navigating government engagement and investment landscapes.