

## **5S Brew at Kafe Kawan**

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### **Abstract**

The 5S Brew at Kafe Kawan tells the inspiring story of Wan Ali, a dedicated employee at a Japanese multinational in Malaysia, who embarked on a transformative journey in Japan. This narrative explores his discovery of the 5S concept - Seiri, Seiton, Seisō, Seiketsu, and Shitsuke - and its profound alignment with Islamic values of orderliness, cleanliness, and discipline. Upon returning to Malaysia, Wan Ali's newfound insights and unwavering dedication lead him to establish Kafe Kawan in Ipoh, Perak. The cafe becomes a symbol of quality management and ethical practice, blending 5S principles with the warmth of Malaysian hospitality and Islamic ethics. It emerges as a community beacon, illustrating the powerful impact of integrating cultural and ethical values in business, transcending cultural and industrial boundaries, and creating a thriving, meaningful enterprise.

Keywords: 5S Methodology, Islamic Ethics, Quality Management

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### **Monologue**

*“As I stand on the brink of a new chapter in my life, I am thinking back on the path that brought me to this point. I spent a year in Japan, a place very different from Malaysia, and it completely changed not only how I saw the world but also how I*

*approached my work. Beyond my wildest expectations, the peaceful, well-organized streets of Japan have taught me more than the busy streets of Kuala Lumpur.*

*I discovered a harmony that spoke to my spirit as I meandered through Tokyo's calm coffee cafes. I found the essence of the 5S philosophy there—the precise organisation and the serene atmosphere. It resonated with me and fit in perfectly with the principles of Islam that I find so important. This was about building a sanctuary, a place where the soul might find calm, not merely about efficiency or cleanliness.*

*I am now imbued with a sense of purpose as I get ready to take this philosophy back to Malaysia and incorporate these ideas into the design of my very own café. More than just a coffee shop, Kafe Kawan will serve as a symbol of the knowledge gained and the gaps between civilizations. It will be a place where warmth and efficiency coexist, and each cup of coffee will remind you of a voyage across continents and cultures.”*

Wan Ali, a devoted employee at a prominent Japanese multinational, stood at a crossroads of fate in the heart of Malaysia, amidst the bustle of busy streets and towering skyscrapers. He had recently received the surprising news that he had been selected for a training programme in Japan for a full year. Wan Ali shared in his loved ones in a warm living room as they surrounded him, listening to his fears.

The words "I can't believe they picked me for this" came out of Wan Ali's mouth with a trace of shame. "A whole year in Japan... it's a big change."

Ahmad, his companion, chuckled loudly from across the room. "Wan, this is a chance of a lifetime! Think of what you'll learn there. And the Japanese efficiency, it's legendary!"

Wan Amirah who is Wan Ali's sister, spoke out as well, her enthusiasm evident in her dazzling eyes. "And don't forget the coffee, Abang Long! You might finally find a blend that lives up to your high standards!"

Wan Ali eventually arrived in the land of the rising sun as the days stretched into weeks. The peaceful orderliness and orderliness of Japan's streets stood in sharp contrast to the chaos of Malaysia. Adapting to new methods of work and learning new things filled Wan Ali's days. However, his true inspiration came during the peaceful hours, in the hidden coffee shops of Tokyo.

During a quiet evening at a well maintained coffee shop, Wan Ali started up a chat with the proprietor, a gracious old man who was deeply passionate about his work. "Your coffee shop... it's so organised, so peaceful," Wan Ali commented, his cup of coffee prepared to perfection.

With wrinkles in the corners of his eyes, the owner grinned. "Ah, my friend, that is the essence of our way. It's not just about serving coffee. It's about creating harmony, order – a haven for the soul."

Wan Ali felt a profound emotion stirred up by these remarks. He started to view his environment as more than just an admirable source of foreign ideals; it was a source

of ideas that could be accepted and transformed. Something he had never encountered in his own country was the balanced combination of efficiency and calmness exemplified by his workplace's rigorous organisation and his disciplined yet quiet way of life.

Wan Ali came to the realisation that his year in Japan had been more than just professional training as the year drew to a close. It had been an eye-opening adventure that changed the way he saw the world and his career. He was ready to go back to Malaysia, brimming with inspiration and fresh information, and he couldn't wait to convey it in his own special way.

### **A 5S Realisation**

With his family gathered in the nice living room of their Malaysian home, Wan Ali felt a rush of enthusiasm as he started to recount his adventures in Japan. His normally serene and introspective eyes shined with the fervour that comes from being inspired and discovered.

"You know, I've learned something incredible in Japan," Wan Ali began, his voice steady but brimming with excitement. "It's called the 5S concept."

With an insatiable need for knowledge, his cousin Hafiz leaned forward, his interest aroused. "5S? What's that?"

In his detailed explanation, Wan Ali used hand gestures to arrange his ideas, much like the concept he was about to present. "It's a philosophy - Seiri, Seiton, Seisō, Seiketsu, and Shitsuke," according to Wan Ali. "Sort, Straighten, Shine, Standardise, and Sustain. It's not just about keeping things in order; it's a whole approach to efficiency, respecting your surroundings, and leading a disciplined life."

A woman of profound faith and profound wisdom, Wan Ali's aunt listened carefully and nodded in comprehension. "That sounds a lot like the principles we've been taught in our faith, doesn't it? The importance of cleanliness and orderliness in Islam."

"Indeed," Wan Ali concurred, his grin expanding. "It's fascinating how these principles align with our Islamic values. It's about respecting the environment, maintaining harmony in our spaces, whether it's a sprawling factory or a quaint coffee shop."

Another coffee lover and lifelong friend of Wan Ali, Amir, interjected with a question that had been bothering him. "So, how did this change the way you saw things there?"

As he considered the far-reaching effects of his encounters, Wan Ali halted briefly. "It changed everything," he responded, his voice betraying his awe. "In Japan, even the smallest coffee shops practise these principles. Everything has its place, each process is meticulously refined, and there's a sense of calm and order everywhere. It made me realise how even the simplest spaces can be elevated through discipline and thoughtful care."

Over the course of the evening, Wan Ali related stories about the 5S coffee shops he had visited. He went on to talk about how these encounters had struck a chord with

him, describing the baristas' silent harmony with their surroundings and the calm precision with which they worked. Wan Ali saw the 5S concept as more than just a collection of rules; it was a philosophy that reflected his core beliefs and changed the way he looked at making the world a better place via more balance and efficiency.

Incredulous and proud of Wan Ali's development and the wisdom he had received from a culture so different from their own, yet fundamentally similar, his loved ones listened intently as he recounted his experiences.

### **Aspirations of Malaysian Coffee**

After ten years of dedicated devotion, Wan Ali returned to Malaysia inspired. He embarked on an entrepreneurial journey armed with the knowledge he had acquired from his time in Japan and his dogged determination. He dreamed of a one-of-a-kind cafe that would exude Islamic virtues, the welcoming spirit of Malaysia, and the 5S methodology.

Wan Ali declared, "I've made a decision," his voice calm but full of anticipation. "After all these years in Japan, I've decided to start my own venture."

Looking at him with a blend of pride and curiosity, his mother, a figure of constant support, gazed at him. "Oh? What have you planned, my son?"

With his eyes sparkling with ambition, Wan Ali leaned forward. "I'm going to open a cafe, but not just any cafe. I want to create a place that reflects everything I've learned and cherished. A cafe that embodies the 5S principles I've seen in Japan, combined with the warmth of our Malaysian hospitality and the ethical values of our Islamic faith."

An entrepreneur for most of his life, his uncle arched an eyebrow in curiosity. "That's a bold move, Wan. Blending the 5S principles in a cafe setting here in Malaysia – how do you plan to do that?"

With an unmistakable picture taking shape in his head, Wan Ali responded with assurance. "Every aspect of the cafe, from the layout to the operations, will be aligned with the 5S concept. We'll have a place for everything and everything in its place. Cleanliness and order will be our top priorities, ensuring a serene and welcoming environment for our customers."

Maya, his cousin, who is always up for exploring new ideas, joined in. "And I bet the menu will reflect our local flavours too, right?"

Wan Ali grinned and gave a playful nod. "Absolutely, Maya. We'll offer a fusion of traditional Malaysian flavours with a modern twist, all served with the highest standards of quality and care."

Wan Ali was the object of Amir's serious gaze as he reclined in his chair. "It's a great blend, Wan. The discipline and efficiency of 5S and our rich Malaysian culture. It's unique, something that will stand out."

As the discussion progressed, thoughts and ideas were passed around the group. Knowing that the path ahead would be difficult but rewarding, Wan Ali soaked up every word and nugget of wisdom. The unwavering backing of his loved ones and the advice of his acquaintances would serve as the foundation for his ambition.

Wan Ali's goal remained as strong as ever as the night came to an end. He had a vision for his café that went beyond being a mere company. It would represent cultural peace, be a hub where efficiency and friendliness intertwine, and each cup of coffee would be a reflection of a cross-cultural journey.

### **Standardising 5S Practices**

Amidst verdant scenery in Ipoh, Perak, Kafe Kawan came to life, fulfilling Wan Ali's ambition. His life's work and his beliefs came to life in this cafe, which was more than just a building. From the carefully placed furnishings to the spotless cleanliness that welcomed each guest, this establishment exuded an air of perfect organisation. Exemplifying the ideal combination of consistency and quality, the cafe's standardised procedures were followed by every aspect, even the customer service. In every area of Kafe Kawan, you could feel the soul of Shitsuke—the determination to constantly uphold these standards.

Hafiz, his cousin, exclaimed, "Look at this place, Wan!" as he marvelled at the carefully organised tables. "You've really brought a piece of Japan here with this organisation."

Wan Ali escorted them through the café with a smile on his face. "The details are crucial," he emphasised. "Every piece of furniture, every item, is placed with thought. It's Seiton - everything in its rightful place for maximum efficiency and aesthetics."

Reaching out to touch the immaculate counter, his aunt said, "And the cleanliness, it's just impeccable. It's like stepping into a different world."

"That's Seisō for you," was the response from Wan Ali. "I wanted to ensure that the café isn't just clean, but that it shines. It's about taking pride in our space, a principle deeply rooted in both the 5S and our Islamic values."

Their tour guide, Mr. Lim, stopped what he was doing to convey his congrats from a nearby café. "I've been running my café for years, Wan Ali, but this is something else. How do you maintain such consistency?"

Wan Ali, who was shaking Mr. Lim's hand, "Thank you, Mr. Lim. It's all about Seiketsu, standardising our processes. From how we brew our coffee to the way we serve, everything follows a standard procedure to ensure quality and consistency."

As if to convey his comprehension, Mr. Lim nodded, clearly impressed. "And the discipline to keep it all going, that's something special."

"Yes, that's Shitsuke, the discipline to sustain these standards," said Wan Ali. "It's a continuous effort, a commitment from me and my team to uphold these principles every single day."

As the night went on, loved ones mixed and mingled, relishing in Kafe Kawan's one-of-a-kind ambiance. A welcoming atmosphere was created by the combination of the sound of people talking and the smell of coffee.

Amir, his friend, remarked as he sipped his expertly prepared coffee, "You've done more than open a cafe, Wan. You've created a haven where efficiency and hospitality blend seamlessly."

As he took in the joyful expressions on his guests' faces, Wan Ali was filled with contentment. A symbol of his journey, Kafe Kawan brought together the precise organisation of Malaysian hospitality with the warmth of his faith and the 5S concept. It was more than just a dream come true; it was a reflection of his journey. The spirit of Shitsuke, the discipline to uphold these standards, was evident in every aspect of Kafe Kawan, guaranteeing that every guest would have an unforgettable experience.

### **Sejahtera at Cafe 5S**

Despite setbacks, Wan Ali persisted in his goal of making *Sejahtera* and the 5S technique integral parts of his cafe. As the cafe was filled with the soft murmur of patrons, Wan Ali got together with a circle of friends, family, and fellow business owners to talk about his novel strategy.

A man of profound insight and knowledge, his uncle was the one who initially broke the ice. "Wan, I've seen many cafes, but Kafe Kawan feels different. Tell me more about this *Sejahtera* you speak of."

With a calm expression on his face, Wan Ali started to elaborate. "Uncle, *Sejahtera* is more than just a word for us. It's about creating a space where peace and completeness reside. It's about nurturing the '*insan kamil*' – the perfect human being – in all of us. I believe that a simple cup of coffee can be a medium for this."

Consistent cafe-goer and buddy of his, Amir, nodded in accord. "It's true. Every time I come here, there's a sense of tranquility that I don't find elsewhere. The atmosphere here is just different."

Mrs. Tan, the proprietor of a nearby bistro, leaned in, her curiosity aroused. "But how do you infuse *Sejahtera* into a cafe setting? It sounds fascinating but challenging."

Around the cafe, Wan Ali waved. "It's in everything we do, Mrs. Tan. From the way we greet our customers to how we present our coffee. Each step is done with mindfulness and respect. We believe in creating an environment where our customers can find a moment of peace in their busy lives."

He was interrupted by his inquisitive cousin Hafiz. "And combining that with 5S, it must be quite a task to balance efficiency with such a profound concept."

Wan Ali acknowledged, "Indeed, Hafiz. The 5S ensures our operations are smooth and efficient, while *Sejahtera* brings a deeper meaning to our work. We sort, straighten, shine, standardise, and sustain not just our physical space but also our approach to service and customer engagement. This harmony creates a unique experience for everyone who walks through our doors."

Conversation, like the coffee, became easier to follow as the evening progressed. Family members recounted tranquil moments they had experienced at the cafe, while business entrepreneurs spoke about how to put this principle into practice at their own cafes.

With a kind grin, Wan Ali's aunt expressed what many felt as they said their goodbyes. "Wan, you've not just opened a cafe; you've created a haven. A place where people come not just for coffee, but for a taste of *Sejahtera*. And that's truly special."

Looking around his cafe, Wan Ali had a profound feeling of contentment. With the merging of 5S principles and the essence of *Sejahtera*, Kafe Kawan became more than simply a coffee shop; it became a haven where people could escape the chaos of their lives and enjoy a cup of peace.

### **Cafe 5s featuring *Ulul al-albab***

The man behind this one-of-a-kind combination, Wan Ali, hosted an evening of contemplation and conversation in his café, inviting friends, family, and fellow business owners.

Wan Ali started the conversation as they sat at the rustically elegantly placed tables, enjoying the thick scented coffee that Kafe Kawan was known for. "You know, for me, combining 5S with *Ulul al-albab* is about creating an environment that encourages thoughtfulness and reflection, leading to a *sejahtera* way of life."

"Wan, could you tell me more about *Ulul al-albab* and how it relates to what we've been through here at the café?" his cousin Ayesha asked, her interest piqued by the idea.

Wan Ali, looking thoughtfully at him, responded, "*Ulul al-albab* refers to those endowed with intellect and insight. It's about being mindful, always thinking, reflecting, and acting in ways that promote peace and well-being. Here, at Kafe Kawan, every cup of coffee serves as a starting point for this journey."

According to Mr. Kumar, a fellow café owner who really appreciates Wan Ali's work, "I've noticed this in your staff's approach. There's a calm, reflective quality in their service. Is this part of practicing *Ulul al-albab*?"

"Indeed," Wan Ali agreed with a nod. "We train our staff not just in the practicalities of café management but also in embodying these values. We believe that serving coffee is more than a transaction; it's an opportunity to encourage contemplation and tranquilly."

One of Wan Ali's closest friends, Amir, voiced his opinion. "Every time I come here, I feel a sense of serenity. It's like the hustle of the outside world pauses for a while. I suppose that's the *sejahtera* experience you aim for."

Wan Ali seemed pleased. "Precisely, Amir. The idea is to create a space where our customers can pause, reflect, and find balance in their busy lives. The 5S

methodology ensures that the environment supports this – organised, clean, and efficient, allowing for a peaceful experience."

Throughout the evening, the group continued to explore how to apply these philosophical ideas to their daily work. Many of the relatives who frequented Kafe Kawan spoke about how the peaceful atmosphere had become an oasis where they could relax and think. The proprietors of other cafes thought about how they may implement comparable policies in their own businesses.

One other café owner, Mrs. Lee, put it this way: "Wan Ali, what you've created here is not just a café. It's a sanctuary for the mind and soul. You've shown us how a simple cup of coffee can be the beginning of a journey towards mindfulness and peace."

After everyone had left, it was obvious that Kafe Kawan had been more than a success story for Wan Ali's business spirit. An oasis of peace and contemplation in the middle of Ipoh, it was the product of a more profound comprehension of life, where the concepts of 5S and Ulul al-albab met.

### **Much More Than Just Coffee Scent**

Wan Ali's vision and passion were on full display at Kafe Kawan in the middle of Ipoh's busy core. The neighbourhood took great pride in this one-of-a-kind enterprise, which had evolved into much more than a coffee shop. As the café hummed with the contented murmurs of its patrons, Wan Ali took a seat with a gathering of loved ones who had played a significant role in his voyage.

The discussion was started by his sister Wan Amirah, who was absolutely beaming with pride. "Wan, you've really created something special here. Kafe Kawan isn't just a café; it's a part of the community's soul now."

According to Wan Ali, who was enjoying his special coffee mix, "Thank you, Amirah. My aim was always to create more than just a café. I wanted a space that reflects our values, a place where quality, ethics, and comfort are not just words but a living reality."

A close friend of Wan Ali's, Yusuf, who had been there from the start, chimed in, saying, "And you've done it brilliantly, brother. The way you've integrated the 5S principles with our Islamic teachings, it's remarkable. There's a sense of discipline and peace here that's hard to find elsewhere."

Nodding in agreement was Wan Ali's uncle, who had served as his tutor. "Your dedication to ethical practices, especially in today's fast-paced business world, is commendable. It's not just about making profits; you've shown that a business can thrive on principles and values."

Overhearing the discussion, a cluster of frequent customers joined in. Mrs. Siti, an esteemed member of the community, was one of them who spoke up. "We come here not just for the coffee, which is excellent, by the way, but for the experience. The sense of joy, safety, and belonging you've created here is something we all cherish."



Mrs. Lim, her friend, added, "Yes, and it's so heartening to see a place that upholds such strong ethical practices. It sets an example for other businesses in our community."

From the beginning of Kafe Kawan's history to plans for the future, the talk flowed naturally as the night progressed. Many people spoke about how Wan Ali's story had touched their life, whether it was in their careers or in their personal pursuits.

Reflecting on the journey, Wan Ali felt a profound sense of fulfilment. "When I started Kafe Kawan, I hoped to create a place that embodied the principles I believe in. Seeing how it has positively impacted our community and inspired others, it makes all the challenges worthwhile."

Everyone left agreeing that Kafe Kawan was more than just a café. It stood out as an exemplar of a place that not only embraced but also cherished conventional management principles, cultural diversity, and religious beliefs. The Ipoh community held Wan Ali's legacy in high esteem because of the impact he had on their lives.

### **Kafe Kawan's Enduring Impact**

Situated in the very centre of Ipoh, Kafe Kawan has become an illuminating example of the extraordinary merging of cultural and ethical principles in business. Wan Ali reflected on this trip with a group of aspiring entrepreneurs who had sought his guidance on a sunny afternoon as the café was bustling with its typical mix of locals and visitors.

"You can see," Wan Ali said, waving around the busy café, "that Kafe Kawan is more than just a coffee shop. It exemplifies the profound impact that traditional values and moral principles can have on a company."

"How did you manage to blend these aspects so seamlessly, Wan Ali?" one of the young entrepreneurs inquired, clearly captivated.

Wan Ali grinned as he thought back on his time spent training in Japan. "It all started when I was a trainee in Japan. I was initially hesitant, out of my comfort zone. But there, I learned about the 5S principles, which are universal. They're not confined to any one culture or industry. I realised these principles could be the foundation of something much larger."

As Mr. Tan, a local businessman who had known Wan Ali from the beginning of Kafe Kawan, put it, "And you've woven these principles with the teachings of Islam beautifully. The sense of community and ethical responsibility here is palpable."

Wan Ali acknowledged, "Exactly, Mr. Tan. The ethical teachings of Islam, emphasising honesty, quality, and community welfare, align perfectly with 5S. Together, they create an environment that's not just about transactions but about building relationships and fostering a sense of belonging."

"So, it's not just about the coffee?" asked a woman with entrepreneurial aspirations.

Wan Ali said, "The coffee is important, of course. But it's more about the experience we provide. Here, every cup of coffee serves as a bridge connecting people, cultures, and values. We're not just a café; we're a community space where people come to find a sense of connection and peace."

With the discussion coming to a close, the group was filled with wonder and motivation. Thanks to Wan Ali's foresight and hard work, Kafe Kawan had become an example of the great possibilities of combining cultural and religious values with traditional management methods. It was a model of how a company could go beyond making a profit and leave a lasting impact on the people it served.

### **Epilogue**

Today, Kafe Kawan stands tall in Ipoh, serving as a reminder of the trip that I, Wan Ali, have made. Lessons learnt from the streets of Malaysia to the heart of Japan have been realised in this small café. A singular oasis has been formed by the merging of Islamic norms and the rich tapestry of Malaysian hospitality with the 5S principles. Customers find an experience—a break from the hectic pace of their lives—here, in addition to a cup of coffee.

Observing customers from diverse backgrounds coming and going, I observe more than simply the prosperity of a company. I envision a community emerging, a place where individuals can stop, think, and get together. The values I took up and modified have inspired people to pursue their personal and professional goals even outside of Kafe Kawan.

Kafe Kawan is now an integral part of the community and a symbol of the success that can be achieved in business when ethical and cultural values are combined. The voyage that started with a cautious step into the unknown has resulted in a legacy that goes beyond coffee smells. It is a legacy of moral behaviour and cultural harmony as well as evidence of the long-lasting effects of uniting people from different backgrounds by promoting common ideals.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. How can the principles of 5S be adapted to various business environments, and what challenges might arise during this adaptation?
2. In what ways do cultural and religious values impact business ethics and management practices, and how can they contribute to sustainable business models?
3. How can businesses balance the need for efficiency and organization with the goal of creating a welcoming and culturally rich customer experience?

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