

Overcoming an Era of Drastic Reform

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Currently, the automobile industry is said to be facing a once-in-a-century time of drastic reform, and with changes such as self-driving, electrification, expanded utilization of cars through MaaS, and participation by other industries (e.g. GAFA), it is becoming extremely difficult to foresee how the future will unfold even a decade from now. Amidst this, in order for JTEKT to achieve sustainable growth, I believe the keys are whether we can develop impressive groundbreaking products, and build a business model to support this.

Impressing customers

When we say “groundbreaking products,” the majority are in fact made through fusion with existing technologies, and I believe it is possible to achieve practical realization of products by devising a business model to leverage such technologies. First, we should ascertain the current situation, sincerely listen to various requests, then utilize the technologies at our disposal to the maximum extent possible. If we follow these steps, I believe we can create products that impress customers beyond their expectations.

For example, Dyson’s air-purifying bladeless fan/heater does not only has a good design, but also purifies the air all year round with higher efficiency the longer it is used. Moreover, it is easy to clean due to being bladeless. I believe these features are what make it an impressive product. The ingenuity of eliminating blades on this product is groundbreaking, however I believe that the majority of the technologies utilized to achieve this were existing technologies.

You have probably heard the phrase used by the Toyota Group of “*Open your mind, and look at the great world outside,*” and I think this is precisely the right mindset to learn about the world, evaluate the value of products, understand customers’ expectations, and start developing impressive groundbreaking products.

Data utilization is the key

To JTEKT, a monozukuri company, the provision of services and data utilization are mandatory requirements. With Uber, drivers and passengers alike are given a score, and if this score is good, drivers get more business, and passengers get to ride for less cost. This is one example of how data can impact an individual’s lifestyle. In other words, I think leveraging data is key to the development of products and services.

Are you familiar with the term “e-nenpi (fuel efficiency)”?

Automobile users provide data on actual fuel efficiency to quantify the actual fuel efficiency performance of a vehicle. Customers refer to this data when purchasing cars. I truly do believe that a company’s growth is determined by its ability to develop No. 1 products and it is advantageous to cleverly utilize data.

Never forget your first heart

Recently, I had an opportunity to watch a Noh play. This gave me a hint regarding management for the reason that it had continued for 650 years since the age of Kan’ami and Zeami. In order to sustain Noh, Noh actors constantly possessed the mindset of “never forgetting their first heart” and this is explained in a book entitled “Noh – The Secret to Lasting 650 Years” written by Noh actor, Noboru Yasuda.

The explanation is as follows: “The first character of the word “shoshin” (first heart) comprises the clothing radical and the symbol for “katana” (sword) in Japanese, and the original meaning is “to cut clothing with a sword”...omitted...“Never forgetting your first heart” means a person must take every opportunity to cut off their old self, and be reborn as their new self.”

A slight elaboration of this is “possessing the resolution to continue the challenge of self-transformation no matter how old a person gets to think of newly obtained bitter trials from the position relevant to the occasion,” and

although it differs to the general meaning, I can really empathize.

Build an abundant society

JTEKT's corporate goal is to "contribute to the happiness of people and the abundance of society through product manufacturing that wins the trust of society." To achieve this, we must continue offering impressive "No.1 & Only One" products. As such, each and every JTEKT group employee must possess a global perspective while discovering and creating issues to be addressed, and unite as one in establishing organizations, systems, and human resources able to resolve such issues. I humbly ask all of you for your ongoing support.