

ONE-PAGE INFORMATION - KAIZEN No.31

Published by S. Yoshida, GTR Institute, Tokyo Japan E-mail: gtr-inst@wta.att.ne.jp

■ Quality Month is Observed Across Japan in November

.November is a special month for the Japanese industry as it is Quality Month. This year, the 44th Quality Month is being observed nation-wide. Across the country, many kinds of quality-related events are planned and held at individual companies as well as at the national level. For example, on the national level, a series of Quality Month seminars are held in 12 major cities across Japan. National Quality Forum is held in Tokyo with outstanding guest speakers from major bench-marking companies. National Quality Circle Presentation Conference is held this month with more than 3,000 participants to decide the best circles in Japan. And more importantly, Deming Prize winning companies for 2003 are invited to share experiences with other companies. In individual companies, various projects are planned to highlight quality issues such as in-house panel discussion between departments, displays of quality problems and dialogue meeting on supply chain issues. In Japan, Quality Month is effectively used to remind us of the importance of product quality.

■ Quality Circle is the Original Form of Kaizen Activities

The Western World came to know about Quality Circle movement in Japan by the famous shocking report entitled “ The QC Circle Phenomenon” by J. M. Juran in Industrial Quality Control of January 1967 which was the monthly magazine of American Society for Quality Control. It was a shocking experience for him to know that Japanese female workers at Panasonic conveyor assembly lines were solving quality problems by using some statistics methods. Quality Circles are still active in Japan. The 4,600th National Quality Circle Convention will be held in Okinawa on December 11 & 12 this year. The 4,600 is not misprint !! And on October 7, 8, 9, and 10, 2003, the 34th International Quality Circle Convention was held in Shinjuku, Tokyo with 1381 people attending, out of which 688 people from 20 countries, mostly from the East Asian region. Today, Quality Circles are instrumental in the rapidly growing industrialization of East Asian countries