

ONE-PAGE INFORMATION - KAIZEN No.14

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■ Military Procurement Makes a Model of Toyota Motor

According to Ashahi Shimbun, a nation-wide Japanese newspaper (Dec. 16, 2002), Japan Self-Defense Agency has decided to learn from Toyota Motor how to procure expensive weapon systems such as Aegis destroyers, new type tanks, anti-submarines at reasonable prices. They are particularly interested in Kaizen and the CE(Chief Engineer) system of Toyota Motor. The “ Chief Engineer” is selected and assigned for any single big project (a new car development) to go over from product concept stage, market research, product development and production down to sales from financial (cost) and technical aspects.

The CE system is believed to remove the bureaucratic red-tape of conventional procurement system of the Self Defense Agency.

Toyota Production System has been successfully used by many other industries in Japan such as car dealers, hospitals, hotels and restaurants.

■ A Revolution – Sushi-Bar on Moving Conveyors



Two pieces of sushi (sliced raw fish on rice) on plate are moving around on a tiny moving belt conveyor through-out the restaurant. The guest picks up any plate from the conveyor and eats the sushi that he selects. New plates are being replenished incessantly by professional sushi cooks at the corner. Payment is very easy. You just count the number of plates by different colors which you consumed.

The sushi price is instantly calculated by different colors of plate. For example, the red plate is ¥100, yellow is ¥150, purple is ¥200. At some advanced sushi-bars, a special electronic counter scans along the edge of the piles of plates and the total payment is instantly shown.

■ Mr. Kaizen-----President of Suzuki Motor

NHK, Japan public television station, televised a few day ago, a special program nation-wide featuring Mr. Osamu Suzuki, 72 year-old chairman of Suzuki Motor, a successful automobile company with motor bikes and light weight passenger cars with 660cc engine. He is known as the Man of Kaizen and Gemba.

He always says that Kaizen is endless as long as you firmly determine to eliminate Muda from Gemba. He warns that any good system can be “ fatigued” and must be revamped to meet the time. He challenges now to produce the “ made-in Japan “ 50cc bikes at comparable selling price with imported Chinese counterparts with better quality by using 30 times more expensive Japanese hourly workers than Chinese counterparts.