

ONE-PAGE INFORMATION - KAIZEN No.2

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■ April The First Is The Starting Point Of Many Things In Japan

The school year, starts from April 1, so does the fiscal year of government offices and major corporations in Japan.

Across the country, more than two millions of recruits from universities and high schools start their first day as businessmen and women on this day.

Major national newspapers report about the welcoming remarks made by the heads of major companies for the new employees.

■ There Is No More Private Working Office For JR-East Executives

Masatake Masuda, chairman of JR-East, disclosed in a recent business magazine that he abolished all private offices for JR-East executives when he undertook the presidency.

Japan National Railway Company, the largest company in Japan was privatized and broken down into 6 regional private companies plus a cargo company more than 10 years ago.

During the big transformation of the companies, they adopted new management reforms such as TQM to give customer-oriented satisfaction and Kaizen to continuously improve business processes across the companies.

Masuda puts great emphasis on the free and unrestricted communication among the employees and top management.

Along with this management philosophy, all executives including himself are now sitting side by side with other employees in the open-space office.

This "co-location" office layout allows much more active and free communication between the top and bottom.

■ International Comparison Of Productivity

Harbor and Associates of the United States released recently a set of productivity and quality comparison tables of the world major automotive companies.

According to Harbor and Associates, Japanese auto companies are still among the highest productivity.

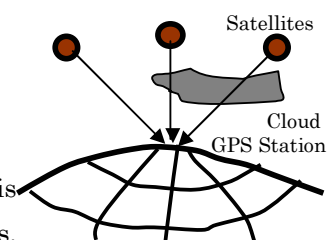
<u>Productivity (assembly hours/car)</u>		<u>First Time Quality (defects /car-truck)</u>	
1. Nissan	27.6	1. Toyota	1.15
2. Honda	29.1	2. Honda	1.33
3. Toyota	31.1	3. Nissan	1.45
4. Chrysler	44.8	4. GM	1.46
5. Ford	39.9	5. Chrysler	1.54
6. GM	40.5 (48.3 in 1997)	6. Ford	1.62

Source : Business Week 2002 March 25

■ Error in Measurement is Used for Creative Inventions

In SQC (Statistical Quality Control) and Information Theory, error or noise is to be minimized. (ie : signal-noise ratio)

But in other instances error can be used for constructive inventions and discoveries. Recently, a Japanese scientist group developed a new weather forecasting system by making use of the delay time of special phenomena of signal wave emitted by GRS satellites. The signal wave is delayed by the cloud between the satellites and GPS receiving stations. This arriving time error is constantly mapped all over Japan by more



than 1000GPS receiving stations for this purpose.