WRITING often involves intense concentration. Even the most skilled writers need space and time to generate good copies. To ensure productivity, members of the UniRazak Case Writers Club who had earlier attended a workshop on the Harvard Method at Golden Sands Resort, Penang, were bussed up to Hyatt Regency Kuantan to produce cases for the third and fourth volumes of case studies due to be published in June 2011.

One of the case writers, Khairul Najmi Idris spoke of the productive time they had. He also recounted a hilarious event during which they nearly left behind a member of their 21-strong team on the way to Kuantan.

“The journey started at the university’s Pintar campus. By 8:30am, breakfast was served and soon, the 21 members were on the way. It rained almost all the way to Kuantan. Some of the members like Dr Dewi Sapuan took advantage of the silence and started preparing for her cases immediately. Armed with her netbook and her Blackberry, she was busy surfing the internet and downloading materials for her cases. Amri was busy going through his notes and junior staff like Mislan and Chiew were quietly talking at the back of the bus. Only our facilitator, Prof Nor Khomar Ishak, was engrossed in her thoughts staring out the window. Her duties would start in the evening,” Khairul said.

“The journey was uneventful till we reached Temerloh R&R. After having light snacks and using the restrooms, the members quickly boarded the bus. As the bus slowly joined the Karak Kuantan Highway, Nor Hayati’s phone rang. She screamed for the driver to stop. We had left Khursiah behind!”

“The driver managed to reverse slightly and the whole team cheered for Khursiah as she quickly boarded the bus. All of the members had a good laugh,” he said.

Khairul said as soon as the members checked into Hyatt Regency, they were given 30 minutes to unpack. The first session started at 3:30 pm with the case writers divided into three groups and the two facilitators, Prof Nor Khomar and Prof Dr Syed Omar.
Syed Agil briefed them. The writers were to write two cases over the weekend. Club president, Assoc Prof Datin Dr Raja Hanaliza Raja Ahmad Tajudin was there to encourage members.

"The South China Sea was rough and it rained the whole weekend. The cool and wet weather kept the case writers indoors and glued to their computers. Members were asked to sign a pledge to finish their required work on time," he said.

Sharp at 3.30 pm on Friday, the facilitators briefed the writers on the schedule outlined for that afternoon - all the writers were asked to download notes, rearrange their notes and have brief outlines of their cases written. They had to present their cases to their group and discuss it after dinner. "The next day, on Saturday, they had to write the whole day. The minimum target was one short case and one comprehensive case. Everyone was thoroughly engrossed in their writing. Occasionally there were groans. The writers stopped only for meals, 'pit-stops' and dinner at a Chinese restaurant. The facilitators kept reminding the writers to employ the Harvard Method of writing cases. They were advised to also submit questions, answers and instructional guides," said Khairul.

On Sunday, the writers had only the morning to finish their cases. In the afternoon, each writer presented their work for comments. Everyone was tired but each felt satisfied with his or her effort. All the comments helped to improve their work. "All in all, the high impact group managed to come up with 35 short cases and 22 comprehensive cases. The trip back on Monday was very quiet as almost everyone slept all the way back. The writers were given two weeks to polish up their work before submission. It was a very productive weekend for the case writers," said Khairul.

Contact Puan Noor Hayati Ruslan (nhayati@pintar.unirazak.edu.my) for details on the case studies. Volume 1 & Volume 2 are for sale at KMyo each or RM80 for both.