

ONE-PAGE INFORMATION - KAIZEN No.24

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■ ISO 9000 Does Not Change Gemba, Nor Company

Gemba, or manufacturing shop-floor, is the centerpiece of company. When Gemba is dirty, unorganized and shaky, no reliable products are expected and high productivity is impossible. To change the company, Gemba must be changed first. But how do you change your company ? To me, people are looking for a quick fix : circumambulating Gemba. Since the publication of “In Search of Excellence “ by Tom Peters and Robert Waterman in 1983, people have been looking for a magic which might change the company in one day. There is no such a managerial magic at all. In USA, Europe, Hong Kong , China, and many other parts of the world, people talk about ERP, Six Sigma, ISO 9000, TOC and hundred of others. Some of them are short-lived and others are too “theoretical” or “superficial” to implement it in an effort to change the company. Take ISO 9000, for example. Many Asian companies, which have acquired ISO 9000 through “famous” European consulting firms, do not change their Gemba at all when I visit them for the first time. Gemba is dirty, out of control, and full of Muda everywhere. I do not see any sign of improvement except a big public board of ISO9000 posted at the plant venue. Remember, acquirement of ISO 9000 is just a starting point, not destination, for a long journey of Quality Improvement. Also you must remember, ISO 9000 is for Quality and CS only, nothing to do with productivity improvement or profitable management.

■ International Olympic Game of Skill Technique

According to JUSE monthly magazine “Quality Circle” No. 504 July 2003, Japan as the nation, is taking up the revival plan of reinforcement of industrial skills to win the International Olympic Game of fine arts. During 1962 (The 11th Game) and 1981 (The 26th Game) Japan was always on the 1st or 2nd place, but since 1963 Japan gave way to Koreans and Taiwanese as the 1st place. Skilled technique such as fine metal grinding and polishing are indispensable foundations of “Monozukuri” (Manufacturing spirit). Recently, a national consensus is formed to support fine art of industrial skills. A few years ago, a national “ Monozukuri “university was established as a stepped-up move towards this trend.

■ Robots

Here are two tables recently released by Japan Robot Association for your information.

Table 1 Robots Working in Advanced countries

| | |
|---------|---------|
| Japan | 389,442 |
| Germany | 91,184 |
| USA | 89,880 |
| Italy | 39,238 |
| France | 20,674 |
| Etc. | 52,076 |

Table 2 Robot Production in Japan

| | |
|------|--------|
| 1975 | 4,418 |
| 1985 | 48,490 |
| 1990 | 79,096 |
| 1995 | 69,895 |
| 2000 | 90,128 |