

Creating a New Era and Values by Developing Organizations with a Great Diversity of Human Resources



With the development and revitalization of human resources selected as one of major work areas under the Medium-Term CSR Plan, we are active in developing human resources who will take the lead in the next generation and in creating a comfortable working environment. The Suminoe Textile Group aims to enable individual employees to display their personality and abilities, irrespective of gender, nationality and age.

Mirai-juku Program (a Series of Seminars on Future Growth).

We held the first "Mirai-juku" (lit. school of the future) program at the Head Office building of Suminoe Textile Co., Ltd., inviting employees wishing to attend the program, with the objective of offering opportunities for exchanges of views between management and young/mid-career employees. The first Mirai-juku program comprised three seminars, with the participation of 18 employees. To begin with, they introduced themselves and expressed their enthusiasm. At the first and second seminars, management delivered lectures to participating employees on the Company's history, industrial trends, future prospects, and the concepts and words that respective executives value, while citing their own experiences. The third seminar was held on the theme "What We Should Start Now for Ourselves Ten Years Hence." Participating employees made personal presentations on the theme, and received advice from the President of the Company. They were also offered an occasion for a round-table talk with the President to listen to various stories, enjoying valuable experiences that could not be usually obtained. At the end of the program, participating employees were

allowed to ask questions, to which answers were supplied from the management meeting at a later date. In this way, the Mirai-juku program was highlighted by an interactive exchange of opinions. Participants made positive comments, which include: "I was greatly inspired when I listened directly to the words of senior executives," "The program provided me a good opportunity to reflect on myself," and "I was happy to have been able to have an exchange with participants from other departments." The average level of satisfaction with the entire Mirai-juku program was 4.28 points out of 5, indicating that it was well-received in general. In the future, we will continue to hold the program, while expanding the scope of participants so that employees working nationwide can apply to join the program.



Interviews with Next-Generation Employees to Foster their Growth

We conducted interviews with next-generation employees, designed to foster the growth of young employees. These interviews were held both on a group and personal basis, with 39 young employees who were in their first to fifth years of employment with Suminoe Textile Co., Ltd. In the personal interviews, interviewers (operating officers and advisers) held an hour-and-a-half interview with each young employee, on their daily questions and future plans.

[Comments from young employees]

- It was stimulating to talk with interviewers whose age bracket, experiences and viewpoints were different from ours.
- I had an opportunity to review my way of thinking and my attitudes toward work.
- I want to fulfill the duties that I am now engaged in, and then go to the next step.
- Other comments from female employees reflected their hopes to work longer, to successfully balance their family and work, and to obtain support and advice from their supervisors and seniors.



[Comments from interviewers]

- On the assumption of "personal growth = change," what should the Company offer young employees in anticipation of their growth?
- To develop the mental capacity for work for which they have trained since school days, young employees should give top priority to complementing and improving their current shortcomings.
- These interviews with young employees are extremely significant as an occasion on which experienced senior employees tell young employees what they wish to pass on to them.
- I realized that talking with young employees on a one-to-one basis forms the basis for human resources development.



In the next year and onward, we will continue to hold interviews with young employees, with a particular focus on the growth of younger employees who will play leading roles in the next 100 years, and the establishment of a system to support their growth.

Questionnaire Survey on Workplace Comfort (In-house Employees' Opinion Survey) 2016

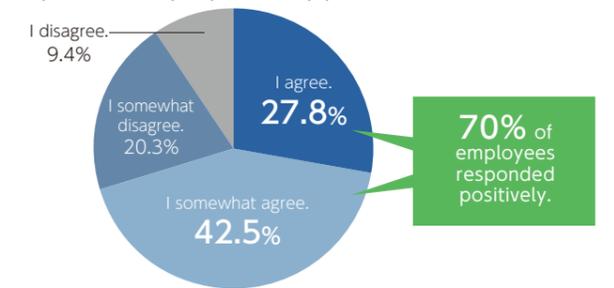
In March 2016, the Suminoe Textile Group held a Questionnaire Survey of Employees' Opinions about Workplace Comfort 2016, which gathered opinions from approximately 80% of employees working in the Group companies.

In the survey, positive answers were submitted to the question asking employees if they have a strong wish to continue working at their present company for many years by a greater number of respondents than in the previous survey conducted in 2014.

A relatively high score (2.75 points) was recorded for the comprehensive level of satisfaction, which may indicate the gradual effects of our CSR activities.

In the future, the Suminoe Textile Group will continue to pursue its priority themes—harassment prevention, correction of problems related to working hours, and women's empowerment, while reflecting the survey results in its CSR activities to help invigorate Group employees.

■ Do you feel strongly that you want to work at your present company for many years to come?



Senior Employees Playing Active Roles



Masumi Tomomoto
Senior Manager, Kinki District Sales Development Department, RUNON Co., Ltd.

- 1975 Joined RUNON Co., Ltd. as a mid-career employee, and was assigned to the Hiroshima Sales Office. Worked as the person in charge of the Shikoku region and opened the Matsuyama Sales Branch Office.
- 1997 Later returned to work at the Hiroshima Sales Office. Deputy Manager, Tokyo Metropolitan Area Sales Development Department
- 2003 Director, Osaka Sales Development Department, and then Director, Kinki and Central Japan Sales Development Department
- 2013 Retired on reaching the mandatory age of 60. Present Working as a Senior Employee engaged in export work

What, specifically, does your present work involve?

I am now involved in all the administrative duties related to exports, including making arrangements with shipping companies, as well as packaging for export and weighing to prepare invoices and packing lists. I sometimes go overseas on business trips, mainly to China. Recently I went to Vietnam, where I organized an installation seminar in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, and demonstrated the deodorant effects of the 空気洗う壁紙® (a deodorant wallpaper). Four years ago, I was involved in giving deodorization demonstrations as part of the media coverage arranged by a dealership in Mongolia in TV programs broadcast on nine TV stations and published in articles in two newspapers. I also offered telephone counseling during a live broadcast. I was privileged to have very valuable experiences.



Appearance in a TV program (in Mongolia)



Seminar (in Vietnam)

How have you increased the number of overseas customers?

The most important thing is to establish personal connections. As you are aware, particularly in China, personal honor and personal connections have a great influence. In a country with such a national character, I clearly realize that people-to-people relationships are essential. Vietnam has an indescribably vibrant atmosphere, specific to a country with a potential for future growth, just like Japan in the past. In the interiors of buildings, in many case walls are still finished with paint, not with wallpaper. From now on, however, the demand for wallpaper is expected to increase rapidly. I think that today's Vietnam resembles China two decades ago, and we should seize our business chance now.

What is the most memorable experience in your career so far?

In 1987 when I was appointed Director of the Hiroshima Sales Office, an interior finishing shop went bankrupt, shortly after our company had introduced the shop to a dealership. I regret the trouble that we had caused the dealership. Bill collection was delayed and our sales decreased, and we could not even talk with the manager of the dealership. Every day I struggled desperately to regain the trust of the dealership. Finally, I was able to win back trust and obtain greater support from the dealership than before. It was very hard, but I realized that there is truth in the saying, "after rain comes fair weather." I think that it was an experience from which I learned a lot.

Do you have any favorite mottos?

My motto is the phrase "Learn by long experience." I seriously believe that the more complaints we address, the more we can grow ourselves. On the other hand, I hate ambiguous expressions, such as "seemingly" or "apparently." Whenever I find something uncertain, I make it a rule to check firsthand whether it is true or not. For instance, I did experiments to confirm whether our wallpaper can be removed completely or not, and to measure its degree of functionality, until I was completely satisfied so that I could explain our products to customers with great confidence. I believe that enthusiasm is the key to the ability to persuade customers, and that it is important for us to study by ourselves. Even now, I can never compromise this belief. Even after I became a Senior Employee, this attitude has remained unchanged.

What are your future plans?

I have still many things I want to do. For example, I would like to sell an adhesive that can be applied directly to vinyl wallpaper, and fleece (non-woven fabric) wallpaper, both of which have been achieved through the personnel connections I have established so far. Before I retire as a Senior Employee, I want to properly hand over my present duties regarding exports and pass on the relevant know-how to my successors.

[Message from an employee in related department]

I have been working with Mr. Tomomoto since the 空気洗う壁紙® (a deodorant wallpaper) was commercialized and released onto the market. To physically experience the product's effects for himself, Mr. Tomomoto actually used the wallpaper as insoles, created an original kit for deodorization demonstrations, and performed these demonstrations everywhere, both in Japan and abroad. I have learned a lot from his proactive and constructive attitude toward work. Additionally, when dealing with customers, even when addressing their complaints, he performs his duties sincerely with comprising his belief, but without making customers feel unpleasant. I attribute these accomplishments to his warm personality. I will continue to emulate his enthusiasm, good personality and power of action.

Yoshinari Miyamura
Group Leader, Technical Center, Suminoe Textile Co., Ltd.



Voices of Local Employees Working at Overseas Subsidiaries

The Suminoe Textile Group has now expanded its overseas network to include 13 establishments in six countries (the United States, Mexico, China, Thailand, India, and Indonesia). At these overseas subsidiaries, local employees who have different experiences, senses of values and perspectives are working as members of the Group. This issue of CSR introduces the voices of local employees working at subsidiaries in Mexico, China and Indonesia.



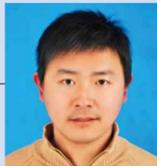
Overseas local employees replied to the following questions.

- ①When did you join the company?
- ②Why did you want to join the company?
- ③What does your work involve, and what aspect of your work do you find the most interesting?
- ④What do you like best about Suminoe?
- ⑤What do you do after work?
- ⑥What are your special strengths?
- ⑦What color is your personality?
- ⑧Nowadays what do you feel the most passionate about?
- ⑨What spots would you recommend in your local area?
- ⑩Do you have any message to employees at other Suminoe Textile Group companies?



Suzhou Suminoe Textiles Co., Ltd. (SSO), China

Gao Feng
Manufacturing Department



- ①July 2003
- ②Suminoe offered not only an attractive salary, but also an environment where employees can improve their skills through work and achieve self-fulfillment.
- ③Together with all other members in the Manufacturing Department, I am working to manufacture products with high quality and cost effectiveness, based on the requirements from customers. I feel the happiest when I am able to improve the work efficiency of my subordinate as a result of my efforts, so as to ensure smooth management.
- ④Suminoe features good human relationships in a style which appears to be cool at a glance, but is actually warm and compassionate.

- ⑤Taking a walk with my family.
- ⑥I am good at cooking Chinese dishes.
- ⑦Black (While black can cover up other colors, black cannot be replaced with others. Black is also a traditional color.)
- ⑧Taking a stroll.
- ⑨The Classical Gardens of Suzhou is the best place to visit in Suzhou. Urban greenery is another feature that the city is most proud of.
- ⑩有付出就有收获、享受工作带来的乐趣! (Your efforts will pay off one day. Let's develop confidence through work!)



SPM Automotive Textile Co., Ltd. (SPM), China

Xu Yan
Sales Department



- ①February 2010
- ②Since I studied Japanese when I was a university student, I wanted to find employment at a Japanese-affiliated company. Since joining SPM, I have learned a great deal in order to cope with my duties, all of which were a first experience for me. I like my present work.
- ③I am a sales representative and engaged primarily in developing new customers and providing customer services. I find it interesting to undertake new work.
- ④A pleasant working environment and well-balanced human relationships.

- ⑤Watching television, reading books, and taking exercise.
- ⑥I am an active type of person and have excellent endurance. I like helping others.
- ⑦Green, which stands for hope and vitality.
- ⑧Travel and reading.
- ⑨Shamian Island (known for its Western-style buildings), Canton Tower, and Redtory Art & Design Factory.
- ⑩为了遇见更好的自己、请别放弃、继续努力(^ω^)(Don't give up and work hard to find yourself better than yesterday.)



Suminoe Textile de Mexico, S.A.de C.V. (STM), Mexico

Fidencio Soto
Sales Department



- ①December 2014
- ②I joined STM since I felt it exciting to experience new work in the automotive textile industry.
- ③I am in charge of sales and new projects. I serve as a contact person for all existing and future customers. I collect information from all teams within STM, and disseminate the gathered information to these teams. I take on new challenges and try to achieve my goals, which arouses my interest every day.
- ④The long history of Suminoe in the industry, and the highest quality that characterizes all the products manufactured by Suminoe Group companies.
- ⑤I enjoy playing with my children, and playing chess online.
- ⑥I can conduct appropriate management in an emergency and under unusual situations.

- ⑦White (As white can be easily mixed with other colors, I can help other people around me anytime.)
- ⑧I am passionate about studying all the processes and materials, so that I can submit a more accurate estimate to customers.
- ⑨El Torito Steak (a local restaurant, which serves a wide variety of dishes at reasonable prices. The restaurant has an area where children can play while customers have their meals with family members and friends.)
- ⑩¡Ama a tu prójimo como a ti mismo y a Dios sobre todas las cosas y Siempre persigue tus sueños! (Love your neighbor as yourself and love God who is above all things, and always chase your dreams!)



PT. Suminoe Surya Techno (SST), Indonesia

Asep Juliana
Quality Control Department



- ①August 2014
- ②Since Suminoe is a large company, I wanted to join it.
- ③My work involves quality control (QC) and management of QC-related documents.
- ④Suminoe has wonderful employees and has a good management style.
- ⑤I enjoy playing games and listening to music.
- ⑥I am good at cooking.
- ⑦A good combination of red and white*.

- ⑧I am absorbed in music. I love listening to and performing music.
- ⑨Tangkuban Perahu (Mt. Tangkuban Perahu Volcano), Bandung, Indonesia
- ⑩Tetap semangat dan berikan yang terbaik untuk SUMINOE Group (Keep on seeking your aspirations and do your best for the development of the Suminoe Textile Group.)



*The flag of Indonesia comprises two colors, red and white. Red represents courage, and white represents purity. We take pride in the combination of these two colors.

Initiatives for Women's Empowerment

In April 2016, the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace entered into force. Based on this Act, Suminoe Textile Co., Ltd. and SUMINOE Co., Ltd. formulated their action plans, which were submitted to the labor authorities concerned and published on our website. With women's empowerment specified as a priority theme for improving business performance, we have established three targets.



The Company has established the following three targets.

- ① Increase the ratio of female employment.
- ② Create a system to support employees continuing to work and developing their careers.
- ③ Introduce improvements to address the results of the questionnaire survey of employees' opinions about workplace comfort—This section introduces initiatives implemented as part of our efforts to achieve the above targets.

■ Lecture Meeting to Promote Women's Empowerment

In January 2016, we held the Lecture Meeting to Promote Women's Empowerment, inviting Ms. Kimie Iwata*, President of the Japan Institute for Women's Empowerment & Diversity Management, to deliver a lecture. The morning session began with an opening address by President Yoshikawa of Suminoe Textile Co., Ltd. Senior executives and managers then listened to lectures on reviewing employees' working styles and training for female employees. The afternoon session was geared to female employees, to whom the lecturer talked about her own experience regarding how to strike life/work balance. Many participating employees made comments such as "I became aware again of the most productive way of working," "I was impressed with the topic about education that fits individuals," "The lecture meeting provided me with an opportunity to consider my future life and career." In the future, we will constantly raise awareness of women's empowerment, in order to create a working environment where female employees can continue to work for as long as they wish with a sense of fulfillment.

*Ms. Kimie Iwata, President of the Japan Institute for Women's Empowerment & Diversity Management. Entered the Ministry of Labor in 1971, and then joined Shiseido Co., Ltd. in 2003. Her present positions include External Director of Japan Airlines Co., Ltd., Outside Director of Kirin Holdings Co., Ltd., and External Director of Stripe International Inc. She is actively working in a variety of fields.



Ms. Kimie Iwata delivering her lecture



President Yoshikawa offering his greetings

■ Manual for Supporting a Balance between Work and Childcare

We have prepared a manual that provides information on systems that employees can use when they give birth and raise their children, and return to work after an extended absence. The manual also describes what their supervisors and coworkers should take care of. Its aim is to help readers deepen their understanding of the relevant rules to offer clues to balancing work and childcare. The manual was posted on the in-house intranet.



Manual for Supporting a Balance between Work and Childcare

Last year, we held six training sessions by level, to raise participants' awareness of women's empowerment and inform participants of the publication of the manual on the intranet and other efforts by the Company to help employees strike a work-childcare balance. We will continue to actively communicate these initiatives to all employees.

■ Participation in the Women's Empowerment Support Forum

As in the previous year, two female managers and two mid-career female employees from the Suminoe Textile Group participated in the Women's Empowerment Support Forum organized by the Japan Institute for Women's Empowerment & Diversity Management. The Group will continue to send female members to the forum, aiming not only to enhance their motivations and capabilities, but also to allow them to broaden their horizons, by exchanging views and forming a network with women who are actively working at other companies and in other industries.

[Comments from participants of the course for managers]

Mana Sugiura

Section Chief, Third Section,
Third Contract Department,
Kinki Block, SUMINOE Co., Ltd



I participated in the two-day training course, which was a truly stimulating and precious experience for me. The course was attended by 35 female managers from various industries, who usually do not have a chance to come into contact with each other. The female lecturer, who became a scholar after having worked at a foreign-affiliated company, gave an easy-to-understand lecture while talking about her own experiences. Then, a group discussion ensued, in which participants enthusiastically talked about themes familiar to them. Hearing other members' views and opinions which were different from mine meant that I was able to broaden my perspective and learn a lot of things.

Naoko Watanabe

Group Leader, Design Department,
R&D Center, Suminoe Teijin Techno
Co., Ltd.



At first, I was very nervous because I imagined that the other participants would all be aggressive career women, given that the seminar was designed for female managers. Unexpectedly, however, I found that many participants had a peaceful and pleasant demeanor. I thus realized that now it is nothing special for women to become managers. In particular, female employees working in the banking industry have made remarkable advancement. The two-day course was very inspiring, since I was able to exchange ideas and opinions with attractive female leaders from other industries.

Vigorous Activities Demonstrated by Female Employees

In this present issue, we interviewed two female employees striving to further develop themselves, about fulfilling experiences they've had at work and what they attach importance to every day.



Megumi Oshima

Section Chief, New Business
Department, SUMINOE Co., Ltd.
Joined the company in 2007

[Pleasure of Creating Products from Scratch and Marketing Them]

Since I was a child, I have loved the texture of fabric. Also, I was engaged in sales of interior products previously. I joined the company with the expectation that I could use my past experience. At present, I oversee the online sales of an interior shop called "cucan." To be more specific, I am in charge of sales management and product planning, layout of the website, and management of staff members. When we take photographs of a newly created product, sometimes we have to take 30 shots a day. Although it is very hard, it's actually fun to create a product as we want, and to introduce it to the market. Additionally, I find it very interesting and worthwhile to be able to see a brand in which I have been engaged since it was launched gaining support from customers.

[More Keenly Feeling Customers' Presence]

I try to perform my duties while always keeping the presence of the customers who use our products in mind. When I receive words of thanks from customers via e-mails and letters, I can realize that our customers are pleased with the products we have delivered. In such a moment I can feel closer to the customers. Going forward, I will continue to attach importance to the point of contact with our customers, through such means as the e-mail newsletter that I have distributed since I joined the company.

[My Future Vision]

I hope to develop "cucan" to make it the first choice for customers when selecting an interior shop. To realize this vision, I always devise measures while considering how to better coordinate with directly managed stores and seeking advice from my supervisor. I am grateful to my supervisor for granting me such broad discretion. In my department, there are several employees who are raising children. I will progress together with these working mothers/fathers, by, for instance, assigning them long-term jobs to make it easier to work, toward the realization of our future vision.



Impression of the Interviews

During the interviews with these female employees, they talked about their work and future visions brightly and cheerfully, which conveyed their love and enthusiasm for their work. We felt that, in order for women to continue to work and develop their careers, finding their own pleasure and sense of satisfaction in their work serves as a great driving force. We will continue to push forward with initiatives regarding women's empowerment, to ensure that more and more female employees have fulfilling experiences at work.



Manami Kinoshita

Director, Kinki Center
Suminoe Logistics Co., Ltd.
Joined the company in 2009

[Shipping Products to Customers with a Sense of Mission]

I have long liked to work on logistics, which is the process of efficiently transporting products to complete orders. I joined Suminoe Logistics in 2009 after working at another logistics company. As the Director of the Kinki Center, I am now in charge of its management. My main duties are striking a balance between payment and management of front-line jobs. Specifically, I consider how to improve work efficiency, conduct sales activities, negotiate with transport companies, and deal with customer complaints. Shipping products to customers marks the last and most important stage of Suminoe's workflow, from product development, manufacturing and sales. I am proud of playing this important role.

[Overcoming Difficulties through Teamwork]

I believe that advance preparation is the key to success in logistics. We consider how we should do something to ensure efficient and accurate product shipment. By openly sharing information and exchanging ideas, we review how to improve the way to place and lay out products, and move them for smooth logistics. Staff members engaged in logistics may have some difficulty in realizing the pleasure in their daily work, because the results are invisible. However, I can certainly feel great pleasure when I see these employees work in concert to seriously seek better solutions.

[Appreciation to Those Who Have Supported Me, and What I can Do Next]

When I was appointed as the Director of the Kinki Center, I was wondering what I should do and whether I could fulfill the responsibility given to me. However, I also thought that it was a good opportunity to take on a new challenge. Even now, there are many things I do not know and I am studying hard every day. I am happy to be supported by my supervisor and staff members. Thanks to their kind support, I am able to accomplish my work now. I thought that I should not just do the same thing that other center directors are doing, but work out my own way of running things. I was then determined to closely look at and give careful consideration to the details of our everyday operations. I wish to maintain this attitude in the future.

