

April 1, 2024

President's Message for New Employees in 2024

Michi Kuwahara, President and COO of Hitachi Zosen Corporation, gave a presentation to new employees, a summary of which is provided below.

Congratulations to all of you for joining us today.

I am very happy to welcome you as our newest colleagues and the first generation of Kanadevia employees. I would like to take a step forward together with you as colleagues who are making a new start in the first year of Kanadevia.

Have you ever heard of the term "VUCA World," a combination of the initial letters of Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous, which has become an established term to describe today's society? In your student days for example, there were too many to list, such as the COVID-19, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the Israel-Gaza conflict, the Noto disaster, and so on. Besides, major changes are also seen in the way people work, such as the establishment of remote working. And the development of AI, as represented by ChatGPT, has been remarkable. When I was young and working in Finance Department, I witnessed the yen currency's appreciation to 80 yen to the dollar, but I could never have imagined that the 150 yen level would ever come again. We are living in the midst of such drastic changes.

However, I see those things not as the threat but as the opportunity for growth. This is because, even in this rapidly changing environment, the technologies, products, and services we provide are indispensable to society in response to climate change and other issues, and their importance is growing, and their demands are becoming increasingly sophisticated. I believe that based on our technology, experience, and knowledge, we can contribute to solving even more social issues. In this context, I believe that what we need is a diverse workforce that brings fresh ideas and the ability to execute, and a corporate culture that celebrates those who take on challenges, tolerates failure, and learns from its mistakes. I believe that you are all part of this diversity of human resources. This is because you have already undergone the baptism of the many events and changes I mentioned earlier during your student days. I expect that you will inject new vitality that will bring about new ideas and actions.

In light of the changes in the social environment and my expectations for all of you, I would like to close my message by introducing a few words.

The first is the characteristic of a paradigm-shifter as described by Thomas Kuhn, historian of science: Someone who is very young or has been in the field for a very short time. This is

precisely the profile of yourselves, don't you think? We tend to unconsciously think in terms of our past successes and tend to think in terms of extensions of those successes. As mentioned earlier, change is rapid, and many of the changes that are occurring are not an extension of the past. I look forward to your fresh and free thinking, free from biases such as successful experiences.

The second is "Be a person who tries" by Soichiro Honda, Honda Motor's founder. Life consists of the three wisdoms of seeing, hearing, and trying, but most people only see and hear, and rarely try, which is the most important part. But most people only watch and listen, and rarely do the most important thing, "trying". Because they are afraid of failure, they have few chances to succeed.

Virtual reality technology has made it possible to simulate experiences without having to go to the site, but I believe that real-life experience in the field is important. Those who "try it out" may fail at times and experience frustration. However, all of them will be your future. I encourage you to go to the field, fully utilize your senses, and gain as much experience as possible in interacting with many people and diverse cultures without fear of failure.

The third is "It's not whether you can do or not, but Do, or Not Do," a phrase used by Hideki Kuriyama, former WBC baseball team manager, which came to his mind when he was debating whether to accept the position of WBC manager. I think that you may be faced with many new and difficult tasks and challenges, and you may find yourself wondering whether or not you can do. However, the question is "Do or Not Do". And, we will make it through. In fact, these are words that I have been telling myself as I take on the role of president.

Finally, I sincerely look forward to your growth and great success. Let's work together to make it happen, remembering our beginnings as members of society and our gratitude to our families and other people who have helped us, and work in good health and with a sense of enjoyment. I am truly looking forward to seeing what kind of harmony I can create with you all.