

Young people spreading their wings to take on the world, and startup activities (this section has been quoted from President Komaba's message.)

Young people in their twenties are challenging the world in a wide range of different sports. Joyous news is coming in systematically since we have entered this year, such as Hideki Matsuyama (29) winning the US Masters in April in the field of golf, and Yuka Saso (19) taking the playoffs against other Japanese players and then winning the title in the US Women's Open. Other athletes we can't take our eyes off include MBL's Shouhei Ohtani, who is vying for the leading spot in home runs and runners batted in, and NBA's Rui Hachimura, who was proudly selected in the first round draft. And, of course, we must not forget swimmer Rikako Ikee, who overcame leukemia and claims to want to contribute not only to individual events but also the relay, as well as many other young people who have set their sights of claiming medals during the Tokyo Olympics.

It is wonderful to see these young people being so active, and it instills me with hope for the future of Japan.

Moving onto a different subject, KSK commenced its Startup Activities in March with an eye on the future. The deadline for submitting suggestions was June 25th, and we received a total of 223 proposals, not only from young people but also many from our senior workers. Approximately half of these will move past the initial screening process, and a total of five teams will be selected to take part in the main convention during the second screening process.

(We are hoping to establish these activities into an event that will equal the Kaizen Convention in the future.)

Unlike the field of sports, in which it is impossible to withstand the physical pressures of aging, daily work allows people to polish their skills through the accumulation of enlightenment and experience so that many wonderful elderly people can contribute to society.

One in every two people working for KSK submitted a varied range of suggestions regardless of their age or gender.

I feel deep gratitude to every one of the people who submitted their ideas in order to support the creation of a single team, including those with youthful spirits, the passionate elder employees, and the ladies who work so hard at their jobs while simultaneously raising children.

Automotive area (Toyota announces the release of its new bZ4X electric vehicle! Toyota has launched its EV strategy at last)

Toyota revealed its new TOYOTA bZ EV series at the 2021 Shanghai Motor Show, and announced that would release seven models by 2025. The first model of this concept car, the TOYOTA bZ4X, is scheduled to be released for sale onto the market by the middle of 2022. The bZ4X was developed in a joint project with Subaru, and the remaining models in the bZ series are scheduled to be jointly developed in partnerships with not only BYD of China, but also Daihatsu, Subaru and Suzuki.

We checked to see what sort of comments the TOYOTA bZ4X EV concept car, which is attracting great attention, is generating on SNS sites. The first comments that stood out were those concerning the design. Opinions on this appeared generally favorable with posts such as "That design will sell," and "I'd fork out for a design like that," followed by "I wonder how much it will cost in Japan," "I wonder if it will be priced within the reach of normal people," and "I hope they will give it a bargain price to beat overseas competition." Other comments focused on the unusual shape of the steering wheel using a new steer-by-wire technology (a mechanism for controlling the steering wheel with digital control) that is scheduled to be mounted on the bZ4X, such as "I'm interested in the new driving experience provided by the yoke-shaped steering wheel," "People are concentrating on the way steer-by-wire technology will be introduced to the world," "Driving without the sense of being in control is really cool," and "The yoke-shaped steering wheel using steer-by-wire technology is sure to place it above the competition." We also noticed that most of the comments were aimed at the battery. These included "Expectations are high for the all-solid state battery" and "Achieving an all-solid state battery will soon result in its widespread use," which focused on the next-generation large-capacity all-solid state battery technology that Toyota has been researching and developing with the aim of achieving in the early half of 2020s.

Making the best possible use of Toyota's motorization technology and Subaru's leading-edge AWD (four-wheel drive) control technology to exploit both companies' strengths has enabled them to utilize the e-TNGA platform, which is a dedicated EV platform developed to create EVs that are both comfortable and fun to drive, and to recharge the battery when the car is stopped with the use of a solar recharging system. The bZ4X is scheduled to be manufactured in Japan and China from now on, and releasing it on global sale is planned for the middle of 2022. Attention is being concentrated on Toyota's future EV strategies, with comments such as "I have high hopes for Toyota now that they have entered the field of EVs in earnest" and "I hope the world takes note of the amazing EVs that are possible once Toyota gets the bit between its teeth."



Source: Nikkei Automotive

Keihin Seimitsu Kogyo (Changes in business styles due to COVID-19)

In the same way as is evident with other companies, KSK's business style has begun to change due to the spread of COVID-19 infections.

More than 30% of workers stationed in the head offices are currently carrying out their jobs via telework (working from home). Employees are permitted to take their PCs home with them and we are loaning some of them WiFi equipment so that they can connect to the company's internal network, and we have expanded the use of our teleconferencing system, and although this requires a little extra time for preparations in comparison with working in the office (including contacts and in-person meetings), the level at which work duties are being carried out is approximately the same.

Telework causes certain problems for the Sales Department and Development Department, whose main duties include sales calls to customers and exchanging and gathering information, but they have been striving to ensure that they cater to customer requirements, even if in a small way, with the use of our teleconferencing system (although there are certain limitations with this).

Our factories have now been continually implementing special COVID-19 systems to avoid 3C (Closed spaces, Crowded areas, Close-contact) situations for more than one year.

Although an end to this threat is still not in sight, we continue to fumble in the dark to ensure full protection from the spread of contagion and to establish and modify systems that will match up with needs during the post-COVID period.

Post-editorial Notes: (The soul)

As the author drank beer and the female squad sipped on shandy gaff while we all nibbled on fried chicken at home the other day, my elder daughter said that she once saw somebody when she was in middle school wearing a T-shirt with "I am my own Lord throughout heaven and earth" written on it and was astounded at the intensity of these words, and I experienced a sense of nostalgia at words and phrases with the capability of reaching the soul. The term "self-righteous," which is a direct translation of the kanji used to express "I am my own Lord" in this anecdote, is recently defined as being conceited, but it was Buddha who claimed "I am my own Lord throughout heaven and earth" to express that **all humans are born to be revered and that everybody is equal within the caste system** prevalent at that time. (Although this resembles Goal 10 listed in the SDGs, I am actually quoting from the Jodo-shinshu sect of Buddhism, of which I am not a follower.)

I was reading "*Super Practicality is Better than Super Interpretation—Konosuke Matsushita*" published by Suguru Asada, and I could relate to and was impressed by the fact that Konosuke Matsushita's way of thinking bore a striking resemblance to philanthropist and founder of KYOCERA and KDDI, Kazuo Inamori's way of thinking, which I am extremely fond of.

Inamori speaks as if he is the founder of a religious sect, but after starting up KYOCERA and KDDI, he then went on to see Japan Airlines through its restructure after bankruptcy, and his authored works on "Living" and the "Soul" resonate deep within me.

(1) The concept of life (work) is an equation that multiplies "Way of Thinking (-100 to +100) x Enthusiasm (0 to +100) x Capability (0 to +100)"

** The priority on enthusiasm and way of thinking over capability creates a natural person = Becomes fond of work

** The most important resource for leaders is a constantly polished "personality" = "Personality + Philosophy (Way of Thinking)"

(2) The purpose of life is to improve one's soul and to do everything one can for other people (in other words, an altruistic soul)

** Repeatedly doing the best you can in daily life based on an altruistic soul will bring about a turning point in destiny without fail

** Live life earnestly, appreciatively, unassumingly and straightforwardly while maintaining a sense of gratitude at all times, the bad times as well as the good times

** No matter how harsh the situations you are faced with, handle them positively without regret or subservience

** Always maintain a beautiful and pure soul, even in times of hardship → This is the key to releasing your potential and living a happy life

(3) The factors behind the birth and acceleration of civilization are determination without ever giving up.

desire and enthusiasm

** The things that bring the soul of a company together are an understanding of its intentions (philosophies) and sharing

** Expanding levels of egotism, selfishness and greed have brought about environmental contamination and established a wide range of disparities

** Knowing when enough is enough and maintaining an altruistic soul is what we need to change the course of civilization

I apologize for listing out many anecdotes that sound so grand, although my intention was to list out the phrases that resonate within the soul when they are read.

I am rather fond of the lyrics to a song written by Noriyuki Makihara that go "You have to like yourself, even when you're no good...", and I believe that every individual has mountains of different heights that they need to climb, and this can only be done step by step as we aim for the summit, even if our mountain is not very tall.

However... I remember long ago when my mother used to tell my father that he spoke extremely grandly but he never followed his words up with action, and because I inherited his character... there is no way that I'll ever be able to show my wife (the Goddess of Thunder) this grandly-sounding article that I have written. I can already imagine the conversation as she flattens my explanation of "I just wanted to share some phrases that resonate in the soul with other people..." with a lightning flash in the shape of "Grow