

Age of Innovation



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Executive Director

Integration

More than a year has past since Koyo Seiko and Toyoda Machine Works merged and set sail as the new company JTEKT Corporation. I am very grateful to all those whose support made embarking on this new voyage possible. Our new company, comprising the four product divisions steering systems, driveline components, bearings, and machine tools, possesses a broad range of technology related to automobile components. In support of this, it also possesses a wide range of core technology related to such areas as tribology, production engineering and control. It is our corporate mission to utilize these wide ranges of core technology and synergistically integrate the excellent cultures and human resources of the two companies in response to the expectations of customers.

Innovation

Now several years into the 21st century, we are witnessing a quiet but rapid change to an age of new needs and an exit from the age of mass-production, mass-consumption and generally admiring all things. We have entered the age of IT and the Internet and can now obtain enormous amounts of information instantaneously and easily wherever on the earth we happen to be. As a result, human mobility related to such areas as jobs and shopping is undergoing significant change. Moreover, rapid progress in the fields of biotechnology and genetic engineering has reshaped both medical care and even the food we eat. The age of ultra-long life is just around the corner. Advanced nanotechnology has made it possible to move objects with micron-level accuracy, process areas of parts heretofore inaccessible, and see extremely small objects heretofore not visible. The latest robots not only can perform bipedal walking but also can carry out various actions more accurately than humans. Industrial robots with joints perform processes that can't be handled by conventional machines. Today's common sense will not be common sense tomorrow in many fields. Regarding the field of steering, one of JTEKT's main fields of involvement, hydraulic power steering is being replaced by electric power steering (EPS). An automatic parking system has already commercialized, and active steering and even automatic driving systems are expected to be on the market in the near future. Cities and transportation structures will become multilayered, and people will be

able to move about automatically and safely. The world depicted in the comic book "Astro Boy" is gradually becoming a reality.

In view of such changes, a big challenge facing us is the maintaining of excellence in development and "monozukuri" manufacturing. To succeed, we must exercise ingenuity without being bound to conventional ways of thinking and achieve accelerated improvement based on a greater breadth of knowledge without simply following conventional methods. We also mustn't forget the importance of speed. Although the physical amount of time in a day hasn't changed, it would seem the mass being packed into each moment has significantly increased. Regarding manufacturing, we won't be able to beat the competition unless we achieve output several times the current amount (perhaps 7~8 times the current amount, like the analogy of dog years). There is a well-known story about a company that achieved great success using vacuum tubes and therefore was slow to begin development work in order to switch over to transistors and suffered a tremendous setback because of that. In order for us to avoid the same fate, I believe now is the time to break free from existing ways of thinking, forget past successes, and pursue new challenges without fear of failure.

Monozukuri Manufacturing that Satisfies and Impresses

Customers expect to receive products that satisfy them, but when they receive products that impress them, they recognize this as added value. We can say products possess added value when they impress customers because of their novelty or having greater performance, beauty, user-friendliness, etc. than expected. It is essential that we not only provide customers with completely satisfying quality, our "lifeline" as a supplier, but also continually develop technology not possessed by competitors and supply "Only One" products that are truly impressive.

Lastly, as global competition continues to intensify and technology evolves, in order that JTEKT as a "monozukuri" manufacturer may continually provide impressive products, we must strive to strengthen our corporate foundation, not forget the basics of stable "monozukuri" manufacturing, and endeavor untiringly to achieve innovation in development and manufacturing.